

religious ties, the separation of church and state, and a weakening of the bonds of theological absolutism. Calvinism, dominant in the colonial period, soon began to dissolve as Eastern Unitarians and Universalists affirmed the benevolence of God and Western evangelists aroused rapturous hope of salvation for every sinner. The tremendous activity within Christianity in the nation's formative years is clearly described in William Warren Sweet's **"Religion in the Development of American Culture, 1765-1840"** (Scribner's, \$3.50), the second of his planned four volumes on the history of religion in America. It is an able survey of an important subject that has too long been slighted or studied piecemeal.

Mr. Sweet emphasizes the influence of the frontier upon the churches and, in turn, the role of religion as a cultural force taming Western barbarism. A church's success in becoming "typically American" depended upon its ability to devise new patterns congruous with Western ideals. The frontier demanded soul-stirring preaching, home mission societies, the founding of new colleges, and modification of aristocratic doctrine. Evangelical Protestant churches, especially the Baptist and Methodist, displayed a genius for meeting these needs.

—J. MERTON ENGLAND.

A KIERKEGAARD SAMPLER: A poet-philosopher himself, it is appropriate that W. H. Auden should be the one to present in **"The Living Thoughts of Kierkegaard"** (David McKay, \$2.50) the thoughts of a man who was "often brilliantly poetic and often deeply philosophical." Yet it is the depth of Auden's religious insights that makes his interpretation of the Danish philosopher and theologian especially valuable. For, above all else, Kierkegaard was an expounder and defender of Christian doctrine and Christian conduct.

In his preface to this volume of selections, Auden identifies Kierkegaard's major concerns as a polemic against the bourgeois Protestantism of his time and the struggle with his own suffering. These two major concerns and Kierkegaard's differentiation between esthetic religion, ethical religion, and the revealed religion of Christianity are brought out in the selections made from his writings and in the interspersed comments of the editor. Thrown in for good measure is a brief explanation of existentialism.

As Kierkegaard is more often quoted than read, the chief value of this book may be the quickening of a desire to gain a first-hand knowledge of the writings of one whose

name is so often used in support of present-day trends in theology.

—K. D. M.

CHRISTIAN-CENTERED VIEW OF RELIGION:

The usual conception of comparative religion today is that it belongs, as a discipline, to philosophy proper, draws its data from history and anthropology, and derives its conclusions in accordance with sociological principles. This is not, however, the conception which informs Edward J. Jurji's **"The Christian Interpretation of Religion"** (Macmillan, \$4.50). Mr. Jurji, a Syrian-born and Beirut-educated Presbyterian minister who teaches Islamics at Princeton, believes that comparative religion is a sub-division of religion itself, and more specifically of the Christian religion. He attempts here, in other words, not an objective account of the religions of the world, but rather an interpretation of these religions from the point of view of Christianity.

The result is far from satisfactory. In his discussions Mr. Jurji ranges far and wide—into the religions of the primitives, the religions of antiquity, Shintoism, Hinduism, Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, and Christianity, and pauses by the way to consider Babylonian mythologies, Druidic rituals, and Greek cults and philosophies. But these accounts, except of course in the case of Christianity, are seldom sympathetic. All other religions suffer in comparison with Christianity and all are judged to be degraded insofar as they fail to reflect the truth of the Gospel. The author's ethnocentrism, apparent in almost every sentence of his book, may not be a theological vice, but it violates most of the recognized canons of objective scholarship.

—R.B.

PIONEER NEW YORK JEWS: In 1954 American Jewry will mark the tercentenary of its settlement in the United States. The organized Jewish community is now busily working on the celebration planned for that significant event and, more or less as an outgrowth of the developing interest in American Jewish history, the past few years have witnessed the publication of a large number of volumes devoted to the history of Jews in America. None of the books already published—or planned—will be more readable, or useful, than Rabbi David de Sola Pool's **"Portraits Etched in Stone"** (Columbia University Press, \$10). Rabbi Pool has drawn his history from the Chatham Square Cemetery, the second oldest existing cemetery in New York City. Its history began in 1682 and Rabbi Pool, in narrating it, tells how the cemetery was acquired by Congregation Shearith Israel and how it was later used

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by Washington's troops in the War of Independence.

But far more interesting than the cemetery itself is the tale of those who lie buried beneath its tombstones. These 179 Jews, noble and humble, were pioneers of American Jewry and from many of them have sprung some of the most notable Jews in America, including Supreme Court Justice Benjamin N. Cardozo, Bernard Baruch, and Arthur Hays Sulzberger. Rabbi Pool has ransacked the archives of Congregation Shearith Israel as well as the records of its families and of New York City. He has written biographies which are intensely fascinating and dramatic. Here is a slice of American history, one of which America and Jewry can well be proud.

—H.U.R.

THOUGHT OF A DISTINGUISHED JEWISH THEOLOGIAN: Professor of Jewish philosophy of religion and ethics at the University of Frankfurt before the war, and professor of social philosophy at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem afterwards, Martin Buber has steadily published books which have won for him a reputation as one of the foremost Jewish theologians of the present day. At the moment, having retired from his teaching post, he is director of the Institute for Adult Education in Israel, an institute which he founded in 1949 and which trains teachers for the awesome task of integrating immigrants into the community life of the new country.

During the past year three of his books have been published in the United States. In *"Israel and Palestine"* (Farrar, Straus & Young, \$2.95) he traces the history of the idea of Zion. It seems to him that this idea is not simply another "national concept" which in its sociological sense includes tradition, character, custom, destiny, and vocation, but rather an almost mystical unification of a holy land and a holy people. The idea of Zion therefore has a deeper meaning and one which he advises his people not to surrender in their ambition to build a strong political community.

In *"Eclipse of God"* (Harper, \$2.50), a series of lectures delivered at American universities, Professor Buber discusses the relations between philosophy and religion. Philosophy, he believes, "holds fast" to an image of God or even a faith in God, while religion holds fast to God Himself. *"At the Turning"* (Farrar, Straus & Young,

\$1.50), contains three lectures on Judaism delivered at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York in 1951. All of these books, but particularly the second and third, serve as excellent introductions to Buber's thought.

—R. B.

THOMISTIC REASON: When a Thomist praises the logical positivists one may well wonder what he is up to. Jacques Maritain, the distinguished Thomist philosopher, does just this in the first chapter of his new book *"The Range of Religion"* (Scribner's, \$3.50), and it is perhaps unnecessary to add that he knows precisely what he is doing. He is grateful to the logical positivists for having shown that what he calls an "empirical" approach can never tell us what a thing is and can never provide us with a definition of its essence. It can only tell us how a thing can be observed and measured and indicate what its impact upon experience will be. Logical positivism therefore, by its abdication from essence, merely proclaims the need for metaphysics, the need for a second or "ontological" kind of knowledge. There is still a third kind of knowledge, poetic knowledge, which is based upon "connaturality," and this too owns a proper sphere in the delineation of the real.

All this, however, comes from only one of the essays. Ten of the chapters are from *"Raison et Raisons,"* published previously in France, and the other seven are drawn from miscellaneous periodicals. As usual, Maritain is both lucid and profound and whatever his subject—whether artistic judgment, atheism, Machiavellianism, democracy, Christian humanism, justice, freedom, faith, or God.

—R. B.

A TILICH SAMPLER: With the publication of *"The Theology of Paul Tillich"* (edited by Charles W. Kegley and Robert N. Bretall and published by Macmillan at \$5.50) is initiated an ambitious "Library of Living Theology." Such a project is in itself testimony that theology is coming into its own rightful position of primary importance in the religious life of America.

The selection of Paul Tillich, professor of systematic theology at Union Theological Seminary, as the subject of the first volume properly identifies him as one of the great theologians of the Western world along with Reinhold Niebuhr, Henry Nelson Wieman, Emil Brunner, and Karl Barth, whose work will be dealt with in succeeding volumes of the "Library."

The pattern of the book includes an intellectual autobiography, essays of interpretation and criticism of Til-

lich's work by outstanding contemporary philosophers and theologians; a brief reply by Professor Tillich to the criticisms made and questions raised by the commentators; and, finally, a complete bibliography of Tillich's writings to date.

In his most interesting and stimulating intellectual autobiography, Professor Tillich tells the story of his intellectual development, first in his native Germany, and, then, since his removal from his post by Hitler in 1933, in the United States. Both a philosopher and a theologian, Tillich has been classified as an existentialist in philosophy and a realist in theology. This reviewer finds it difficult to pigeon-hole one whose thinking is so original, creative, and individualistic.

The editors suggest in their introduction that anyone who cannot appreciate Tillich's thought "has probably ceased to think." Some of us find Tillich himself easier to understand than the theologians and philosophers who "interpret" his writing. No doubt this is due to the fact that Tillich is a great preacher as well as a theologian.

—K. D. M.

CHRISTIANITY VS. COMMUNISM: Our press, our magazines, and our pulpits resound with attacks on Communism, its principles and practices. However, all too few of these diatribes are based on a thoroughgoing study of Communism. Indeed, such study is definitely discouraged. To be found reading Karl Marx nowadays is to invite investigation for subversive thinking.

Edward Rogers, author of *"A Christian Commentary on Communism"* (Frederick A. Praeger, \$3.50), is a British Methodist church leader. He contends that the Soviet Revolution of 1917 was one of the turning points in human history and that since the philosophy of Communism commands the allegiance of such a large proportion of the population of the world it is high time that we studied it and understood it if we are to combat it intelligently.

Accordingly, Dr. Rogers has given us a careful, well-documented study of the basic ideas of Communism and of the way in which these ideas have been put into practice. Thorough expositions of the teaching of Marx, of Leninism, and of Stalinism are followed in each case by a commentary wrought out of deep and sound Christian convictions.

The publication of this book in this country should be welcomed by those who believe that our opposition to Communism should not be purely emotional, but based on an intelligent understanding of it in the light of our Christian faith.

—K. D. M.