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*The general diffusion of the Bible is the most effectual way
to civilize and humanize mankind.*—CHANCELLOR KENT.

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EDITORIAL

DEEP SPIRITUALITY AND KEEN INTELLECTUALITY should finely complement each other. But intensely spiritual people, unless watchful, may become merely impractical religious dreamers and enthusiasts, if not fanatics. Again, the opposite type, gifted with clear and energetic intellects, often have no desire to penetrate beyond those regions of thought where exact analysis and reason most avail.

Now, the temperament of present civilization being intellectual rather than spiritual, every phenomenon must have a natural explanation; its source must be found, and the unvarying laws governing it must be rationally indicated. So spirituality, more explicitly, spiritual Christianity, is neglected, and faith in what cannot be accounted for by reason is ranked as a species of credulity that lingers in humbler souls long after its day has passed for the world of progress. Of course, under such conditions the supernatural is ruled out of court.

Still, men are feeling in their inmost selves needs and desires which cannot be satisfied by science and philosophy. It is just such unsatisfied souls that Dr. Sloan addresses in *The Christ of the Ages*. He begins

priate criticism which perhaps can be summarized in the following quotation: "The plan tends to develop favorable public sentiment for the introduction of English Bible courses into the English and history departments of the American high school. * * * This plan leans towards the state, rather than the church, towards academic culture rather than spiritual development.

* * * "Valuable as this plan may be for literary and academic purposes, it does not provide the solution of the problem of the religious training of the children and youth of Indiana. This problem must be solved under church auspices, not as a bi-product of secular education." (P. 551.)

The volume under review is but the first of a series, and therefore cannot present final conclusions on many phases of the religious education problem, but if the other volumes are as significant as this one the authors will greatly benefit students of religious education. The careful work exhibited in the tables bespeaks confidence and reliability for the work thus far published and great promise for the coming volumes.

JOHN ANDERSON WOOD.

THE MAKING AND MEANING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT ⁵

This book is a real contribution to Christian literature. There is nothing that is particularly new or startling in it, but it brings together under one cover a great deal of material for which the student would have to search many volumes. Not only so, but this material is presented in such a fresh and striking way as to make it intensely interesting. The author has a graphic literary style and a consecrated imagination, which enable him to make a subject live.

The title is well chosen and gives some real idea of the contents of the book. Part I pictures for us the Jewish, Roman, and Greek background of the New Testament. I do not know of any other book which presents this so well in so short

⁵The Making and Meaning of the New Testament. By James H. Snowden. New York. The Macmillan Co. 1923. Pp. xvi+311.

a compass. Part II gives a brief introduction to and a very brief summary of, each book in the New Testament. Part III gives in outline the life of Jesus and interprets His life with remarkable precision and insight. Part IV tells the story of the spread of Christianity, as recorded in The Acts of the Apostles and in the Epistles. This part gives an excellent summary of the life and work of the Apostle Paul.

This bird's-eye view makes it apparent at a glance that this volume covers a great deal of ground. Whole libraries have been written on these topics, and still they have not been exhausted. There were possibilities here of writing dull, tedious, commonplace outlines instead of a living book with a unity of purpose running through it. The author avoided this and gave us a book that pulsates with life.

Critical questions are not lugged in. The author takes the New Testament as he finds it, and interprets it for us. He believes in the Virgin birth, the Deity of Jesus Christ, the miracles, and in the bodily resurrection of Jesus. As we read we are aware of the fact that he is familiar with these critical questions, and occasionally he makes a critical note, but the book is written for the popular reader and not so much for the technical student of critical questions.

His interpretations of the life of Jesus and of the New Testament in general are exceedingly suggestive, and if the minister will keep his pencil and notebook at hand as he reads he will get seed thoughts for many a sermon. Dr. Snowden moralizes and spiritualizes quite a good deal, but legitimately so.

After all I suppose, the book was written more for laymen than for ministers. It would be especially valuable for Bible classes in churches and in schools and colleges. Teachers of such classes have always had difficulty in finding suitable text-books. This book meets a real need at this point.

There are points here and there where we would take issue with Dr. Snowden's views and interpretations, but these do not bulk large. For example, in speaking of the resurrection of Jesus, he says:

“This thing was not done in a corner, but in the open day and in the New Testament is pushed into the light of the fullest publicity as is no other event. There may be discrepancies in the narratives, but they are such as might be expected in fragmentary accounts in which the witnesses are giving impressionistic reports of what they experienced and no one of them is endeavoring to tell a complete story. God left no uncertainty about this event, but placed it on a rock in the broad light of history.”

The whole discussion here shows that there is no uncertainty in the mind of the author as to the fact of the resurrection of Jesus; why, then, should he go out of his way to say that “there may be discrepancies in the narratives”? There is an intimation here that he may not hold to the doctrine that the Word of God is our infallible rule of faith and practice. So far as I observed, this is the only place in the whole volume where there is any such intimation.

The closing paragraphs of the book give us the author’s point of view and conclusions:

“The study has surely caused the Book to grow upon our understanding and appreciation until we realize it is beyond rival the greatest book in the world, incomparably the supreme literary treasure of the race. * * * It is these contents and characteristics of the New Testament that prove it to be ‘inspired of God and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.’ The students that will read, mark, and assimilate this Book will find that it will strengthen and enrich their souls and enable them to live a great life that is hid with Christ in God.”

WALTER L. LINGLE.

GOD’S BEST SECRETS ⁶

Christianity is primarily and overwhelmingly spiritual in essence and function, yet it has its appeal to the intellectual and

⁶ God’s Best Secrets. By Andrew Murray. Los Angeles: The Biola Book Room, 1923. Pp. 298.