

## AMONG THE RELIGIOUS BOOKS

**T**HE Reconstruction of the Spiritual Ideal" (Appleton) contains the six Hibbert lectures delivered by Felix Adler at Oxford University. In these lectures Dr. Adler expresses the philosophy of living which he has developed as a life work. He particularly discusses three of the most vital problems of our time: marriage, labor, and the Society of Nations. The problem of social reconstruction is presented as that of perfecting the personal relations involved in our society. Dr. Adler establishes a principle on which, in his judgment, a society of mankind can be founded. And, in a statement of personal religion, he shows that anyone may achieve a profound realization of the worth and significance of the individual spirit. These lectures grip the attention at once because of their practical idealism.

The account furnished by Rev. Msgr. M. D. Krmpotic of the life and missionary labors of Rev. Ferdinand Konecak, S. J. in California and elsewhere during the early eighteenth century forms the subject matter of "Life and Works of the Rev. Ferdinand Konecak, S. J." (Stratford). This book portrays a character that stimulates the practice of virtue—a man who at the call of his Master left his native country, crossed the deep, and entered the American wilderness to work as an apostle among the redmen. It is a beautifully written story of thrilling adventures.

Principal L. P. Jacks of Manchester College, Oxford, long known to discriminating readers in America, whose recently published "Religious Perplexities" proved so popular, presents a new collection of essays on vital ques-

tions of the hour, "Realities and Shams" (Doran). In a foreword the essays are said to have been "prompted by reflection on the course of events during the last nine years". With untrammelled frankness the author sets forth the need for new methods and new men if civilization is not to be overtaken by disaster.

In "Our Nuns" (Benziger) the Rev. Daniel A. Lord, S. J. writes of a series of visits, termed by him pilgrimages, which he made through fifteen typical Catholic institutions. In all of them—the orphanage, the hospital, the old people's home, etc.—he finds the same patient, loving person, ever ready to render a varied and vital service for God and country. Dealing mainly with the human side of these institutions, Rev. Lord has written a brilliant, delightful book, sparing the reader the usual boresome statistics and particulars. It is a vividly true appreciation.

The Deems Lectures for 1922 at New York University, delivered by Henry Churchill King, are contained in "Seeing Life Whole" (Macmillan). The purpose of these lectures is to present a Christian philosophy of life, and the author approaches his subject from six angles: scientific, psychological, value, personal and ethical, philosophical, and Biblical and Christian. He succeeds admirably in showing "the close and vital relations of the most significant lines of modern thought to Christian living and thinking."

"Reasonable Religion: Emanuel Swedenborg, his Message and Teaching" (Dutton) is an outline of the main features of this great philosopher's system, clearly and simply

stated by E. Brayley Hodgetts, president of the Swedenborg Society. After a short biographical and critical sketch, Mr. Hodgetts takes up separately Swedenborg's revelations concerning "Life and Creation", "The Origin of Evil", "Ethics", "Sex", "The Governance of the World", "Revelation", "Prayer", "The Sacraments", "The Church", "The Soul", "The Hereafter", and "The Godhead". The recent achievements of science and the general trend of modern ideas tend to bring Swedenborg into ever greater harmony with contemporary thought, making the present a favorable time for the popularization of his remarkably harmonious, rational, and logical philosophy. These teachings are here presented in such a way that they can be easily grasped and digested by the untheological reader.

A new edition of the Old and New Testaments, made up of passages woven together into chapters of convenient length for reading in church service or in the family circle, is "The Living Word" (Century) by Henry Hallam Saunderson. The language of the great standard versions is retained. There are nearly three hundred Scripture lessons, each with a distinguishing title. This book selects such passages as are especially adapted for those who never read the Bible through, and does it skilfully and with insight.

A carefully thought out, clearly and effectively expressed series of essays in religious restatement is "The Greater Christ" (Judson) by Reverend Albert D. Belden, the famous English pastor and essayist. Here are treated such living themes as religion and evolution, the authority of the Scriptures, the divinity of the Scriptures, the divinity of Christ, the meaning of the death of Jesus, and the return of Christ. "The book is meant particularly for the help of lay readers who

desire a popular though well considered presentation of these difficult problems rather than an academic treatment of them."

A new volume in the Beacon Course in Religious Education is "From Desert to Temple" (Beacon). Eleanor Wood Whitman presents the Old Testament story geographically and in such a way that the Hebrew people live again in the mind and heart of the reader. "The use of this book by pupils approximately twelve years old should make real to them these ancient people of God, instruct and quicken their developing minds in religious history and expression, and serve as a valuable introduction to the Gospel story."

"Can We Find God?" (Doran) by Arthur B. Patten is an interpretation of the mystical element in religion and its application to modern life, that will help clear away many misconceptions. The author shows that modern mysticism is an attainable Christian experience, and that it is an essential and practical part of our religious life. In contrast to a true mysticism, many current religious delusions are considered and shown to be untenable.

"An effort to show the relation of modern English poetry to the higher thought and impulse of the race" is Arthur S. Hoyt's "The Spiritual Message of Modern English Poetry" (Macmillan). By a study of the poets of the last hundred years he shows our constant need of this poetry to give us eyes and heart and purpose. He undertakes to "rescue us from our threatened loss of faith in man, to conform us in our democratic sympathies and to save us from the surrender of our belief in the victory of the vicarious life". It is a book to be read with great pleasure and profit.

—E. E. F.