

Notes on Books By and About Adventists

Reviewed by Peggy Corbett

Robert H. Pierson. *Here Comes Adventure*. 159 pp. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1984. \$5.95 (paper)

“They say the Adventists have a group called the Marathons. They come in and build a church in two or three days!” (p. 47). Thus, the reputation of Maranatha Flights International—a Christian Peace Corps founded by John Freeman—passes on by word of mouth. And though half the book elapses before the reader learns Maranatha’s philosophy—helping self through helping others—the skilled organization and selfless spirit of myriads of workers cram the pages with personalities and experiences not to be forgotten by anyone helped by the organization. Interesting as well is Maranatha’s encouragement of an interdenominational character for each project; whoever can help is welcome. Unfortunately, facts and figures litter the pages and the episodic, choppy text detracts from the “thrilling” miracles that one is led to expect at every turn of an MFI project. Yet that “worksheet” atmosphere and the abrupt ending of the report may aptly serve to give the flavor of an organization that is ever planning and never finished.

Geoffrey E. Garne. *In the Sweet Here and Now*. 110 pp. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1984. \$5.95 (paper).

I find it amazing indeed that we are once again offered a book touting the joys of legalism. Admittedly a book for “insiders” (p. 57), Garne advances

his “formula for salvation” (p. 20), based on the assumption that being righteous is equivalent to being obedient (p. 16). With only an assumed transition, Garne introduces the Ten Commandments and then busies himself with counting the number of words in each of the Ten and evaluating its juxtaposition to each of the others in order to determine its importance in enabling us to live the good life here on earth—some seem to carry more weight than others (p. 104), some seem to be easier to keep (p. 43). Included as a bonus are dire predictions of what will come of not being obedient. The book jacket claims a “fresh and fascinating” approach to enjoying legalism, yet I’m pressed to see how numbers and scenarios of what will be if I don’t follow the Ten qualify as “sweet.”

Charles E. Bradford. *The God Between*. 90 pp. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1984. \$5.95 (paper).

Given the fact that most of us consider important people to be busy people, I suppose a natural curiosity arises when we consider God’s “occupation”—what is God doing? Unfortunately, the title chosen for Bradford’s book on that very topic sets an ominous tone for his material to follow. The immediate question arises: Between what? And the ensuing discussion, written as a companion to the Sabbath school lessons for the first quarter of 1985, seems unable to produce many satisfying answers, what with the reader leaping, in analogy, between spaceship, plane, ship, and back to spaceship.

Bradford, the broadly read president of the North American Division, has included many texts describing Christ’s ministry, but has done little to show how verses presenting opposing ideas could fit as a whole. And one puzzles why one of the clearest statements from Jesus, John 16:26, does not

appear at all. Bradford finishes his text with the assuring proof that Christ is our Guide (Rom. 11:36) as well as our Judge (John 5:22-7). Yet he makes no move to align these verses with Hebrews 9, where Paul speaks of Christ's appearing before God on our behalf. "We must not think of Christ's death as satisfying an angry God. . . It is always God who works in Christ to reconcile the world unto Himself" (pp. 49-50). The reader is left wondering just who this discussion is about. Knowing Bradford to be a powerful and effective speaker, perhaps if one heard the text, it would be convincing.

Mervyn A. Warren. *God Made Known*. 94 pp. Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1984. \$5.95 (paper).

A fresh breeze blows through the pages of Mervyn Warren's volume, *God Made Known*. Among the plethora of articles and books available on the how-to's of the Christian life, this book begins with the frank assumption that God wants to be known and, therefore, can be known. From that point the author explores some historical approaches to the search for God and conclusions of that search, and then leads the reader through numerous avenues of discovery, ranging from nature and health through the law, family, and Christ.

Another welcome change from the usual is the inclusion of complete bibliographical information for the wide variety of sources cited (from Barth to *Business Week* to E.G. White). Warren combines scholarly information with explanation, making the views presented understandable to the general reader as well as challenging to those reaching for deeper content. The reader will welcome the author's effort to avoid cliché and peripheral issues and remain intent on his subject. Indeed, one may "come boldly" and receive light.

Peggy Corbett, is a homemaker and *Spectrum's* coeditor of book reviews.

Comparing Adventist Schools to the Competition

James C. Carper and Thomas C. Hunt, eds., *Religious Schooling in America*. 257 pp., indexes. Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1984. \$14.95 (paper).

by Maurice Hodgen

In an effort to remove religious schooling from the periphery of educational discussions, James C. Carper and Thomas C. Hunt have edited a collection of essays on religious schooling in America that seeks to sketch the history of six religious school systems, offers insight into contemporary issues of religious education, and generally stimulates a higher level of debate about American education.

The authors of the historical chapters emphasize those particular aspects of their denominations that they believe make their brands of religious education distinctive. Calvinist schools, for example, seek "distinctives" based in their theology; Catholic schools wrestle with their identity in a church redefined by Vatican II; Christian day schools' great diversity probably finds focus from fighting secular humanism; Jewish day schools are tied to profound ideological questions in their congregations; Lutheran schools are presented as their congregations' ministry of Christian training to Lutheran youth; and Seventh-day Adventist schools develop steadily against a background apparently free of problems.

Within the historical section of the book, the essay on Jewish day schools, by Eduardo Rauch, and the Thomas Hunt and Norlene Kunkel chapter on Catholic schools (by far the longest chapter at 33 pages) are clearly the best written. Moreover, these two chapters convincingly demonstrate the value and importance of understanding denominational preoccupations and historical