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A SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF REV. HENRY ELIAS DOSKER, D. D., LL. D., L. H. D.

*(Professor of Church History, Louisville Presbyterian
Theological Seminary, 1903-1926).*

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For those not well acquainted with Dr. Dosker, it may be well, before my expression of appreciation of him, to give, in a few words, the data of his life.

He was born in the Netherlands in February, 1855, at Bunschoten. His father was the Rev. Nicholas Herman Dosker, pastor of the Christian Reformed Church at Bunschoten, and his mother was Wilhelmina De Rondon. Henry Elias, for that was the name given him, was educated in the Dutch Gymnasium, a school of secondary education that corresponds roughly to our academy or high school. The family came to this country in 1870, the Rev. Nicholas Dosker having accepted a call to take the ministry of the Second (Dutch) Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan. Henry E. was sent to Hope College, Holland, Michigan, from which he graduated and of which he was one of the most distinguished alumni. He then entered McCormick Seminary without, of course, leaving the membership of the Dutch Reformed Church in America. His first church was a country pastorate in Ebenezer, near the city of Holland, Michigan. His second church was the First Reformed Church of Grand Haven, Michigan,

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

Books in This Department Reviewed by Dr. W. T. Thompson, Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Va.

THE MYSTERY OF RELIGION. By Everett Dean Martin, Director of the People's Institute of New York, and of the Cooper Union Forum. Harper & Brothers, New York. 1923. Pp. 391. \$3. **RELIGIOUS VALUES.** By Edgar Sheffield Brightman, Borden Parker Bowne Professor of Philosophy in Boston University. The Abingdon Press, New York. 1925. Pp. 285. \$2.50. **THE ROOTS OF RELIGION IN THE HUMAN SOUL.** By John Baillie, M. A., Professor of Christian Theology in Auburn Theological Seminary. George H. Doran Co., New York. 1926. Pp. 251. \$2. Dean Martin remarks that "in all our total reactions to the world, we are looking out through what has unconsciously accumulated upon our own windowpanes" As he looks out upon Protestant Christianity (for he limits his study of religion to it) he is peering through windowpanes almost completely covered by an accumulation of Freudianism. He states frankly at the outset that he is approaching Christianity from the standpoint of psychopathology. "Is it not possible," he asks, "that those unconscious psychic mechanisms, which among unadjusted persons find expression in the neuroses, do under other circumstances appear as religious behavior?" His answer is in the affirmative. Religion with him is a sort of "beneficent psychosis". Man is in a cold, hard world in which he feels uncomfortable and inferior. Religion is an escape mechanism by means of which he lifts himself out of the real into the imagined, where he can be comfortable, safe, superior; or, as he defines it, "religion is our symbolic expression of our wish that the universe were run in our interest".

To him all the truths of religion are symbolisms after the Freudian fashion. God is the image of the father constructed out of childhood's fancy. The child's first ideas of his father are free from any thought of imperfection or sex. When he discovers that his father and his mother have a deep secret between them, an emotional conflict is set up in his own nature, which gives him a sense of unrest and causes him to swing away from his complete trust in his father. During adolescence he finds that the same force is in himself which, seen in his father, had wrongfully caused his disillusionment about him. A second conflict develops in the ego, which can be resolved only by a reconciliation with the father. This necessitates redemption as we see it.

The church is the mother image, and membership in the church is the symbolic realization of the wish of the childish ego to return to

the mother. We might go on and on with his interpretation of the truths of religion in terms of such symbolism.

The book is ingenious, written in an attractive style, and valuable in that it reveals the deep needs of the soul in a difficult world. He strongly affirms that a social gospel, or a modernism which rationalizes religion until all of the supernatural elements disappear will not satisfy man, and he predicts, from his knowledge of the soul unfed by these husks, a revival of religion.

Of course his religion has in it no supernatural element—it only appears to have. When man sees through the deception, will it have any further value? Isn't its subjective power dependent upon a faith in the objective reality of God? Because he can explain how religion works, from his psychological viewpoint, has he proved that its truths have no foundation in reality?

Dr. Brightman is a worthy successor of Dr. Borden Bowne. His book is one of the most helpful I have read in the last year. He shows us clearly what are some of the values of religion for life, and maintains, splendidly evaluating current psychology and philosophy as he proceeds, that religion has these values only because of the existence of an objectively real, personal God, with Whom man can commune. His whole book is plea for, and an exposition of, personalism in the interpretation of religion. It is a fine refutation of a book like Mr. Martin's, as well as of present day pragmatism and behavioristic psychology. There is a balance, a fairness, a courtesy, and a keen humor about the book that is delightful.

It has been a long time since I have read a book so completely clear in its thought and style as "The Roots of Religion in the Human Soul". There is no cloudiness in it anywhere. The author has thought his way to explicit conclusions, and is giving us his matured convictions.

He begins by showing us the soldier's demand for reality in religion, his ignorance of, and indifference to, the teachings of the church, and his rather desperate belief that if he does right it will be all right for him. Then he traces the search of the race for reality in religion through rationalism, romanticism and pragmatism to its belief in the objective existence of a God in Whom our best ideals of righteousness are found; a God Who is to be discovered by those who search for Him by the pathway of obedience to His will. "There is no use at all in attempting to bring home the evidence of religious truth to a man whose hold upon goodness and love and honor is in any wise loose." He is almost back at his starting point. His discussion might well be considered as an exposition of John 7:17. "It is always in the context of duty and of goodness that religious conviction comes. It is never possible for a man to have a firmer hold upon God than he has upon duty. . . . It is difficult to think that any

mere argument could ever directly bring faith in God to birth in a man's soul."

These books were read together largely by chance, but they make good companions. Mr. Martin emphasizes the place of emotion in religion, Dr. Brightman the place of thought, and Mr. Baillie the place of life.

PRINCIPLES OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION. *By Earl Edward Emme and Paul Raymond Stevick.* The Macmillan Co., New York. 1926. Pp. 285. \$1.75. This is the first comprehensive statement of principles written in the field of religious education. The authors discuss first the character of human nature as viewed by psychology, sociology and historic Christianity. Then they examine the ultimate aims of religious education and the specific aims for each period of the unfolding life. This section is followed by a discussion of the methods by which these aims are to be carried out, which involves a consideration of the learning process, the curriculum, and the principles of administration. The last section emphasizes the type of leadership such a task demands.

The authors have read broadly, and summarize their material well. While they make use of some of the values of behavioristic psychology, they are not dominated by it. The statement of aim is good, putting the emphasis on life, yet stressing the pupil's relationship to God.

I can't agree with their statement of human nature from the Christian viewpoint and their attitude toward the Bible. This book should be read by every serious student of Religious Education.

THE GANG AGE. *By Paul Hanly Furfey, Ph. D., Instructor in Sociology in the Catholic University of America.* The Macmillan Co., New York. 1926. Pp. 189. VARIETIES OF ADOLESCENT EXPERIENCE. *By E. Leigh Mudge, Ph. D.* The Century Co., New York. 1926. Pp. 134. The first sentence in "The Gang Age" is indicative of the attractiveness of the book, "There comes a time in the life of every boy's mother when she feels like the hen which hatched ducklings". Dr. Furfey gives us a masterly treatment of the recreational needs of boys from ten to fourteen. He has a thorough acquaintance with psychology and a first hand knowledge of boys. He blends, therefore, finely theory with interesting case studies. At the end of each chapter he lists, and briefly describes, the books bearing on the subjects discussed. This is one of the most valuable features of a book which every worker with boys would do well to read.

Dr. Mudge bases his book on papers written by one hundred women who were students of his at college. This means that it deals with