

former book, "The Power of Positive Thinking," in emphasizing how to achieve well-being, enthusiasm, and new vitality." It will surprise some that there was further one *could* go.

The true religious self-help genre has reached a triumphant *reductio ad absurdum* (in more senses than one) in "Pray Your Weight Away," a newly published book by a Houston Presbyterian minister, the Reverend Charlie (sic) W. Shedd. He might at least have had the grace to call it "Pray and Fast Your Weight Away," acknowledging that the demon fat "goeth out only by prayer and fasting."

What is the harm in Pealeism and its fellow travellers? Can it not just be ignored? Unhappily, no. Dale Carnegie and the other secular self-help pundits can be ignored, but not Peale and company.

The Peale products and their like are equated blatantly with Christian teaching and preaching. They are represented as part of a revival or response in Christianity with which they have no valid connection. They influence, mislead, and often disillusion sick, maladjusted, unhappy, or ill-instructed people, obscuring from them the Christian realities. They offer easy comforts, easy solutions to problems and mysteries that sometimes, perhaps, have no comforts or no solutions at all, in glib, worldly terms. They promise a cheap "happiness" in lieu of the joy which Christianity can offer, sometimes in the midst of suffering.

The panacea of positive thinking has

been called by qualified people a positive hazard in the delicate marginal areas of mental health. Sick and sinking people will commit themselves to this waterlogged life preserver with possible disastrous results, when sound psychiatric counsel is needed. The church is belatedly, but rapidly, developing psychiatrically trained pastoral counsellors who know how to recognize the problems that the minister must refer to the realm of the doctor. Three fine books on this vital interrelationship between the religious and psychiatric fields are "Anxiety and Faith," by Charles R. Stinnette, Jr.; "Anxiety in Christian Experience," by Wayne E. Oates, and "Sex in Christianity and Psychoanalysis," by William Graham Cole. They help to show the actual harm that the irresponsibilities of positive thinking may do to unstable persons.

The books and teachings of Pealeism pervert the nature of Christian belief and experience. They make a virtue of being man-centered and self-centered. They seek an immediate, material good. The awesome sense of confrontation with God is gone. The fear of God which is awe has been dispelled. The meaning of worship is nullified and forgotten. God is to be worshipped because He is God. Pealeism and its corollaries debase Christianity to make of it a means to other and lesser ends—which by its nature the Christian religion cannot be. As Reinhold Niebuhr has observed, "There is no way of transmuting the Christian Gospel into a system of historical optimism."

Actually Pealeism is no novelty in relation to Christianity. It is a puerile, vitiated, shallow revival of Pelagianism, thoroughly unworthy of its tenuous link with Augustine's great theological adversary, Pelagius. For Pelagianism had a certain integrity and dignity (with a genuine impact on theology) missing from Pealeism's by-your-own-bootstraps doctrine.

Rabbi Liebman's "Peace of Mind," though in better taste and more restrained than Pealeism, nevertheless similarly set up an aim in life unworthy of the historical genius of Judaism. Bishop Sheen's "Peace of Soul," with its obvious corrective allusion to the Liebman title, is, like his broadcasts, filled with devices of presentation that sometimes are painful in their theatricality or slickness, but the massive structure of Roman Catholic theology ultimately prevents Sheen from sliding into Pealeism.

Where, in all the morass of false witness, whether in quests for successful living or in saccharine sentimentality—where are the great, historic central themes, subjects, words of Christianity through the ages? Where are considerations of the Trinity, Incarnation, covenant, atonement, redemption, salvation, sin, offering, judgment, worship, sacrament, sacrifice, communion, and the idea of the Holy?

These have been left behind by the prophet of positive thinking with his handy general maxims. "Many are called but few are chosen" has given way to "Everybody has won and all must have prizes." This is a travesty



Pick of the Paperbacks



THE APOSTLE. By Sholem Asch. Translated by Maurice Samuel. Pocket. 50¢. A novel about Paul of Tarsus set against the rich historical background of the Christian, Jewish, and pagan world of the first-century Roman empire.

BASIC CHRISTIAN WRITINGS. Edited by Stanley I. Stuber. Reslection. 50¢. Selections from the writings of the men whose thinking greatly influenced American Protestantism, among whom are Augustine, Calvin, and Emerson.

MOSES AND EGYPT. By Henry S. Noerdlinger. University of Southern California Press. \$1.95. Data collected from religious, archeological, and historical sources pertaining to Moses

and his times, prepared as documentation to the film "The Ten Commandments."

THE PAPAL ENCYCLICALS. Edited by Anne Fremantle. Mentor. 50¢. The official letters of the Popes from the first epistle of St. Peter to recent pronouncements of Pius XII that explain the Church's position on moral law. They are placed in their historical context by the editor.

PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY. By Rudolf Bultman. Translated by the Reverend R. H. Fuller. Living Age. \$1.25. A German New Testament theologian examines the forces other than Late Judaism (Greek paganism, Stoicism, the mystery religions, etc.), which influenced Christian belief.

RELIGIOUS VERSE. Edited by Horace Gregory and Marya Zaturenska. Mentor. 50¢. An anthology of devotional poetry ranging from ballads and epics to the verse of Crashaw and Dylan Thomas.

NO MAN IS AN ISLAND. By Thomas Merton. Dell. 35¢. Reflections upon the interior man and a life of the spirit by the Trappist monk who wrote "Seeds of Contemplation."

THE WRITINGS OF MARTIN BUBER. Edited by Will Herberg. Meridian. \$1.35. Selections from the works of the religious philosopher, now professor emeritus of Hebrew University at Jerusalem, whose "I and Thou" profoundly influenced contemporary Christian-Judaic thought.



Michelangelo's "Creation of Man," from a section of the Sistine Chapel ceiling.

of the great religion that has lent the name of Christendom to an epoch in Western civilization. One must say of Pealeism in all its manifestations, paraphrasing Richard Bentley's comment about Pope's translation of Homer, "It is a pretty religion, Mr. Peale, but you must not call it Christianity."

Christianity (and Judaism too) teaches not that man has found out God, but that God has sought out man. Again, the hope of salvation is not in that man loves God, but that God loves man. Christianity is not a discovery, or a technique, it is a revelation. Its history is not of what man has done for God, but of what God has done for man.

To speak of a religious revival is careless. There is always religion—the question is, *what kind*, what is worshipped? That is why J. V. L. Casserley, in his book "The Retreat from Christianity," called a chapter "The Retreat from Christianity Into Religion."

All this dross, jingling the cash registers, does not represent a religious reawakening—at least not a Christian one. An authentic Christian awakening, nevertheless, is going on and has produced within the last decade, and continues to produce, a wealth of fine books by which the shoddy, pseudo-Christian books can be measured. These books are available (a few quality paperback lines are beginning to make them more so) but they are not big sellers. Why?

First, because they all recognize the truth that the Judeo-Christian religious experience, instead of being an escape or a ready solution to daily

problems, is instead the awesome recognition of God's intrusion into man's life, with foundation-shaking implications. Someone has said, justly, "Christianity is too hard for anybody to have made it up." Yes, it can be joyous, comforting, hope-giving, life-renewing—but its biblical historicity must be understood as the mighty acts of God, and its worship, sacraments, and obedience must be comprehended as man's privilege of response to God's initiative.

The authentic Christian books deal straightforwardly with these great

themes. They make demands upon the reader—not unreasonable ones, but nevertheless demands, which in some circles today, religious, educational, literary, and artistic, simply isn't done. A personal, off-the-cuff list of such books is printed below.

In the face of Peale and company, even so brief and random array as this shows that a genuine, probing religious dialogue is going on today, in Christianity and in Judaism. Each man searches for himself, but these are types of the fruitful channels for his search to follow.

Antidotes to Pealeism

THIS, I would emphasize, is a personal list. It does not include the enduring classics of Christianity, now extensively available in good editions. It makes no claim to case the field, to be representative, yet this improvised reading list turns out to include several Protestant denominations, Anglicans, two Roman Catholics, and a Jew. No book mentioned is beyond the resources of an intelligent, concerned layman, though they vary widely in their demands.

Try C. S. Lewis: "Mere Christianity" and "The Screwtape Letters." Chad Walsh: "Campus Gods On Trial," "Early Christians of the 21st Century," "Stop Looking and Listen." Paul Tillich: "The Shaking of the Foundations" and "The New Being," tremendous experiences from a man difficult in other books, but not in these. From Reinhold Niebuhr, a little tougher, generally, try "The Irony of

American History" and "The Self and the Dramas of History," though the latter may be the hardest on this list. The late David E. Roberts's "The Grandeur and Misery of Man" is a complete answer to Pealeism. Try George Hedley's "The Superstitions of the Irreligious" and "Christian Worship." Evelyn Underhill's "Worship" is a classic.

You should know the great Jew who has vastly stimulated contemporary Christian thought, Martin Buber: "Eclipse of God," "Good and Evil," "Between Man and Man," and "I and Thou," the latter being the greatest but the hardest for it is poetic and cryptic. Read Barbara Ward's "Faith and Freedom" or Martin D'Arcy's "The Mind and Heart of Love." Dorothy L. Sayers: "The Mind of the Maker" and "Creed or Chaos." J. V. D. Casserley: "Graceful Reason" and "The Bent World." —E. F.

The Bible: Right After All



"The Bible as History," by Werner Keller (translated by Williem Neil. Morrow. 477 pp. \$5.95), is an account of the light shed by archeology on the Old and New Testaments. It is reviewed here by William F. Albright, a Biblical archeologist and professor at the Johns Hopkins University.

By William F. Albright

THE Bible as History" is the rather hackneyed title that has been given to a German book "Und die Bibel hat doch Recht." The German name is both picturesque and untranslatable. "The Bible Is Right After All" does not quite carry the same punch. The original, published in 1955, was written by a German journalist who had specialized in science news until his attention was caught by the work of two brilliant French archeologists in Syria. He immediately plunged into this new world, and after four years of feverish activity completed his manuscript.

Werner Keller possesses a gift for picturesque description and a happy turn of phrase. More unusual is the fact that it has been put into excellent English by William Neil, whose command of German is also unusually good. Only in dealing with archeological technicalities does the translator betray uncertainty. Neil's renderings are so exact that in place after place where a puzzled reviewer compared them with the original he found faithful reproduction of the German text.

It must be emphasized that the author cannot compete with his compatriot Kurt ("C. W. Ceram") Marek, author of "Gods, Graves, and Scholars," either in general accuracy or in skill as a storyteller. And yet his subject is so engrossing and his style so facile that he sweeps the reader along. In spite of many errors in detail, to say nothing of some dubious journalism, he is right: the Bible is almost throughout a reliable account of historical events and a repository of original religious documents.

A flood of information from all lands of the ancient East has been pouring in during the past century and a quarter since Champollion published his decipherment of Egyptian hieroglyphs and in the very same year

(1822) confirmed the basis of Grotefend's decipherment of Old Persian. With it has come the decipherment of a great many previously unknown scripts and languages, while excavation has given us a detailed knowledge of ancient cultures and their evolution through many millennia. Since the Bible reflects the life of the entire Near and Middle East between about 2000 B.C. and A.D. 100, it is not surprising that all this tremendous volume of previously unknown data from the ancient world bears directly or indirectly on it. Nor should it be at all remarkable that the positive impact of our new data on Biblical research is incomparably more

powerful than their negative effect. The historical picture as given by Biblical tradition is almost always correct; only rarely must we seriously modify the story as transmitted by Hebrew and early Christian traditions because of new archeological discoveries. We now have thousands of improved translations of words or passages, only a small proportion of which have yet found their way into modern editions of the Bible.

THE author paints a vivid picture of the rapid increase of knowledge in the field of Biblical archeology. As a rule he follows the best recent sources and reproduces what he finds



Protestant Reading List

EDMUND FULLER, novelist, critic, book editor of *Episcopal Churchnews*, has drawn up the following list of suggested reading for Protestants during Lent.

- AND WALK IN LOVE. By Henrietta Buckmaster. Random House. \$3.95.
 THE ART OF MEDITATION. By Joel S. Goldsmith. Harper. \$2.50.
 BY MEANS OF DEATH. By Hughell E. W. Fosbroke. Seabury. \$1.75.
 CANDLES ON THE GLACIER. By Kenneth Joseph Foreman. Association. \$3.
 CRISIS IN COMMUNICATION. By Malcolm Boyd. Doubleday. \$2.95.
 THE DEAD SEA SCRIPTURES. Translated and edited by Theodor H. Gaster. Doubleday. Clothbound, \$4. Paperbound, 95¢.
 THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS AND THE ORIGINALITY OF CHRIST. by Geoffrey Graystone. Sheed & Ward. \$2.50.
 THE DESCENT OF THE DOVE. By Charles Williams. Living Age. Paperbound, \$1.25.
 FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE. By Emil Brunner. Westminster. \$1.50.
 THE FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT—LIGHT OF CHRIST—ABBA. By Evelyn Underhill. Longmans. \$2.25.
 HIS KINGDOM IS FOREVER. By Ernest Lee Stoffel. John Knox. \$3.
 JOY IN BELIEVING. By Henry Sloane Coffin. Scribners. \$2.95.
 MAN AT WORK IN GOD'S WORLD. Edited by George E. De Mille. Longmans. \$3.
 MEN ON THEIR KNEES. By Kenneth O. Eaton. Abingdon. \$1.75.
 THE MIND OF THE MAKER. By Dorothy L. Sayers. Living Age. Paperbound, \$1.25.
 MYSTICISM. By Evelyn Underhill. Meridian. Paperbound, \$1.95.
 NAUGHT FOR YOUR COMFORT. By Trevor Huddleston. Doubleday. \$3.75.
 NEW TESTAMENT CHRISTIANITY. By J. B. Phillips. Macmillan. \$2.25.
 THE PRAYERS OF KIERKEGAARD. Edited by Perry D. LeFevre. University of Chicago Press. \$3.50.
 THE PRIVATE DEVOTIONS OF LANCELOT ANDREWES. Edited by Thomas S. Kepler. World. \$1.50.
 THE RULE AND EXERCISES OF HOLY LIVING. By Jeremy Taylor. World. \$1.50.
 THE SAVING PERSON. By Angus Dun. Harper. \$2.
 SERMONS ON THE PASSION OF CHRIST. By Martin Luther. Augustana. \$2.50.
 THROUGH TROUBLED WATERS. By William H. Armstrong. Harper. \$2.
 TILL WE HAVE FACES. By C. S. Lewis. Harcourt, Brace. \$4.50.
 THE WRITINGS OF MARTIN BUBER. Edited by Will Herberg. Meridian. Paperbound, \$1.35.