

Book Reviews

Andersen, Arlow W., *The Salt of the Earth*. Nashville: The Parthenon Press, 1962.

The Salt of the Earth is a telling title of a history of Norwegian-Danish Methodism in America, covering an exciting and fruitful period of religious experience. The story clusters correctly and most interestingly around the lives and the missions of the people who made it possible. Here is "an endless line of splendor" of the good and the great who made so much possible. It was not easy for a flood of immigrants to adjust themselves to the New World and the American way of life. We shudder to think what might have been, but for the effective ministry of godly men who made this new beginning a beginning with God. "The strangely warmed heart" so typical of the religious experience and faith of pioneers gave joy, depth, and redemptive power to a dreary bewildering experience in conquering a wilderness. Their faith was indeed the salt savoring their every and deepest relationships. We are indebted to Dr. Andersen for giving us this book, both for its historical value and for the inspiring human interest story it is.

About the year 1920 the flood of immigration became a mere trickle—a new situation calling for new ways of ministering. The descendants of the people of Norwegian-Danish stock had already adjusted themselves well to the American way of life, contributing much to the great society. Religiously, pastors and people were looking yearningly to the green pastures of American Methodism, within the span of a single generation becoming part of that larger fellowship of kindred minds. They were joining the church at large as individuals and as churches, bringing reverence, faith, life and good works to the whole body of American Methodism.

This is a book that will enrich our understanding of the many strains giving to the Methodist Church much variety and vitality. The reading is good for the soul.

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Mead, Frank S. *Rebels With a Cause*. Abingdon, 160 pp., \$2.75.

The format of this book reflects the theological education and the editorial experience of the author, who is now editor-in-chief of the Fleming H. Revell Company. No doubt, he has plowed through many a dull manuscript, and determined that this work would be at least readable. He succeeds in this respect, for the reader finds himself moved breezily along through church history to meet those who, in Mr. Mead's terms, might be described as the left-bank element of the Church. At times, the distinction between the non-conformist and the simply eccentric is blurred to the discomfort of those who have been brought up on a "lives-of-the-saints" treat-

ment of these individuals. The opening chapter is a kind of "Screw-tape letter" in reverse, written by nephew Brutus Mentallus to his uncle, Senator Stentorius Maximus. It combines John the Baptist, Jesus, and Paul in a trio described as responsible for the unrest in Jerusalem in the late first century. The book continues through church history, sketching the lives of thirteen other persons whom the blurb describes as "religious non-conformists, men who dared to be different." Included are the hermit, Anthony the Great, Simeon Stylites, Francis of Assisi (no titles of sainthood are used), and Martin Luther. From the modern period, two colonial Americans are chosen, Roger Williams and Mather Byles. The book concludes with a well-written and sympathetic treatment of Salvation Army founder, William Booth.

This is the kind of book which a minister might well use to introduce the figures of church history to the secular-minded layman. It would be unfortunate if nothing beyond what is contained in these pages were read. However, if its readable and lively treatment of its subjects stimulates a greater interest in and appreciation of the contributions made by these heroes of the faith, it will serve a good purpose.

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Stewart, William: *Mindful of Man*. Cape Girardeau, Missouri: Missouriian Litho and Printing Co., 1964. 140 pp. (\$4.00).

This is a delightful book, the observations and memories of an eighty-three-year-old Methodist preacher who has spent nearly 60 years as an itinerant in the Missouri East (formerly St. Louis) Conference, and is still going strong, serving as the Protestant chaplain in the mental hospital at Farmington, Missouri.

Serving churches mostly in the towns of Southeast Missouri, the author seems to have enjoyed his work, the people, and the communities, and in retrospect he can laugh about the hard times while taking genuine satisfaction in the many pleasant experiences he had through the years. He has a buoyant faith, a sensible philosophy of life, a good sense of humor, a zest for living, sympathy for people, and a love of and pride in his large family. He gives much credit to his wife Mabel.

A golf enthusiast, Stewart quotes a doctor, who also loved the game, to the effect that golf will cure any disease except cancer, and it will help that!

As the title of the book indicates, Stewart was mindful of man as a minister. In the depths of the great depression, he initiated a project whereby the unemployed in the town where he was pastor could cut wood for fuel. As the project grew, they sold wood to buy food and other necessities for the needy.

William Stewart is known in Missouri Methodism as the man who rediscovered, and persuaded the conference to rehabilitate, Old McKendree Chapel, one of the twelve national shrines of American

Methodism. In the book he tells how in 1925, while pastor of the New McKendree Church, Jackson, Missouri, only three miles from the Old Chapel, he picked his way one day through briars and underbrush and over fences to find the dilapidated building, and how he resolved at once to see that it should be restored. Largely due to his keen interest and persistent work, the Old McKendree edifice was saved, and today it is covered with a steel canopy, and a caretaker lives on the grounds, and every year in the fall a great service is held at the old shrine.

There are some typographical errors and a few mistaken references; Bishop Waldorf, for example, is called Walford. But these are minor matters. The author has felicity of expression, and the book makes interesting and helpful reading.

ALBEA GODBOLD