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AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
RELIGIOUS BOOKS ROUND TABLE

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A LIST OF OUTSTANDING RELIGIOUS BOOKS
1951/52

COMPILED BY
BOOK SELECTION COMMITTEE

The annual list of outstanding religious books is compiled from titles submitted by the publishers, under the direction of the Religious Books Round Table of the American Library Association, with the cooperation of the Religious Publishers Group. Inclusion on the list, however, does not imply endorsement of any book by either group. The period covered by the present list is May 1, 1951 to April 30, 1952, and the Book Selection Committee included: Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, Union Theological Seminary, New York; Dr. Leonard A. Stidley, Graduate School of Theology, Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio; Rabbi Jonah B. Wise, Central Synagogue, New York; Dr. Alden D. Kelley, Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, Evanston, Illinois; Rev. Thomas J. Shanahan, St. Paul Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota; and Miss Frances T. Thayer, University of California Library, Berkeley, California, chairman.

All of the books included on the list were chosen by at least two members of the Committee; those starred were named by four of the five selectors. There were no unanimous selections.

Natural Science and the Spiritual Life, by John Baillie. Scribner.
1952. \$1.75.

An address delivered before the British Association for the Advancement of Science. To the author, modern science is not only the product of Christianity, but dependent on the Christian virtues for its advance. Thus "science" and "religion" are properly related. - A.D.K.

The Interpreter's Bible. Vol. VII-VIII. Edited by Nolan B. Harmon (and others) Abingdon-Cokesbury. 1951-52. \$8.75 each.

One of the most thoroughly prepared commentary publications, which will include 12 volumes when completed in 1957. Volume VII, the

first to be published, contains 14 general articles, and commentaries on Matthew and Mark. Volume VIII, the second, has one general article and commentaries on Luke and John. At the top of the page, in parallel columns, are the King James Version and the Revised Standard Version. This is followed by a scholarly exegesis in a single column across the page; and at the bottom of the page, again in two columns, runs an exposition by an outstanding preacher. - L.S.

The Wisdom of the Talmud; a Thousand Years of Jewish Thought, by Ben Zion Bokser, Philosophical Library. 1951. \$3.75.

A guide to the most famous record of Jewish religious speculation and Biblical interpretation. Non-Jewish readers will find here the conditions that surrounded rabbinical teaching. Examples are given of the types of legal, theological and moral problems discussed; and there are excerpts from the Talmudic literature to illustrate its general spirit. - T.J.S.

Theology of the New Testament, by Rudolf Karl Bultmann. Vol. I. Translated by Kendrick Grobel. Scribner. 1951. \$3.50.

The first volume of a comprehensive New Testament theology by the most renowned of modern New Testament theologians, whose work is associated with the question of the validity of "mythological" elements in the New Testament tradition. - R.N.

Bells Above the Amazon, by Arthur J. Burke. McKay. 1951. \$3.00.

A mission on the upper reaches of a great, steaming South American river is the scene for this life story of Hugo Mense, friar and one-time blacksmith. The sustained narrative embraces customs of the Mundurucu Indians that help or hinder mission effort, and comments minutely on the climate and life of the jungle openings. - T.J.S.

The One Church in the Light of the New Testament, by Clarence Tucker Craig. Abingdon-Cokesbury. c1951. \$2.00.

The author, a New Testament scholar and leader in the ecumenical movement, contends that "it is time to lay alongside our contemporary divisions the unmistakable witness of the New Testament that the church by nature is one." The problems of unity-sacraments, orders, baptism--are discussed in the light of the New Testament, and the faith of the United Church is asserted. - L.S.

*The Long Loneliness; the autobiography of Dorothy Day. Illus. by Fritz Eichenberg. Harper. 1952. \$3.50.

The story of a courageous woman whose pilgrimage through the I.W.W., Socialism and Communism led her finally to the Roman Catholic Church and to be a co-founder of the Catholic Worker Movement. Like St. Francis, the author has identified herself completely with "God's poor." - A.D.K.

*The Life of Baron von Hugel, by Michael de la Bedoyere. Scribner. 1951. \$5.00.

The English philosopher and authority on mysticism treated in this careful study gave new directions to his country's religious thought in the mid part of the hundred years just past. An advocate of reunion, he cultivated friendships with men whose beliefs had all degrees of difference from his native Catholicism. - T.J.S.

Today's Children and Yesterday's Heritage, by Sophie Lyon Fahs. Beacon Press. 1952. \$3.00.

The author, a well-known teacher, editor and writer, sets forth on "emerging philosophy" of creative religious development, which stands in contrast with the traditional approach of authority and indoctrination, and which has the support of the physical sciences, psychiatry, anthropology, sociology and education. This is a book which grapples with basic problems of religious education. - L.S.

The Christian Understanding of God, by Nels F. S. Ferré. Harper. 1951. \$3.75.

This book by the prominent theologian and professor of philosophical theology at Vanderbilt University studies the relationship between the historic doctrine of God and modern process philosophy. Five of the nine chapters are on the nature of God and the remaining four are on the work of God. This is a basic theological book. - L.S.

Great Voices of the Reformation; an anthology. Edited with an introduction and commentaries by Harry Emerson Fosdick. Random House. 1952. \$5.00.

This anthology of the classical texts of Protestantism will serve the purpose of giving many moderns an historical survey of Protestant thought on the basis of primary, rather than secondary, material. The selection of texts is excellent. Hus and Wycliffe, Luther and Calvin, George Fox and Roger Williams, and our own Puritan fathers are included. - R.N.

The Cosmic Christ, by Allan D. Galloway. Harper. 1951. \$4.00.

An exposition of those strains in Christian thought which insist that redemption involves the whole cosmos, including the world of nature. The exposition is clear and not esoteric. A very wide erudition underlies the exposition. - R.N.

A Protestant Manifesto, by Winfred E. Garrison. Abingdon-Cokesbury. 1952. \$2.75.

This well-known author and long-time editor of The Christian Century magazine sets out to define the Protestant faith and to show its message and meaning in the world of our time. He discusses the "protestant" attitude as witness and denial. - A.D.K.

The Interior Life of St. Thomas Aquinas, presented from his works and the acts of his canonization process by Martin Grabmann. Translated by Nicholas Ashenbrenner. Bruce. 1951. \$2.75.

A renowned German interpreter and historian of the Thomistic tradition has sifted the suggestions of autobiography in the works of the great light of the 13th century. A temperament marked by considerate love of those around him, a view of things and ideas that saw them in a context woven by God, and a personal love of Christ in His human form combine to form the portrait of the patron saint of intellectuals. - T.J.S.

The Virgin Mary, by Jean Guitton. Kenedy. 1952. \$2.75.

French lay theologian displays in simple outline the elements of Catholic belief about the Mother of Christ. The author, who has been interested in reunion movements, traces stages of growth of the doctrine, and the place it holds in Orthodox theology. - T.J.S.

The Modern Rival of Christian Faith, by Georgia Harkness. Abingdon-Cokesbury. 1952. \$2.75.

The major rival of Christianity, says Miss Harkness, is secularism, which is defined as "the organization of life as if God did not exist." The concluding section of the book deals with the problem of how Christianity may overcome secularism through evangelism, religious education, and deepening of the devotional life. - A.D.K.

Judaism and Modern Man; an interpretation of Jewish religion, by Will Herberg. Farrar, Straus and Young. 1951. \$4.00.

A fresh and profound interpretation of the Jewish faith, which sweeps beyond a particular faith to illumine the issue between the Hebraic and the Hellenic, the "existential" and the rational elements in our culture and religious life. - R.N.

Doctrine of the Atonement, by Leonard Hodgson. Scribner. 1951. \$2.50.

The author, Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford, has made a study of the doctrine of the atonement throughout his theological career, and in this book sets forth the results of his study. The contents are: The Old Testament preparation; The wider background; Punishment and forgiveness; "God was in Christ"; Christ in his Church; Creation and redemption; The doctrine of the atonement. This is a solid book. - L.S.

Ecumenical Foundations; a History of the International Missionary Council and its Nineteenth Century Background, by William Richey Hogg. Harper. 1952. \$5.00.

A definitive and interestingly-written history of the International Missionary Council by a disciple of Latourette, under whose guidance the study was done. Cooperation among missionary societies on methods and affairs of mutual concern not involving compromise on beliefs furnished the experience and practical basis, as well as part of the motivation, for forming the recent World Council of Churches. - A.D.K./T.J.S.

Rufus Jones Speaks to Our Time; an anthology, edited by Harry Emerson Fosdick. Macmillan. 1951. \$4.00.

An anthology of the better selections from the writings of Rufus Jones, the eminent Quaker and religious thinker, who had both a vital message and a gentle humor. - A.D.K.

A Journey With the Saints, by Thomas S. Kepler. World Publishing Company. 1951. \$2.00.

Man's progressive dedication to God presented through the lives, briefly stated, of forty men of spiritual power. Beginning with Cyprian (200?-258) and Augustine (354-430) the list includes men in many walks of life, in different countries, and ends with four who are still living--Albert Schweitzer, Frank Laubach, E. Stanley Jones and Toyohiko Kagawa. These studies first appeared in the columns of daily metropolitan newspapers. - A.D.K./L.S.

Bible Key Words from Gerhard Kittel's Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament, translated and edited by J. R. Coates. Harper. 1951. \$4.00.

These four book-length articles (on Love, The Church, Sin, Righteousness) have been translated from Kittel's Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament. Each is a sampling of the comparative uses of a word as found in both the Old and New Testament, and provides an

introduction to the method of this monument of Protestant Biblical scholarship. - T.J.S.

John the Baptist, by Carl H. Kraeling. Scribner. 1951. \$3.00.

This volume by a leading New Testament scholar is unusual because it makes the forerunner of Jesus, not usually considered a special problem, the object of close historical scrutiny. Thereby the relation of the Gospel to later Judaism is illumined. - R.N.

*Communism and Christ, by Charles W. Lowry. Morehouse-Goreham. 1952. \$2.50.

It has long been the custom of anti-Communist propaganda to describe it as "atheism" and "irreligion." Actually, its danger derives from the fact that it is a powerful idolatrous religion. Why this is true and how this false religion is to be compared with Christianity, Dr. Lowry explains in this very illuminating volume. - R.N.

*By the Way; an autobiography, by Francis J. McConnell. Abingdon-Cokesbury. 1952. \$3.50.

This account of a rich and active ministry by a bishop of the Methodist Church who has been a crusader for social reform will give the reader an insight not only into a vigorous and vivid personality, but also into the social, ecclesiastical, and theological movements of the past fifty years in this country. - A.D.K.

Saints for Our Times, by Theodore Maynard. Appleton-Century-Crofts. 1952. \$3.50.

Theodore Maynard has a practiced hand at drawing from a life that was lived one or twenty centuries ago the elements that have application and appeal today. Seven women and eleven men are sketched here, few of them strangers. The "gentleman and journalist" (Francis de Sales), the "ecstatic politician" (Catherine of Sienna), and the first saint of the United States (Frances Cabrini) are samples from the collection. - T.J.S.

Handbook of Denominations in the United States, by Frank S. Mead. Abingdon-Cokesbury. 1951. \$2.75.

This is a most useful collection of data on the history, doctrine, organization, and present status of 255 religious groups. Gives the correct form of name, specific beliefs, and statistics of membership--items not always easy to find. Libraries and editors will welcome Dr. Mead's well-checked manual. - T.J.S.

*The Ascent to Truth, by Thomas Merton. Harcourt, Brace. 1951. \$3.50.

In this book Father Merton, author of The Seven Storey Mountain, sets forth the thesis that only a spiritual revolution can save the world from moral collapse, and this revolution can come through Christian mysticism. The book explains that mysticism and describes the methods used by St. John of the Cross. There are also biographical notes on the saints quoted. - L.S.

That All May be One; a South India Diary, by James Edward Lesslie Newbigin. Association Press. 1952. \$1.50.

This narrative diary of an outstanding leader in the newly formed Church of South India gives intimate glimpses into the varied lives of the people of India and also into the life of the United Christian movement which brought together Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians and Congregationalists. This is a personal account of a unique movement. - L.S.

God's Word in Man's Language, by Eugene A. Nida. Harper. 1952. \$2.50.

Dr. Nida, who is in charge of translations for the American Bible Society, gives a readable, sometimes humorous, and always instructive account of the trials and perils of translating the Bible into many tongues and giving the original meaning of the text despite the vagaries of cultures and the pitfalls of varying grammars. - R.N.

Christ and Culture, by Helmut Richard Niebuhr. Harper. 1951. \$3.50.

A penetrating and definitive study of the relation of Christianity to culture in terms of five historic and classic patterns which continuously appear and reappear. - A.D.K.

The Irony of American History, by Reinhold Niebuhr. Scribner. 1952. \$2.50.

A discussion of the position of our country in the world community from the perspective of a Christian understanding of history. The ironic contrasts of our weakness in power, of our vices in virtue, and of our insecurity in the struggle for security are provocatively set forth. - A.D.K.

Florence Allshorn and the Story of Saint Julian's, by J. H. Oldham. Harper. 1952. \$2.75.

Four years spent in conducting a mission school for native girls in Africa convinced the Englishwoman who is the subject of this sketch

that the chief problem in the field was lack of mutual forbearance and sympathy among a mission's personnel. She spent the rest of her life in training schools for missions where love of neighbor manifested in the duties of common existence in a home took first place. Many quotations from her letters, and her own story of the establishment of such a center make the book in large part an autobiography. - T.J.S.

*The Greatest Book Ever Written: the Old Testament Story, edited by Fulton Oursler. Doubleday. 1952. \$3.95.

This book, a companion to the author's The Greatest Story Ever Told, is the Old Testament story simply and forcefully told. From Genesis to Malachi, the story moves through richness of Old Testament narratives with additional imaginative touches. The author has consulted Protestant, Catholic and Jewish experts, and has inserted carefully prepared maps which add to the realism of the narrative. - L.S.

The Flight from God, by Max Picard, with a note on Max Picard by Gabriel Marcel. H. Regnery. 1951. \$2.50.

This little volume by a lay theologian of Switzerland is a profound and moving exposition of the irreligion of our day. None of the worn shibboleths or epithets of religious controversy are in this treatise. It is fresh and searching. - R.N.

The Book of Thirty Centuries; an introduction to modern study of the Bible, by Stanley Israel Rypins. Macmillan. 1951. \$7.00.

This is a history of the transmission and translation of the Bible, written by a professor of English who has done extensive research on the manuscripts, papyri, translations and versions of the Bible. The book is buttressed by voluminous and careful references and has an extensive bibliography. - L.S.

The Religions of Mankind, by Edmund Davison Soper. 3d ed., rev. Abingdon-Cokesbury. 1951. \$3.50.

Handbook with emphasis on non-Christian religions both past and present. Text and bibliography show awareness of latest studies in the history of religions. The author's ability to point out the elements in each religion that corresponded with human spiritual needs helps us understand how some gained wide acceptance despite less worthy features. - T.J.S.

Guide to the Christian Faith, by William A. Spurrier. Scribner. 1952. \$2.50.

A very readable exposition of the basic doctrines of the Christian faith, designed for lay readers and relating the doctrines to the problems of every day living. - R.N.

*A Believing Jew; the selected writings of Milton Steinberg. Harcourt, Brace. 1951. \$3.50.

The late Rabbi Steinberg was one of the most thoughtful intellectual and spiritual leaders in the Jewish community. In this collection of sermons, he deals with ultimate religious issues, with problems which American Jews face specifically, and with issues centering around the new state of Israel. - R.N.

The Puritan Heritage, by George M. Stephenson. Macmillan. 1952. \$3.50.

Beginning with the colonial period, the author traces the religious development of the U.S.A. against the background of the westward migration of this country's peoples. - A.D.K.

A Catholic Speaks His Mind on America's Religious Conflict, by Thomas Sugrue. Harper. 1952. \$1.00.

"Self-criticism" by a practicing Roman Catholic. A frank discussion of the sectarian mind as it seeks to use the Church for political ends through "pressure tactics." - A.D.K.

*Religion in the Development of American Culture, 1765-1840, by William Warren Sweet. Scribner. 1952. \$3.50.

This book describes the growth and development of churches in our country during the period 1765-1840. It shows how the major religious denominations broke old world ties, explored the American frontiers, became the founders of educational institutions and upheld moral and spiritual codes in the emerging nation. Interesting to both scholar and man in the pew. - L.S.

The Psalms and Their Meaning for Today, by Samuel Terrien. Bobbs-Merrill. 1952. \$3.00.

A good treatment for the general reader, setting forth the wisdom and living power of the Psalms, not only in terms of their historical sources, but also for our times. - A.D.K.

The Gospel According to Luke; Exposition and Application, by Ernest Fremont Tittle. Harper. 1951. \$3.75.

A posthumously published commentary which brings out the devotional values and "timeless truths" of the Third Gospel. An illuminating

and inspirational interpretation. - A.D.K.

The Life We Prize, by Elton Trueblood. Harper. 1951. \$2.50.

The life Elton Trueblood prizes is not one exhausted or confined by a motorized economy. He finds it in freedom--not as an escape from morality, but as a willing responsibility to have each of his acts weighed for justice and thoughtfulness. To be sure that this position is worth the risk of a life's energy, he insists that it be based on God's personal revelation of Himself in the Jewish and Christian religions. - T.J.S.

The Upanishads. Vol. 2: Śvetāśvatara, Praśna, and Māndukya with Gaudapāda's Kārikā. Translated from the Sanskrit with an introduction ... by Swami Nikhilananda. Harper. 1952. \$4.50.

This is the second volume of the translation and interpretation of the Upanishads. It is an important contribution to the understanding of Oriental religions. Four Upanishads are included, and the author has furnished the volume with an introduction on the subject of Hindu ethics. The first volume of this work was published in 1949. - R.N.

Cult and Culture, by Von Ogden Vogt. Macmillan. 1951. \$3.25.

The author, after analysing the nature of culture, contends that religion (cult) is that creative, cohesive and all-pervading element which gives life to culture. He examines primitive, historical and contemporary culture to test his position, and also explores many phases of culture, such as philosophy, commerce, government. In the last chapter, the constructive force of religion is described. - L.S.

*Modern Poetry and the Christian Tradition, by Amos N. Wilder. Scribner. 1952. \$3.00.

A most discerning analysis of the effect of modern culture upon poetry and upon the expression of the Christian faith in the poetry of such moderns as Gerald Manley Hopkins, W.H. Auden and T.S. Elliott. More profoundly considered, the book deals with the relation of Christian faith to the whole of culture. - R.N.