

# AMONG THE RELIGIOUS BOOKS

AN attempt to explain the riddle of life is "The Meaning of Life" (Doran) by Rev. A. Edwin Keigwin, D. D. There are twenty-three sermons delivered in the regular ministry of a large cosmopolitan church, enlightening answers to the perplexed questions of members of the congregation. The riddle of life, the function of spirit and soul, the place of reason, ambition, adversity, and death in the scheme of things human, and the life beyond, are all considered in the light of revelation, science, and common sense. It is a book to be read with interest and profit.

Who knows most about preaching? In "Preach It Again" (Judson) Bernard C. Clausen, D. D., answers emphatically in favor of the congregation, the critic extraordinary of good sermons. In a fascinating story the author tells of an experiment made in his church in Syracuse, New York, to learn what the congregation thought about the year's preaching. His conclusions as to the true sermon test, arrived at from an analytical study of the results of this experiment, form the first part of the book. The second part contains the ten sermons voted most worthy and requested again.

"To show something of what the Christian revelation means in relation to the great historic facts of the Faith, and the response which those facts must awaken in the minds and hearts of men today" is the underlying purpose of the volume of consecutive addresses, "Revealing Light" (Revell) by Sidney M. Berry, successor to Dr. Jowett at Carr's Lane Church, Birmingham, England. Mr. Berry's addresses are sympathetic and frank and show that he is in close touch with the hearts of men and women and with their everyday needs.

Probably the only book devoted exclusively to the religion of the late President Roosevelt is "Roosevelt's Religion" (Abingdon) by Christian F. Reisner. The religious life of this great American is traced from childhood, through his home life, and into his public career. The material is gathered from biographies and articles, personal utterances of Mr. Roosevelt, and from interviews with many high authorities of church, state, and school. The result is a work of inspiration and a real contribution to the literature on Roosevelt.

"The surest way for America to fail is for America to think that tomorrow will take care of itself. If this nation is to have a great and worthy future the consciousness of our national calling must be transformed into a serious national purpose." That briefly is the thesis of Samuel Zane Batten's book on our national mission and our possible future, "If America Fail" (Judson). So great is the subject that Mr. Batten's book is of necessity but a brief outline. He succeeds admirably, however, in calling attention to a vital question. The book is in two parts: the first deals with the meaning and mission of America, the causes of the decline and fall of nations and how these causes may be at work in America; the second part deals constructively with the things needful to be done to assure a great and worthy future in our national life.

"Women at the World's Crossroads" (Womans Press) is a book of addresses delivered by A. Maude Royden to the women of America at the seventh national convention of the Young Women's Christian Associations of the United States of America. Miss Royden is well known in England for her editorial work on, "Common

Cause", her settlement work in Liverpool during the war, and as an assistant to Dr. Joseph Fort Newton of the City Temple, London. She is at present conducting services at the Guildhouse, London. These addresses on the world at the crossroads, Christian patriotism, woman's service to the race, woman's service to theology, and the law of life are direct and simple appeals to humanity to eliminate the struggle for existence and to pave the way for spiritual development through love, the fulfilling of the law.

"God—Our Contemporary" (Revell) is the title of Dr. John Henry Jowett's latest book containing fifteen sermons preached at Westminster Congregational Church. In these discourses he presents Jesus Christ as the Savior, "the incomparable Emancipator", of the world today. It is his conviction that "God, in Christ Jesus, is our great Contemporary" and that in Him can be found the expedient to meet the pressing needs of everyday human life. These sermons by one of the greatest masters of the art of sermoning will prove stimulating reading to the preacher and to the seeker of spiritual truth.

A new book about books by a man famous for his dramatic sermons on books is "The Place of Books in the Life We Live" (Doran) by Rev. William L. Stidger. There is a short introduction by Bishop William F. McDowell. Many years of pastoral visiting convinced Rev. Stidger that the average American home was starving for books and brought him to a determination to urge the men of his profession to awaken in the hearts of their church members a love for good books. In his foreword he says, "No preacher can have a more lasting ministry than the Ministry of Books. This does not mean that he will neglect his Evangelic Ministry. It means that he will enhance it with books."

Here is most delightful reading and inspiring advice on the choice and reading of books.

A new book on preaching and the problems of preaching is "Preaching the Social Gospel" (Revell) by Dr. Ozora S. Davis, president of the Chicago Theological Seminary. A new conscious experience of the gospel is needed today and here is a confession of faith as well as some working rules for the preacher. Of recent years there have been many books on the social values of the Christian gospel, so that this practical treatise adapting these various aspects to preaching should prove timely and helpful.

The seventy-one pages of the little book "Heroes of the Church" (Westminster) by Park Hays Miller are truly delightful reading with an appeal to a large circle of readers. There are twelve miniature biographies of Christian leaders upon whose convictions the foundations of the

Protestant faith were built. The heroes of the church included are Polycarp, Augustine, Bernard of Clairvaux, John Wyclif, John Huss, Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli, John Calvin, John Knox, John Wesley, Francis Makemie, and William A. Shedd.

An arresting and original series of essays on "The Thoughts of Youth" (Macmillan) is written by Samuel S. Drury, rector of St. Paul's School. Mr. Drury possesses an unerring and sympathetic understanding of the thoughts of boys and girls and in these essays, heart-to-heart talks, he tells them how to get the most out of life. He covers a wide variety of subjects including manners, health, family, country, religion, friends, lost time, out of doors, relatives, vacations, etc. The writer says: "I have tried to speak to and for them, and without being too serious, have tried to show the young reader what are in truth the best things in our common day. I trust that along with any satisfaction that they may take in the way that I have presented their point of view to their parents, they will accept in good part the home thrusts meant for their private ears."

A book of rare inspiration and practical suggestion for every minister of the Gospel is "Pastor and Evangelist" (Doran) by Dr. Charles L. Goodell. Dr. Goodell emphasizes the possibilities, methods, and rewards of pastoral evangelism.

Rev. Martin J. Scott, S.J., in his "The Divine Counsellor" (Kenedy), endeavors to help the individual soul which is so often puzzled by the great questions of multiplied hardships, belief apparently contradicted by science, temptations that pounce upon even the wary soul, and scruples that respect no man's devotion. To these great questions the author reports briefly and pointedly the convincing and gentle answers of the Counsellor of counsellors to the troubled heart.

—E. E. F.