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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).*

BY REV. JOHN M. VANDER MEULEN, D. D., LL. D.,
President of Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

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 Ronden. 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,

papers, in which Jew and Gentile, Catholic and Protestant, Modernist and Fundamentalist, Christian Scientist, Quaker, Ethical Culturist, Humanist, Empiricist and Mystic tell us, frankly and intimately, not why they believe in God, but in what terms they think of God, Who is both the mystery and the meaning of life." The result of this collaboration is "a symposium of faith", but not a symphony. For there is here not only variety, but contrariety, of conception. The views of the Divine Being bound up together in this volume cannot possibly be reduced to a harmony.

So if a man has no satisfactory idea of God and is in search of one, it seems likely that he might find here what he wants. Does one crave a God of infinite perfections? He may find Him portrayed in this volume. Or does one prefer a finite God, a God who "has always been struggling, failing and beginning again, falling and rising again: a million times halted, turned aside, and defeated"? He can learn about Him in this book. If one is in love with the theory of evolution, he may be gratified to find in this book his favorite principle applied to the Deity. "An evolving God" is one of the amazing discoveries of this scientific age. The evolving God of the Pantheist has long been a familiar notion; but this is different.

The reader who likes the kind of literature contained in this volume will find all the essays interesting, and some of them very helpful. On finishing some of the papers, the reader wishes for more from the pens of their authors. But on reading through others of them, he feels that he has had enough of that way of thinking about God. For three of the contributors manage to tell us what they think of God without so much as referring to Jesus Christ, who more than any other, more than all others, clarified and enlarged men's thought of God. And a fourth contributor, though he mentions Jesus, does not acknowledge himself indebted to Him, in the least, for his idea of God. His acknowledgments of debt are made to others. It seems strange to a Christian that any man in Christendom, writing of his conception of God, should find no occasion to mention Jesus Christ as an influential, if not a decisive, factor in his thinking.

This book is worth reading. That is more than can be truthfully said about many volumes now issuing from the press.

J. B. GREEN.

Columbia Theological Seminary.

NEW CHALLENGES TO FAITH. WHAT SHALL I BELIEVE IN THE LIGHT OF PSYCHOLOGY AND THE NEW SCIENCE. *By Sherwood Eddy.* George H. Doran Co., New York City. Pp. 256. \$1.50. Sherwood Eddy spent the academic year 1925-6 at Columbia University and Union Theological Seminary in catching up with the new science and with the new currents of thought in philosophy and theology, and in relating them

to the Christian system. In this volume he shares with us the results of his study. In chapter 1 he describes the new science, in chapter 2 the new psychology, in chapter 4 the new views of the Bible, summarizing the main conclusions of modern criticism. Dr. Eddy's own views are rather extreme; nonetheless he believes that the real value of the Bible is unimpaired. The remaining chapters present the author's reconstruction of Christianity in the light of these and other challenges to the faith. Written from a definitely liberal standpoint, the value of this book will be differently estimated according to the theology of the reader. The minister who has not read widely along the lines indicated above will find it a very informing book; on the whole, a reassuring book, for "through it all flames the light of spiritual assurance which masters every achievement of human progress".

ERNEST TRICE THOMPSON.

Union Theological Seminary.

RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE. THE BAIRD LECTURES FOR 1924. *By Rev. R. H. Fisher, D. D.* George H. Doran Co., New York City. Pp. x, 319. \$2.25. This book is a study of Religious Experiences, in the light of wide reading and genuine scholarly knowledge, but, which is far better, perhaps, in the light of a wide and fruitful experience in various pastorates. Its range is inclusive—Hindrances to Becoming Religious, The Approach to Religion, The Crises of the Soul (The Fall, Forgiveness, Conversion, Regeneration), The Making of Christian Character, The Moral Results, Middle and Old Age, Hope for Time and Eternity. Under these heads are many a sub-title, covering most phases of the Christian life. The advice and counsel given is often wise and helpful. The constant endeavor is to explain these experiences in language which shall be in harmony with theological doctrines, yet be expressed in simple language so as to help the everyday problems of men. Occasionally one wishes the author had been somewhat more theological in his explanations—without intending it, doubtless, he has at times seemed to explain a doctrine away. The style is clear, illustrations excellent, and the book contains much of value to a pastor.

DANIEL S. GAGE.

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"THINGS MOST SURELY BELIEVED." *By Gerrit Verkuyl.* Fleming H. Revell Company, New York. Pages 219. Price \$1.50. The author of this volume has attempted a popular presentation of the essentials of the Christian faith. He had in mind the need of interdenominational Bible classes for a text book dealing with the fundamental doctrines upon which Evangelical churches are agreed. There are twelve chapters, and at the end of each chapter suggestions for discussion, also