

BOOK REVIEWS

Cynthia Lynn Lyerly, *Methodism and the Southern Mind, 1770–1810*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998. Viii + 251 pp. \$45.00.

Here is yet another social history that finds early American Methodism to be illustrative of more general patterns, especially of the powerful counter-cultural and anti-genteel religiosity in the early republic. Lyerly's work complements and extends that of A. Gregory Schneider, *The Way of the Cross Leads Home: The Domestication of American Methodism* (Indiana, 1993), Christine Leigh Heyrman, *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt* (Knopf, 1997), John H. Wigger, *Taking Heaven by Storm: Methodism and the Rise of Popular Christianity in America* (Oxford, 1998), William R. Sutton, *Journeyman for Jesus: Evangelical Artisans Confront Capitalism in Jacksonian Baltimore* (Pennsylvania State, 1998), and Dee E. Andrews, *Religion and the Revolution: The Rise of the Methodists in the Greater Middle Atlantic, 1760–1800* (Princeton, 1999).

With a couple of her generalizations about Methodism I would quibble—the sharp distinction between Methodism and Anglicanism (17), the underestimation of the Methodist doctrine of grace (27–29), the narrow set of Methodist essentials (29), the notion of sanctification as only instantaneous (32), and the inclusion in the stylistic marks of Methodism of “mysticism” and direct revelation (34). In the main, however, Lyerly's handling of Methodist terms and distinctions is highly sophisticated and accurate. Her first two chapters present the character, concerns, and development of that movement in a rich but concise fashion. Throughout her writing, she explains Methodist peculiarities clearly and precisely.

However, what commends her scholarship is not this mastery of technical religious lingo, but her remarkable ability to see in, through, beside, and under it various patterns of social purpose and practice. *Methodism and the Southern Mind* exhibits that discernment throughout as she explores the counter-cultural, counter-genteel, and counter-patriarchal dimensions of Methodism in relation to slavery and race, to class, to gender, to family and social order, and to power. Her perspective and argument—that Methodism turns the world upside down—confirm findings in the works mentioned above. What differentiates her efforts from those is focus. Heyrman, Wigger, and Sutton throw new light on leadership; Schneider comes at laity by way of elite publications and for the Midwest; Andrews looks with discernment at Philadelphia and urban Methodism; Schneider and Sutton focus on the next phase of Methodism.

Lyerly has been able to recover folk patterns and particularly those of southern folk for this early period. She has done more than almost anyone I can think of to get inside the experience of the lay people, white and black, male and female, rich and poor. Particularly instructive is her ability to

reconstruct the religious world of slave women and to reimagine how such women might have heard Methodist overtures as “freeing,” found dignity and sisterhood in conversion and class meeting, discovered resources for self-protection in discipline, and experienced baptism as quite literally a dying to this world. She has a keen eye for telling detail, knows how much of a story to develop, positions such particularity in relation to the larger story, and draws sensitively on the insights of other scholars.

RUSSELL E. RICHEY
Durham, NC

Perspectives on the Social Gospel: Papers From the Inaugural Social Gospel Conference at Colgate Rochester Divinity School, edited by Christopher H. Evans. Lewiston-Queenston-Lampeter NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1999. xxiv + 259 pp. \$89.95.

The editor’s introduction to this timely and informative book calls attention to the importance of continued historical and theological study of the social gospel, and documents his remarks with informative notes—as do the authors of the dozen chapters that follow. Together, their efforts make up a solid, useful, documented volume which summarizes and interprets the story of an important slice of American Protestant history from the latter part of the 19th century to World War I and its aftermath. To summarize their contributions briefly:

Ralph E. Luker reflects on two generations of the historiography of social gospel action and thought, observing that not enough attention has been given to the theological underpinnings of a significant movement, even as he cites some writings relevant for further advances in this area. Informed by the renewed attention to racial issues in research and interpretation, Susan Curtis finds that, “it is essential to be aware of the powerful interplay between American cultures and social Christianity” (19), and reviews the evidence that the social gospel has borne the marks of its whiteness until recent times. Stephen R. Prescott challenges the simplistic view that there was no social gospel in the South by summarizing the work of such historians as Hugh C. Bailey, H. Shelton Smith, J. Wayne Flynt, and Anne Firor Scott, who have found evidences of clear social concerns and reformist efforts in the South, often based on conservative theological positions. Women and their organizations were often involved in socially-minded Christian reformism.

Though the essays in *Perspectives on the Social Gospel* do break new ground, the pioneers and prominent leaders are not neglected. C. George Fry focuses on Washington Gladden and his church in Columbus, Ohio. Wendy

J. Deichmann Edwards deals with the complex sources of Josiah Strong's transition from traditional to social evangelicalism, his well-known works, and his program of global reform. Thomas W. Simpson compares the prophetic realism of Walter Rauschenbusch with Reinhold Niebuhr and Martin Luther King, Jr. and illustrates the inadequacy of setting too precise limit in dating the social gospel, which despite influences by too optimistic doctrines of human life lived on in Christian thought and action throughout the twentieth century. Robert C. Trawick advances the thesis that in the writings of Rauschenbusch especially, social Christianity contributed to "a reclamation of human work as participating in God's ordering of the earthly community" (140), rooted in part in the Reformation doctrine of vocation. In a case study that discusses culture, class, and gender, William Kostlevy focuses on the social thought of the Free Methodist Church, which in the Progressive era understood itself to be a reformatory organization concerned for the poor and was very active in operating urban rescue missions and as an ally of the Women's Christian Temperance Union.

The one chapter of the book that looks overseas is by Tim Macquiban, who traces the rise of the social gospel in British Methodism, suggesting certain relevant parallels between Christian reformist writing and activities of the two nations. David Nelson Duke aptly calls the controversial Harry F. Ward a "Social Gospel Warrior in the Trenches" as he traces the path of the English-born immigrant in his labors at a social settlement in Illinois, as pastor of Methodist congregations, as co-founder of the Methodist Federation for Social Service, and finally as professor at New York's Union Theological Seminary. Economist Bradley W. Bateman discusses John R. Commons, who as a student at Johns Hopkins where he was influenced by Richard T. Ely, one of the influential early writers in the developing social gospel movement; the two became close friends. Commons attracted attention by his "disguised socialism" and concern for the municipal ownership of the means of production, which led to his dismissal from a teaching post in 1899. He moved on by developing skills in the collection and analysis of data, which secured him a position at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, where he combined his scholarly and reformist efforts as he became a prominent and productive economist. D. Keith Naylor brings quite a different perspective in interpreting Gifford Pinchot, a forester, conservationist, and politician (two terms as governor of Pennsylvania). Pinchot's early concern with religion continued to influence his mature life and helped him to continue his emphasis on service to humankind as he understood the conservation crusade as a "defender of spiritual values" (244).

Perspectives on the Social Gospel provides useful summaries of many aspects of Protestant religio-social movements in the latter part of the 19th century and deep into the 20th. Unfortunately it lacks an index. Indirectly it suggests that further attention to social Christian movements can be informative. There were parallel social concerns in Protestant bodies little men-

tioned here, in Roman Catholicism, and perhaps in Eastern Orthodoxy. Further exploration in relation to Jewish social endeavors may show both some interesting similarities as well as distinctive differences.

ROBERT T. HANDY
West Caldwell, NJ

Troy Messenger, *Holy Leisure: Recreation and Religion in God's Square Mile*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999. 171 pp. \$29.95.

Ocean Grove, New Jersey, has been a Methodist meeting place for well over a century. Its location on the seashore of the Atlantic made it possible for the Grove to be both a gathering for the advocates of holiness and a place for them to enjoy summers of relaxation and renewal by the ocean. Its auditorium remains one of the unusual architectural gems of the nation (see the cover article on this structure in *Methodist History*, April 1987).

Messenger's book is the story of how Ocean Grove began in 1869 as a Methodist camp meeting with strict regulations and evolved into a community whose citizens no longer have to live with the same religious ethos which governed its life for more than a century. The story is well-told and contains a fascinating description of many facets of Ocean Grove's place in the holiness movement and Methodism.

There are a few errors which mar the text. For example, the author states on page 16 that clergy and laity in 1869 formed the "Ocean Grove Camp Meeting Association of the United Methodist Church." United Methodism did not become a denomination until 1968. At other places he refers to the Methodist Church when he means the Methodist Episcopal Church. There is a transposition of numbers in the date on page 101 which should read 1879. Furthermore, some holiness advocates (and others) will not be happy with the "fruits of the spirit" on page 129, which should read "fruits of the Spirit" since the work of the Holy Spirit is central to holiness theology.

One also wishes that less space was devoted to the Jerusalem model, as captivating as it must have been, and more space employed to describe the content of the preaching and worship which was a central feature of the camp meeting experience. Nevertheless, this is a fine piece of work and will make for enjoyable and informative reading, especially for those interested in American religious and Methodist history and Ocean Grove's important place in it.

CHARLES YRIGOYEN, JR.
Madison, NJ

Erwin Fahlbusch, Jan Milic Lochman, John Mbiti, Jaroslav Pelikan, and Lucas Vischer, Editors; Geoffrey W. Bromiley, English-language Editor; David B. Barrett, Statistical Editor, *The Encyclopedia of Christianity*, Volume 1 (A–D). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999. 893 pp. \$100.00.

This is an outstanding reference work which is based on the third, revised edition German work *Evangelisches Kirchenlexikon*. It reflects the highest standards of scholarship with articles written by experts from many nations and cultural backgrounds. The first volume contains 465 articles which include all but the smallest countries of the world, the latest statistical information on the religious and ecclesiastical affiliation of each continent and country, articles on denominations, doctrines, and social/ethical issues, and biographical articles on prominent persons throughout church history.

This series of volumes will be invaluable to persons interested in the history and theology of the Christian church. Church and institutional libraries will find it indispensable as a ready guide to information about the global presence of denominations. References to Methodism occur in the articles in Volume 1 and many will find the geographical, doctrinal, and biographical articles of special relevance as background information on Wesleyanism and Methodism. The price for this series is substantial, but its value is considerable.

CHARLES YRIGOYEN, JR.
Madison, NJ

Gerald H. Anderson, editor, *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1999. 845 pp. \$50.00.

This is a major reference work which ought to be found in every seminary, university, and college library. It would also be a worthy addition to church and personal libraries. Several years in the making, it was originally published in hardback in 1998 by Macmillan and is now available in this much less expensive paperback edition. It contains more than 2,400 biographical entries including 155 biographies of Methodist missionaries. One of the assets of the volume is the extensive appendix which lists biographies by six time periods, by region of service, by type of mission work, by religious or church affiliation, and whether they were martyrs, women, or non-Western. There is also a useful index.

Eslinger, Ellen. *Citizens of Zion: The Social Origins of Camp Meeting Revivalism*. Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1999. 306 pp.

In this thoroughly researched and clearly argued social history, Ellen Eslinger reevaluates the major assumptions about the state of late 18th century Kentucky society and offers a new understanding of the nature and causes of the camp meeting revivals that took place there. Along with other scholars of American revivalism, Eslinger uses Cane Ridge as the origin of camp meeting revivalism in America. Previous scholarship on the Cane Ridge event, says Eslinger, explains the revival's causes and effects via Frederick Turner's famous "frontier thesis," and argues that the violent, rugged, and isolated frontier life of white European settlers contributed to chaotic, individualistic religious expression. Eslinger, along with scholars such as John B. Boles and Leigh Schmidt, argues that the frontier thesis is inadequate for a clear understanding of the beginnings of the camp meeting phenomenon.

Eslinger says that analysis of these origins must look more closely at the particular social context from which they emerged. In Part I she describes the harsh, violent years in Kentucky from approximately 1785 to 1790, a period that matches Turner's description of the frontier. Part II pieces together a narrative of the next decade that shows the building of a relatively peaceful, politically organized, and economically burgeoning society in Kentucky. But while the frontier chaos was greatly diminished, there emerged a moral crisis. The culture of national liberalism, so formative on the Atlantic seaboard, was shaping frontier Kentucky as well, and the partisan politics, capitalist ventures, and apparent loss of regard for a virtuous citizenry and disinterested government leadership provoked questions about the moral and spiritual health of the new republic. This perceived crisis is what the revivals were a response to, and helps Eslinger explain their success. The rituals of the camp meetings brought a sense of *communitas* through the intimacy of camping, shared emotions, and shared ecstatic religious experience. Rather than being a chaotic expression of self-sufficient, individualistic frontier culture, the revivals served as a healing experience for individuals who saw their society disintegrating. Having shown that Kentucky society of the decade preceding the revivals did not resemble the violent frontier years, Eslinger guides us clearly to a new understanding of how the camp meetings functioned to heal worries of a moral crisis and restore a sense of broken community. *Citizens of Zion* offers a fresh and focused look at the energy behind the first camp meetings in America.

MORRIS L. DAVIS
Huntington, IN