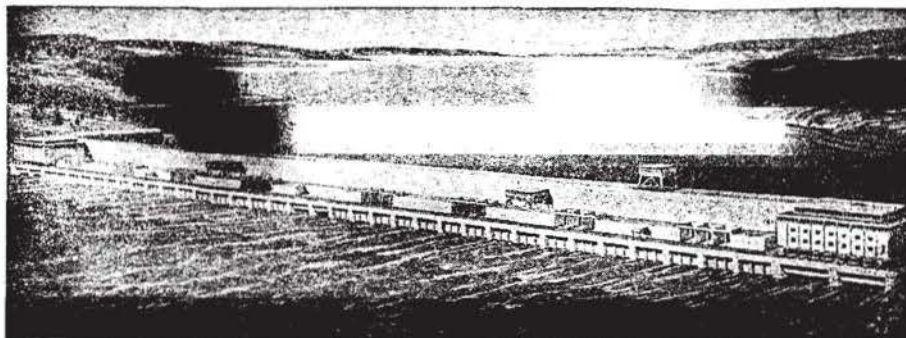


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NEW BOOKS

GOD AND SPACE-TIME. Deity in the Philosophy of SAMUEL ALEXANDER. By ALFRED P. STIERNOTTE. Philosophical Library N. Y. 1954. Pp. 440. \$3.00.

Good critical exposition is not common. As a piece of exposition *God and Space-Time* is almost a model of its kind. Dr. Stiernotte has divided his book into two parts: the first mainly exposition, the second mainly critical. With a keen eye for ambiguity of statement and internal contradictions, he has produced a clear summary of Alexander's religious ideas in the context of his metaphysical system. While exercising the expositor's right to produce a revised version of the thought he is examining, by ample quotation and adequate reference to previous criticism he gives the reader enough evidence to judge for himself whether the suggested revisions are justifiable.

In spite of these very substantial virtues, *God and Space Time* just misses being an important book. It stops short of the final achievement of critical exposition; which is, not a new interpretation of a thinker's philosophy, but a fresh perspective on the problem which the philosophy has been created to resolve. Dr. Stiernotte has made some admirable criticisms, but he has not thrown his net wide enough. So the second part of his book, while containing good things, is much less valuable than the first part. The reason for this failure to make exposition creative is that, instead of allowing the subject to operate freely on the critical intelligence, the author largely argues from philosophical premises chosen beforehand. We find that he favours realism in epistemology, evolutionary philosophies and the belief that the religious sentiment is *sui generis*, and that he was drawn to Alexander because that thinker's philosophy seemed to build on these foundations. This would matter very little—all thinking must start with some preconceptions—if his personal predictions were later subject to criticism. Unfortunately they are not, and they displace rational consistency as the final touchstone by means of which elements in Alexander's thought are accepted or rejected. Dr. Stiernotte shows how Alexander's conception of deity is incompatible with the foundations of his evolutionary metaphysics and so must be abandoned. But he supports Alexander's belief in the 'real fact' of Otto's numinous experience—which is just as incompatible with consistent evolutionism. He will have none of Alexander's theory of the subjectivity of value, because he regards it as a departure from 'realism.' Yet it is quite evident that Alexander's fundamental naturalism necessitates this view of human valuations which derives directly from the decision to 'take Time seriously' that Dr. Stiernotte so much applauds.

K. M. HAMILTON.

THE MANUSCRIPT POEMS of A. E. Housman. Edited by THOMAS BURNS HABER. Thomas Allen Ltd., Toronto. \$4.75.

Stephen Spender writing about the poetic process has said: "One line is given to the poet by God or nature, the rest he has to discover by himself." It is the vital and sometimes agonizing stage of discovery in the creative process of a great minor poet that is revealed in Dr. Haber's well-edited book of the manuscripts of A. E. Housman.

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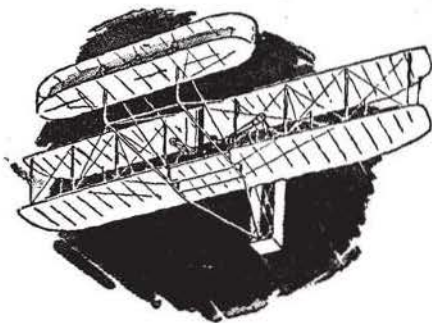
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During his life-time A. E. Housman published just 2216 lines of poetry. These lines, which make up *A Shropshire Lad* and *Last Poems*, were selected for publication by the poet from a series of notebooks dated 1890-1925, now in the Library of Congress. Dr. Haber has had access to these valuable manuscripts and from them has made available some 800 additional lines of Housman. They consist of complete poems, fragments, and alternate lines and stanzas for such well-loved poems as "Loveliest of trees, the cherry now", "The Recruit", "Reveille" and others. These, together with *More Poems* and *Additional Poems* edited by Laurence Housman, now make up A. E. Housman's total published work.

Housman once admitted that he wrote the last poem of *A Shropshire Lad* thirteen times before he got it right. That Housman was a poet who wrestled with words, who groped, gutted and gouged for the right and only word, is quite evident from his notebooks. He wrote in pencil and pen, erasing, blotting and crossing out, changing, in some instances, the mood and idea as well as individual words, as he progressed. All serious students of the highest art will come upon this book. It will also be of some help in silencing those who maintain that 'anyone can write that stuff.' Poetry, it would appear, is like a lot of things—one part inspiration and nine parts blood, sweat and fears (sic).

DOUGLAS LOCHHEAD.

PAUL VALÉRY AND THE CIVILIZED MIND. By NORMAN SUCKLING.
University of Durham Publications. Oxford University
Press, Toronto 1954. Pp. 278. \$3.75.

Of the young writers who sat at the feet of Mallarmé at his famous Tuesday gatherings, three have achieved world-wide reputations: André Gide, Paul Claudel, and Paul Valéry. Valéry is least well-known in the English-speaking world, yet he was in some ways the most remarkable of the three—a portent as well as a poet, whose original mind stood out against the intellectual currents of the times and, for that reason, is likely to prove increasingly influential.

Norman Suckling's very able study is an example of Valéry's power to make disciples, for it states from the start that the author is not so much concerned to interpret Valéry as to seek a pathway to truth with Valéry's guidance. Mr. Suckling does not attempt to estimate his hero's literary achievements. The different intellectual encounters of the post-Symbolist poet's literary career; his debt to Mallarmé and Poe; his repudiation of Pascal and Bergson; his adoption of Leonardo da Vinci and (with reservations) Goethe as ideal exemplars of humanity; his re-appraisal of Descartes;—these are carefully investigated and reported on. But they are not given as items in a biographical sketch or of a historical survey of one period in the French literary scene. They are set out as stages in an individual Quest (so written by the author, who is for the most part very sparing in his use of capital letters). The Quest is for realizing the values belonging to civilization and, still more essentially, to man the rational spirit.

Valéry's fundamental insight was the biological irrelevance of

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spiritual values. Nature is to be completely discounted. It is nothing in the end, not even an enemy of the spirit unless men prostitute their spiritual heritage by believing it to be something, and so turning it into an idol. Nature is not on that account to be despised. In our earthly existence (the only one we know) it serves as a featureless ground upon which we can impose our mental forms. Thus mind has its partial victories here, for it can concentrate to some extent on its own proper business, and, again to some extent, succeed in ignoring nature. And hereafter? A *life beyond life* is the substance of the Quest. That can only mean that existence must give way to non-being. The end is silence. But while nature continues to generate individuals who are individuated souls that silence is, humanly speaking, an 'asymptotic limit' never to be experienced. Thus the 'bleak consolation' that all activity exists to negate itself is softened by the knowledge that activity is pleasant and creative, in so far as by it we can partly disengage ourselves from nature and discover in each of us what Valéry termed the *moi pur*.

All this is in refreshing contrast to the worship of the Goddess Nature which has dominated Western thought ever since Hegel, whether directly, in the form of belief in a Life Force or a philosophy of Organism, or disguised as a programme of pragmatism or positivism. An uncompromising rationalism, prepared to jettison the world by appearances to preserve the integrity of thought, is as morally bracing in its willingness to face up to all the implications of its presuppositions as most naturalistic philosophies are morally depressing in their wilful refusal to test their own foundations. Valéry's case against Bergson, as expounded by Mr. Suckling, can be read with profit in a much larger context. His 'revulsion' from Pascal is equally illuminating and honest. Rationalism on this plane (so different from the mere girding at particular religious beliefs which assumes the name without any right to it) is to be preferred to the special pleading of theologians trying to force a 'natural theology' into the sphere of philosophy and to the equivocations of naturalistic philosophers who try to pass off their nature worship as a justification of religious faith 'in terms of modern thought'. Positivism and (non-Christian) existentialism indeed bluntly reject all revealed religion. But in this they are like people who think that they are being honest when they are merely being rude. For they disguise their religious pretensions by denouncing supernaturalistic creeds. Rationalism, on the other hand, makes no secret of its claim to be the sole 'spiritual' interpretation of the universe which has final authority.

The attractive features of rationalism, however, do not suffice to establish its validity. Here, as elsewhere, good intentions do not pave the way to heaven. The rationalist's crucial problem is to show with any degree of plausibility what reason is and why it ought to be considered divine and authoritative. Plato, the supreme rationalist, repeatedly emphasized the extreme vulnerability of his own position. Those rationalists who, like Descartes, have tried to show their systems to be self-evident and intellectually compelling have failed to be convincing. This applies *a fortiori* to those who, like Valéry, have found reasons for avoiding the rigours of dialectic, turning their backs upon Plato's *Parmenides* and retaining of the Platonic method only the use of literary dialogue and poetic myth.

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Valéry's neo-classic rationalism looked back through the Enlightenment to the Renaissance. His revival of the Renaissance ideal of autonomy was—and is—a much needed stimulus to thought. To-day positivists and existentialists compete for votes as realists and idealists did a generation ago. Valéry calls us to a perspective where we see these oppositions to be far from final. And, in addition to making us face up to intellectual fundamentals, he gives us (though he would not wish it) an illustration of a man of faith. His attitude is not the only possible attitude for a civilized mind to adopt—Pascal has as good a right to stand in our Western heritage as Descartes—and the Quest is not the one feasible solution to the riddle of man's destiny. But it is an attitude which must command our admiration and, above all, our critical attention.

K. M. HAMILTON.

CHRISTIANITY AND ANTI-SEMITISM. By NICHOLAS BERDYAEV, with a commentary and notes by ALAN A. SPEARS. Philosophical Library N. Y. 1954. Pp. 58. \$2.75.

The subject of this little essay (which takes up only half the book, the other half being filled by commentary and notes—mostly notes to the commentary) is less the moral issue of anti-Semitism than the religious challenge to Christianity of 'the Jewish problem'. In Berdyaev's view the latter problem centres around the messianic mission of the Jewish people and can only be solved by the conversion of the Jews to Christianity. This may happen when Christian truth frees itself 'from the accretions of the centuries' and Christians get converted themselves.

Berdyaev puts his case quite simply. It is not clear why a commentary was necessary. However, by searching in the notes, the reader can find out that Berdyaev's essay was first published in Russian in 1938, and that the present translation has already appeared twice in periodicals.

K. M. HAMILTON.

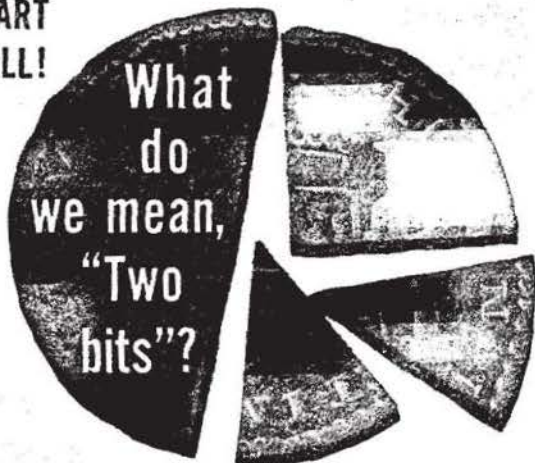
PERCEPTUALISTIC THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE. By PETER FIREMAN. Philosophical Library, N. Y. 1954. Pp. 48. \$2.75.

Dr. Fireman, a chemist, wanted to have a reliable guide to what thinking was all about. He tells us, "Instead of looking up authorities I, without much hesitation or misgivings, framed one myself." The result was called *Sound Thinking*, and chunks of that book appear in the present work, which states that perception (not sensation) gives us all our knowledge, either directly or by recollection in the form of ideas (or re-percepts). Percepts and re-percepts convey to us the real qualities of objects. And thinking is simply the combination of percepts or re-percepts, or both together.

Dr. Fireman seems to regard thinking as a tool to accomplish a particular task. He is quite sure what this task is and that he has found the simple and correct way of using this tool. Empiricism, backed by traditional logic, covers all needs. Thinking 'deals with plain experiences accessible and discernible by all normal men.' When

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imagination is added to sound thinking, we can obtain 'clear and full' definitions of any word we make use of—e.g. *justice*. 'Authorities' who fail to share these views about the scope of the task or the use of the tool are rejected out of hand. Descartes and Dewey have failed to define thinking—so have all philosophers and logicians. Russell talks nonsense about logic. What Kant has proved to 'his own satisfaction' Dr. Fireman disproves to *his*, stating his beliefs in the form of, 'The truth is . . .'

Yet, we may perhaps hesitate where the author does not. It is not a mere coincidence that his theory of knowledge and his definition of justice are both almost exactly those used by Plato as examples of that naive 'common-sense' certitude which Plato considered it to be the mission of philosophy to replace by the discipline of doubt.

K. M. HAMILTON.

PREPARATION FOR PAINTING. By LYNTON LAMB, F.R.S.A. Oxford University Press, Toronto. 166 pp.

"This book," says the author, "is intended to help the unaided beginner, the part-time painter, and the art-school student to form some idea of what they want to do and of the skill they will need for it. It is a reading book rather than a handbook of recipes; but, throughout, the theoretical and the practical are directly related. Instead of attempting to cover the wildly confusing variety or contemporary methods, I have signposted a few paths that go a very long way in the right direction. And some dead ends I have clearly marked as such."


In that passage from his introduction, the author has almost reviewed his own book, but it should be added that the book fulfils its intention very well indeed. It is not merely a "child's guide" for the so-called Sunday painter, but a thoughtful exposition of painting and a useful reference work as well. It contains so many good things that it will undoubtedly prove of value even to experienced artists.

In amazingly few pages, Mr. Lamb discusses a wide range of topics: how to see and interpret a subject, how to use color, the importance of drawing, painting from sketches as compared with direct painting, equipment and materials, perspective, and even a useful note on how to hang pictures. To enhance its value as a reference work—which is not its primary intention—the book includes a glossary, bibliography, and index.

Mr. Lamb, who is a well-known British painter, illustrator, and designer, is production adviser to the Oxford University Press. He speaks with authority in his own right and supports his arguments by quotations and pictures by a notable group of other authorities including Michelangelo, Leonardo, Raphael, Rembrandt, and Degas.

All in all, this is an invaluable work for the ever-increasing group who are attempting the difficult but intriguing business of putting oil on canvas.

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ROYCE ON THE HUMAN SELF. By JAMES HARRY COTTON. Harvard University Press (S. J. Reginald Saunders, Toronto) 1954. Pp. 340. \$6.50.

With Pierce and James, Royce is regarded as making up the 'classical' period of American philosophy. He has been less written about than the other two, probably because he called himself an idealist and idealism has been out of fashion. But the interest of Royce's thinking does not lie primarily in its being idealistic. As Professor Cotton points out, if Royce was a metaphysical idealist he was equally a logical realist. What characterised Royce's thought was a refusal to be satisfied with that unwillingness to think critically which so often goes with a claim to be a champion of realism. Royce always held on to both poles of the paradox of the human condition, refusing easy solutions reached by compromise. So he refuted realism and defined truth in terms of the real. He championed traditional metaphysics and was a pioneer in symbolic logic and an advocate of the extension of scientific methodology into philosophy. He called himself an ethical individualist and believed rebellion against society to be the essence of sin.

Royce's recognition that the self cannot be accepted as a *datum* of experience was a sign of his critical integrity. So was his unification of logic and ethics. This integrity allowed him to incorporate Pierce's pragmatism within his idealistic system without making it into the substitute for rationality which it became in the hands of James. It saved him from the shallow illusions of popular Darwinian notions of progress which, as he said, had led to 'a day of weak-minded fooling' over the problem of evil—a day that, alas, has not yet come to its close. It enabled him to make a telling analysis of the relation of the individual to the community. Increasingly, as Professor Cotton makes plain, he was concerned with plurality. In the end his Absolute was transformed into the 'community of interpretation'. The problem of the self was presented in his late period, not as the finite self in process of discovering itself in the Absolute Will, but as the individual self over against the Community. This not only brings to the fore Royce's ethical concern with *loyalty* but also raised in acute form the issue of individuation and historical existence. So we are brought back again to the point where Royce started his investigation of the self. Not the least merit of Professor Cotton's admirable exposition of Royce's thought from the standpoint of the problem of the human self is that it passes on to us Royce's problem where he left it.

Professor Cotton has given us a timely work, an essay in stimulating argument—and also a thoroughly enjoyable piece of writing.

K. M. HAMILTON.

ST. PAUL AND EPICURUS. By NORMAN WENTWORTH DEWITT. The Ryerson Press, Toronto 1954. Pp. 195. \$4.00.

It has long been recognized that Epicureanism had, on its ethical side, not a little in common with Christianity. Professor DeWitt advances the radical theory that Christianity is, in effect, simply Epicureanism Judaized. The teaching of Jesus is to be explained by the contact of Epicurean thought with Jewish faith in Palestine. St. Paul, himself an ex-Epicurean, adapted this teaching to the Greek-speaking world by combining it with the Authorized Doctrines of Epicurus, thus being

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able to fight with their own weapons the Epicureans who were Christianity's only serious rivals.

Professor DeWitt rests his case on the large number of 'hidden parallelisms' he produces. Now, nearly ninety years ago Bishop Lightfoot examined the very striking parallels between the writings of Seneca and the New Testament. He concluded, 'The proverbial suspicion which attaches to statistics ought to be extended to coincidences of language, for they may be, and often are, equally fallacious.' He might well have added, —'especially where moral instruction is concerned'. Professor DeWitt's book is full of interesting information about the similarities and divergences existing between Christian and Epicurean principles and terminology. But its picture of Epicurus lurking behind the whole ethical teaching of the Pauline Epistles and indeed of almost the entire New Testament, 'consigned to anonymity' by the unscrupulous and highly successful policy of the Apostle to the Gentiles, is an incredible one. And the evidence brought forward to support it is mostly quite unconvincing. Professor DeWitt claims to have discovered a lost 'key' to the New Testament. When we are told of a key which unlocks everything we begin to wonder whether it unlocks anything.

K. M. HAMILTON.

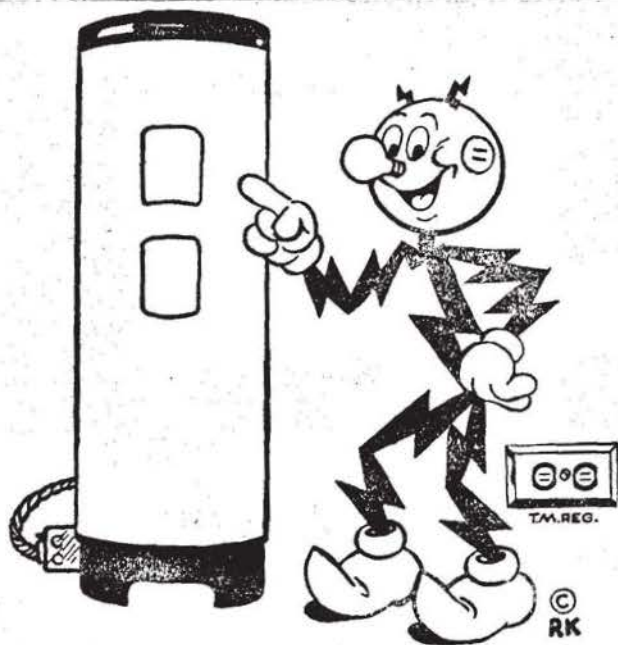
NUCLEAR PHYSICS. By W. HEISENBERG. Philosophical Library, New York, 1953. 221 pages. \$4.75.

This brief survey of nuclear physics was written by one who has made very significant contributions to modern physics and in particular to our understanding of the atom. The book starts with an interesting history of the development of the ideas of atomic theory from the time of the early Greeks and traces the progress in ideas about molecules and atoms to the present. The main part of the book is devoted to natural and artificial radioactivity, nuclear structures and nuclear reactions. There is a brief and very interesting account of the German attempt to utilize atomic energy during the Second World War. The author was a leading figure in this attempt.

Since the writing of the book in German (1948) very great advances have been made in nuclear theory, and some parts are out of date—for example, a revision at this date would undoubtedly place a good deal more emphasis on the shell structure of the nucleus than it has here received. Nevertheless this book serves as an excellent introduction to the field.

'*Nuclear Physics*' was written primarily for the layman, and the general reader as well as the student of physics will find in it a fascinating picture of the way in which the development of nuclear theory appears to one who played a prominent part in working out modern ideas about fundamental particles.

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THE LEGACY OF ADORATION: HOMILIAE COLUMBIAE. By SAMUEL HENRY PRINCE. With a Foreword by Grayson Kirk. An Exposition-University Book, Exposition Press, New York. 1955. Pp. 73. \$2.50.

The eight sermons here gathered together have been chosen from a number preached at the annual Commonwealth Services held in St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia, by Dr. Prince who has been honorary President of the British Commonwealth Club at the University for more than twenty years. In the first sermon Dr. Prince mentions that he brings 'the greetings of Old King's College in Nova Scotia to Old King's College in New York!' This is no mere formality, for Dr. Prince in his own person has been a real bridge of understanding as well as an active champion of Anglo-American co-operation, and he 'belongs' to New York as well as to Halifax. His work has been recognized on both sides of the line separating Canada from the United States.

The themes of *Homiliae Columbiae* are aptly chosen from sights to be seen on the Columbia campus, beginning at St. Paul's itself. In carefully chosen words, Dr. Prince sets forth his conviction that religion has a place in the 'living heritage' of university life. His creed is one of optimism. He writes: 'Even in this darkened night of history, those who have eyes to see can witness the spreading of the rays of democracy, can behold the golden light of a growing international spirit and feel the warmth of a great compassion wide as the world is wide.' Because progress must be slow, painful and partial he holds there is 'no excuse for failure to do our best to create an order better than the one in which it has been our lot to live'. With Dr. Prince practice and precept have been in harmony.

K. M. HAMILTON.

NO GRAVEN IMAGES. The Contemporary Relevance of the Ten Commandments by CHARLES W. LESLIE. The Ryerson Press, 1954. Pp. 88. \$1.50.

In seven short but cogently presented chapters (which were originally Lenten addresses) Dr. Leslie of Emmanuel College, Toronto, has combined Biblical exegesis with a review of practical ethical issues which confront every one to-day. Designed to challenge professing Christians to look at their lives in the light of their faith, and not to assume that currently accepted standards are necessarily Christian ones, this little book will be of use to any who want to begin to think straight about problems of conduct. It is not only direct and concrete in its approach but it also shows how in moral matters, sound practice rests upon sound principles.

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THE PROPHET ARMED: TROTSKY 1879-1921. By ISAAC DEUTSCHER. Oxford University Press, 1954. \$6.00.

An Oxford Press book is often a joy to see and to use and the physical beauty of this book catches the imagination. This flush of promise is fulfilled by the work itself. Mr. Deutscher's biography is a piece of learning and literary craftsmanship. And how intriguing a book written fresh from the sources! Socialism comes alive, in its international range, its conflicts of personality and its spirited sense of principle.

Trotsky was the driving spirit of the Russian revolutions of 1905 and 1917. His enormous energy, his sheer capacity for command, and his fearless intellect made him a redoubtable man. Too fluent perhaps, too easily convinced by his own great powers of persuasion, Trotsky lacked the weighted rudder that gave Lenin strength. In many ways Trotsky was a more attractive figure than Lenin, and he has been given, in this book, his rightful place in the Russian Revolution, removed at last from the obscurity to which Stalin's "bat-like character" had condemned him.

PETER WAITE.

CANADIAN JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY, A QUARTERLY OF CHRISTIAN THOUGHT. Vol. 1, No. 1. April 1955. Pp. 64. \$1.00 (\$3.00 a year).

This new quarterly seeks to fill the vacuum left when *The Canadian Journal of Religious Thought* ceased publication in the depression years. The interdenominational Editorial Committee which is responsible for bringing it into the world foresees two possible reactions to its appearance: 'Not another theological Journal!' and, 'Ah, at last a Canadian Journal of theology!' It is to be hoped that the second (and much more enlightened) reaction will predominate over the first.

Canadian interests are served in this introductory issue by articles on 'The Present Position and the Future Prospects of Canadian Theology' by Gerald R. Cragg, 'The Study of Canadian Church History' by T. R. Millman, and 'The John Henry Birks Collection of Ancient Palestinian Manuscripts' by R. B. Y. Scott. Hilda Neatby uses her controversial pen to present 'The Challenge of Education to the Christian Church'. An Editorial considers 'The Evanston Assembly, 1954'. Other articles on varied themes are by A. S. Dewdney, F. W. Dillistone and R. B. Y. Scott. The book reviews are excellent, though this section could well be extended considerably: only five books are reviewed. A list of some of the contributions to future issues bears out the Editors' promise that the *Journal* will interpret *theology* in the widest sense and will deal with practical affairs as well as with contemporary religious scholarship at home and abroad.

K. M. HAMILTON.



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