

As one would expect, *A Search for Meaning in Nature* is fair to opposing views. It is so fair, in fact, that occasionally the clarity of the text suffers. For example, on page 164 the author states: "The creationist should recognize . . . that the existence of gaps, the apparent absence of transitional series between major groups of animals and plants, is not in itself proof that such forms never existed. But on the other side of the picture, the evolutionist must also recognize that apparent absence of certain groups of higher animals and plants in lower strata likewise is not proof that these forms of life were not in existence at the time."

As one man's personal search for meaning, this book will not appeal to everyone. To read it requires concentration; sometimes the problems presented have not been dealt with in a compelling or gripping manner. The whole exercise may seem futile to those who have never asked the appropriate questions. To those who have personally wrestled with the problems of origins and purposes of Creation, however, and who have sought answers in the natural world by means of the scientific method, this work is invaluable.

REFERENCES

- 1 Bernard Ramm, *The Christian View of Science and Scripture* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company 1954).
- 2 Warren Weaver, The imperfections of science, *The American Scientist*, pp. 99-113 (March 1961).
- 3 Alan T. Waterman, The changing environment of science, *Science*, pp. 13-18 (January 1, 1965).
- 4 C. S. Lewis, *The Four Loves* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, Incorporated 1960).

Professors' Porridge

M. JERRY DAVIS

THEOLOGICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

Prepared by SDA Theological Seminary Professors

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This list of "basic books for the minister's library" makes no reference to its purpose, beyond the implications of its title. The intent must be drawn from its content, therefore. My first impression is that the contributors have listed titles which for the greater part would tend to confirm that which the Seventh-day Adventist clergyman already believes about theological questions. The organization of the materials reflects the structure of the seminary curriculum. From the standpoint of enlarging and updating a college or seminary experience or supplementing a scanty theological education, the bibliography offers safe guidelines. On the critical side, I want to call attention to the arrogant style of the annotations:

"This is the sort of book to have on hand when the church or its individual members need legal advice" (p. 1). Does the clergyman give legal counsel? "Catholic in mood but pithy" (p. 4). What does "Catholic in mood" mean? "Beyond the average level of the parish minister" (p. 9). Average level? "His is a very useful work at the point where he does his positive exegesis" (p. 43). Ladd's exegesis is negative at some points?

"Still not as thorough and substantial as it might have been" (p. 55). "A somewhat conservative scholar" (p. 68). "Anyone who hasn't read the first part of this book has not yet grappled with the dramatic force of the biblical meaning of love" (p. 96). "Concedes too much to economic determinism and not enough to divine providence" (p. 105). "If he had ever been 'converted' during an evangelistic campaign he would probably have written a more understanding interpretation" (p. 105). "Its scholarship has been accepted by reputable American church historians" (p. 107). "Engaging style based on reasonably good scholarship" (p. 107).

These examples are perhaps petty to the point of humor. However, I take serious exception to the note appended to Sidney Mead's *The Lively Experiment*: "A provocative work by a man who is sometimes called a 'historian's historian' in spite of his prejudices" (p. 106). Mead once told me, "I've searched twenty-five years for an Adventist who writes history. Your 'histories' come across as propaganda."

Such a bibliography can hardly include every significant work, but the omissions seem glaring, in view of the title's suggestion that these are basic books for the minister's library. The selections seem right for getting one through the academics of seminary but impoverished at the point of helping a minister minister to the kinds of problems that confront him when he leaves the seminary and meets the realities of a parish ministry. There are *fifteen* entries dealing with ministry to personal problems (only three published in the last decade) and *ninety* dealing with missions. A clergyman may preach forty years and not encounter a Buddhist, yet he deals with his congregation daily. Why not more entries where the real problems are?

How can a 1970 bibliography ignore the invasion of drugs in modern society; the implications of Vietnam; a Christian's responsibility to his government (resistance as well as support); the growth of homosexuality, divorce, marital infidelity, student promiscuity, and the whole permissive society? The bibliography is strong in its presentation of the timeless Scriptures, but feeble in its relation to timely issues. The major currents of the Sixties: violence, civil rights, radical theology, communication, automation, situation ethics, and renaissance of lay involvement receive no reference. To ignore such figures as Thomas Althizer, Martin Luther King, Joseph Fletcher, J. A. T. Robinson, James Baldwin, Marshall McLuhan, Eric Fromm, Eldridge Cleaver, Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Rollo May, Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslowe, Harvey Cox, John Cobb, and John Robinson suggests an unfortunate isolationism.

A few inclusions of works that offer social criticism or take a look at society and the church would add perspective: Charles Merrill Smith's *How To Become a Bishop without Being Religious*, Pierre Berton's *The Comfortable Pew*, W. Kilbourn's *Restless Church*, David Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd*, Edward T. Hall's *The Silent Language*. These may be more existential than scholarly, but they speak much truth that needs recognition. In summary, the bibliography appears to see the minister as a scholar. I would like to see a bibliography for the minister as a minister.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

HAROLD F. ZIPRICK (*Abortion in Our Changing World*) joined the Loma Linda University faculty in 1940 and has been chairman of the department of gynecology and obstetrics since 1969. He has the doctor of medicine degree from the University (1937).

BETTY J. STIRLING (*A Sociologist Looks at Abortion*) received the master of arts and the doctor of philosophy degrees from the University of California at Berkeley (1959, 1963). She is professor of sociology at Loma Linda University. She has taught at San Jose State College and at the University of California (San Francisco and Riverside campuses).

R. MAUREEN MAXWELL (*The Nurse and Abortion*) is associate dean of the School of Nursing and director of the graduate program at Loma Linda University. She is a graduate of Pacific Union College (1945) and has degrees from the University of Colorado (master's 1950) and Columbia University (doctor of education 1956).

CLARICE J. WOODWARD, a graduate of Loma Linda University (1962), holds the master of science from the University of California at Los Angeles (1964). She is associate professor of nursing and acting chairman of the department of maternal and child nursing at Loma Linda University. She spent a term of mission service in India.

HARRISON S. EVANS (*The Psychiatrist and Abortion*) has the doctor of medicine degree (1936) from Loma Linda University, where he is now chairman of the department of psychiatry. He is a former president of the National Association of Private Psychiatric Hospitals.

JACK W. PROVONSHA (*An Appraisal of Therapeutic Abortion*) holds the doctor of medicine degree from Loma Linda University (1953), the master of arts from Harvard University (1963), and the doctor of philosophy from Claremont Graduate School (1967). He is professor of philosophy of religion and Christian ethics at Loma Linda University and is the author of a book on philosophy of religion.

ANNA LOU HALL (*The Woman and Abortion*), who received the bachelor of science degree from Loma Linda University in 1961 in the field of medical technology, is the mother of two young sons. Her husband is associate professor of physics at Walla Walla College.

W. PAUL BRADLEY (*Ellen G. White and Her Writings*) is president of the Ellen G. White Estate, Incorporated. He is a graduate of Columbia Union College (1919) and holds the master of arts degree from the University of Southern California (1937). Formerly he was an associate secretary of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

GARY LAND (*Christianity and Society*) is a graduate of Pacific Union College (1966) and holds the master of arts and the doctor of philosophy from the University of California at Santa Barbara (1967, 1970). He is a member of the history faculty at Andrews University.

BRIAN STANLEY BULL (*A Pilgrim's Progress*) is assistant professor of pathology at Loma Linda University. He is a graduate of Walla Walla College (1957) and holds the doctor of medicine (1961) from Loma Linda University.

M. JERRY DAVIS (*Professors' Porridge*), a graduate of Loma Linda (B.A. 1960) and Andrews (M.A., B.D. 1962, 1963) universities, earned the doctor of religion (1967) Claremont Graduate School. He is a member of the Loma Linda University Division of Religion faculty and on the Medical Center chaplain's staff.

BEN JACQUES (*Light; The Dream*), a reporter for the South Bend *Tribune* (Indiana), has contributed poems to several issues of SPECTRUM.