basis of the 20 percent of the evidence instead of the 80 percent. Would he ever have come to such conclusions if it were not for the findings of science? If not, how does accepting the weight of evidence in science, while rejecting the weight of exegetical evidence, differ from accepting the weight of exegetical evidence, while rejecting the weight of scientific evidence? If the Flood geologist cannot rest secure in the notion that "might" makes right in science, neither can the interpreter of Scripture long maintain an honest confidence that "might" makes right exegetically.

Ramm's answers cannot be our answers, yet *The Christian View of Science and Scripture* remains a bold attempt to reconcile the Bible and science. In many respects, *how* the church goes about seeking solutions is as important as the actual solutions it may or may not find. Ramm can teach us much concerning the spirit and methods appropriate to our search for answers.

Brief Reviews

COMPLETENESS IN SCIENCE
By Richard Schlegel
Appleton-Century-Crofts, New York, 1967 xi plus 280 pp $7.50

The gap between the culture of the scientist and that of the humanist has been the subject of much recent writing. There has been much talk, particularly from the humanists, about the need to build bridges between the two cultures. It seems significant that most of the bridges are being built by scientists. Richard Schlegel, a physicist, in writing the largely philosophical work *Completeness in Science* has provided an example.

In view of the title of the book, one reasonably expects the author to provide working definitions of *science and completeness* at an early stage. His treatment of *science* actually takes the form of a philosophy rather than a definition. Since science is the study of nature, this treatment leads to a philosophy of nature. For him, nature broadens as scientists wish to, or can, broaden their perceptions (pp. 58, 239). He believes that defining the scope of nature is a scientific rather than a philosophical problem.

Schlegel's definition of *completeness* is rather weak, in my opinion, since it may confirm the view of some readers that scientists flit from one field to another in the same frivolous way that people change from one fashion to another: "A science is complete when it gives as much descriptive detail as is desired . . . and when the theoretical structure of the science satisfactorily explains all the facts of the science" (p. 46).

It comes rather as a surprise to read that in one very important direction science *has* come to an end, "to have reached a limit of the understanding that came in the form of complete description" (p. 173; see also p. 236). This alarming conclusion, supported by three chapters (ten, eleven, and twelve) of argument, is further

bolstered by analogy to the field of logic, where Gödel's theorem (chapter five) has placed very specific limitations upon the search for completeness.

The author makes much of the similarities between science and religion. For example, in the science age, he points out, the same drives that once caused men to build cathedrals have been directed into such efforts as the space program. Two unwarranted generalizations about religion, unfortunately, are made in *Completeness in Science:* that religions claim to explain everything, including their own axioms (p. 252 and context), and that fundamentalist thinkers accept creation of fossils (p. 107). The author is quite willing, however, to admit that science has its problems too (paradoxes, difficulties in interpretation, observational discrepancies, etc.), and he admits that science lacks in its contributions to "humane living" (p. 260).

The considerations raised by this book make one wonder about completeness in areas other than science — for example, criminal evidence, communications, and religious experience. Perhaps one of the choice quotations among those Schlegel uses throughout the book from John von Neumann gives a partial answer (p. 78): "[Truth] is much too complicated to allow anything but approximations." In my own mind, I find it helpful to remember that, at least on certain levels in Christian experience, there is hope for closure: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:12).

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HOW TO BECOME A BISHOP WITHOUT BEING RELIGIOUS
By Charles Merrill Smith
Doubleday and Company, New York, 1965 131 pp $1.98 paper $.50

How to Become a Bishop, its introduction would have us believe, is first a book of practical advice for the young seminary graduate, telling him how to succeed as a pastor, and second an advertisement of some of the advantages of the ministry, seeking to recruit manpower for that profession. Actually, these purposes only provide the satirical matrix of a humorous, and yet entirely serious, plea for the general reader to reexamine his feelings toward religion generally and the clergy particularly. I suspect that the humor will appear either fanciful and delightful or biting and cruel, depending on the religious experience and circumstances of the reader.

Very early in the first chapter, Smith distinguishes between being religious and being pious, which he defines as *appearing* to be religious. He considers piety, unlike true religiousness, to be absolutely essential to ministerial success, because piety is the quality church members must see in their pastor if they are to feel at ease with him. "It is like people who have so long had frozen orange juice for breakfast," he explains, "that if they were served a glass from freshly squeezed fruit, it would taste somehow artificial."

The chapter entitled "Conducting Public Worship, An Exercise in Nostalgia," provides a good example of how much Smith is able to say about modern religious attitudes using the satirical framework he has chosen. He cautions the young pastor

to put out of his mind whatever he may have learned at the seminary about conducting the church service, since the instruction he has received there will have been based on the assumption that the purpose of the service is to glorify God.

What your good Christian people want to worship is not God but themselves, although they do not know this and only a pastor who expects to depart shortly for other fields of endeavor will have the temerity to explain it to them. But you need to know it, for this is the correct assumption on which all successful public worship is built. . . .

In this worldly, secular, materialistic age . . . millions of people still go to church Sunday after Sunday to do the same thing over and over. They sing hymns, pray, and listen to a choir and a preacher.

On the face of it, it is difficult to understand. Why do all these people forsake warm beds and a leisurely perusal of the Sunday paper? . . .

You may be certain that they do not make this extraordinary effort for the purpose of anything so abstract as to worship God, however commendable such a motive would be. Leaving aside such contributory but not very important factors as force of habit and the need to flee from loneliness, the main force which pushes them out the door and brings them to the house of the Lord is the gratifying experience of worshiping themselves.

Smith explains that if the worshipers are not to be disappointed in the church service, it must produce in them the proper mixture of nostalgia and "religious feeling." He shows how the careful selection of music can be especially crucial in focusing the attention of the churchgoers firmly on themselves. To this end "objective" hymns (for example, "A Mighty Fortress"), which emphasize God's majesty, power, mercy, or love, are to be avoided in favor of "subjective" ones (for example, "Sweet Hour of Prayer"), which are "preoccupied with the feelings, reactions, desires, hopes, and longings of the individual worshiper" and often "have texts which are little short of gibberish."

We are assured that by faithfully following the advice in the first six chapters the preacher will inevitably find himself in a position to start his climb to more comfortable and prestigious fields of service. (A timetable is provided.) Chapter seven begins the discussion of church policies. The terminology here is that of the Methodist church (bishop, board executive, etc.), but no special genius is required to translate these titles into ones more familiar to Seventh-day Adventists. Some of the parallels thus recognized serve us at present, I trust, only as warnings, but in other respects it may appear that we are not entirely as peculiar as we would like to think — either in our personal attitudes toward the clergy or in their attitudes toward the church organization.

It is revealing that Smith feels the necessity to close his book with a "Benediction" in which he drops his satirical mask and tries to explain why he feels that his unusual treatment of religious ideas is appropriate.

It behooves us then — those of us who love the church — to do what we can to eliminate the ridiculous, the superficial, and the trivial so that the glory and the dedication and the relevance may be seen unobscured.

Some sincere Christians insist that this end is best accomplished by pretending that there is nothing ridiculous, superficial, or trivial about the church. But so to pretend is to underestimate the perceptive powers of those outside the church, especially the well-educated materialists and the keen-minded unregenerate. That they are quicker to detect the ridiculous in the church than they are to see its glory is due in part to

their lack of objectivity. But it doesn't help much for the church to play like it is perfect. These things will not go away for all our pretending.

It is healthier, I think, to acknowledge our shortcomings and poke fun at them than to claim sanctimoniously that they do not exist or at least ought not to be admitted [publicly]. More devils can be routed by a little laughter than by a carload of humorless piety.

It is unfortunate that religious — or should I say pious? — people are so unaccustomed to laughter, especially to laughing at themselves.

B.E.T.

THE BIBLICAL FLOOD AND THE ICE EPOCH
By Donald W. Patten
Pacific Meridian Publishing Company, Seattle, 1966 336 pp $7.50

Why write a book on the biblical flood? Has not this subject been largely relegated to academic limbo?

With these words Donald W. Patten, a disciple of Immanuel Velikovsky,* begins his multifrontal iconoclastic attack on uniformitarian theory in astronomy, geology, biology, and anthropology. In this day of increased specialization one must admire the self-confidence of any man who writes a work so nearly universal in scope, but one must also question his ability to do so competently. Patten's ambitious polemic, if one can bear its burdensome repetitiveness, presents a few interesting theses reviewed here.

The Biblical Flood points out that most Christians have traditionally felt comfortable when working with catastrophism as their integrating theory. In this century, however, many fundamentalists have found immense conflicts in attempting to reconcile the Bible and science; and for the sake of their intellectual integrity, many have sought a reinterpretation of either one or the other. When Velikovsky first began to publish, there were those who felt that his catastrophism would be the mechanism of that reconciliation. The fact that Velikovsky was rejected overwhelmingly by the scientific community and the fact that even the most theologically conservative scientists had been educated by that community tended, Patten believes, to cause a rejection of the initial feeling. The forces of conformity and tradition were at work.

Patten challenges the scientific community to react to catastrophism rationally and maturely, not emotionally. He might have helped the reader do so more easily had he not chosen so often to base his own theories on clearly erroneous information (for example, the supposed existence of vast numbers of quick-frozen Siberian mammoths).

To tilt with contemporary uniformitarian theory by the use of a theoretical lance forged from misinformation becomes ludicrous. The few times this quixotic joust succeeds for him the author vanquishes only theories that uniformitarians themselves have long discarded (such as environmental determinism, as Darwin originally postulated it). The valid information that Patten does use is often presented with a new interpretation. But rather than indicate that his interpretation is different from that of the academic community generally, Patten takes the stance, without even the

briefest explanation, that his is the standard interpretation. (One of his unique uses of data is his bold assumption that several of the psalms were written in the Exodus period, merely because such an interpretation furthers his catastrophic theory.)

For men who have been trained in conventional uniformitarian theory, to adjust to catastrophic theory or methodology is difficult, I believe, but not impossible. Initially catastrophism may seem more like fantasy than science. But if Patten and others who believe that the Bible contains scientific truth would demonstrate a clear understanding of the theories they seek to challenge and of the facts relevant to these refutations *before* they try to convince the scientific community of their own particular overview, it would be easier to break down some of the prejudice against catastrophic theory.

The most frustrating thing about this book is that it holds out the promise of a rational catastrophism as the new integrating scientific theory. But by failing to fulfill the prerequisites, it may well reinforce the doubt that catastrophism will ever be put on a scientific basis. Though some of its theory is interesting, the book is more successful as fascinating fantasy than as a work of lasting scientific value.

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* Immanuel Velikovsky's *Worlds in Collision* (published in 1950) attempts to establish near approaches of the plants Mars and Venus to Earth as the physical mechanism for miraculous and catastrophic events recorded in the Old Testament and in other ancient writings. His *Earth in Upheaval* is a companion work. Both are available in paperback (Delta Books). B.E.T.

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