

IV. PRACTICAL THEOLOGY.

Youth and the Church: A Manual for Teachers and Leaders of Intermediates, Seniors and Young People. By Cynthia Pearl Maus, Secondary Division Superintendent, Department of Bible Schools of the American Christian Missionary Society. Cincinnati, The Standard Publishing Company, 1919. 186 pp. \$1.00.

If there is anything in theory or description of method for the subjects contemplated in this book that the author has omitted it would not be easy to name. It is "up to the minute" and presented in the most approved scientific way. Organization, instruction, expression, entertainment, all are presented in vitally interesting fashion.

Jesus and the Young Man of Today. By John M. Holmes. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1919. xv-170 pp. \$1.00.

"This book is to deal with the life and teachings of the historical Jesus. We wish to learn what He actually said and did, and to ascertain what foundation we have for our Christian faith."

"The logical way, then, to study the acts and teachings of Jesus, is not to try to harmonize the three gospels but to use Mark as a basis, and to study in Matthew and Luke the material Mark does not contain. This plan is followed in this book."

The trained student will know at once where to place this little volume, which is intended for use primarily of young men affected by modern questionings concerning the historicity and rationality of "the things which have been fulfilled among us". Its plan is fifteen "studies" subdivided into lessons for each day of a week, except the last "study", which has lessons for three days.

The "Conclusion" reads: "We have finished this brief survey of the life of Jesus, the Christ. We have sought only a minimum of belief but have endeavored to find at least a solid basis upon which each can build a reasonable faith for himself. Perhaps the views of the writer will change as time goes on, for 'we reach truth only by continual adjustments to new light'. Whatever you believe or do not believe, follow Jesus Christ."

That the purpose is positive, high, constructive, is clear enough. That many of the lessons show profound insight and have great practical value is equally true.

Quite as obvious is it that the writer is concerned to be modern and that he deals out negative critical conclusions with easy assur-

ance. The "Introduction" rules out "the Fourth Gospel" as not at all historically trustworthy and as composed in the interest of dogma. Its author "wrote consciously in the interest of" "a narrower message, in accordance with the idea of the church" and "under the form of a biography of Jesus it deals with problems and difficulties which did not arise until after his death". These quotations (with approval) from E. F. Scott cause one to raise the question whether Mr. Holmes has any real acquaintance with John's Gospel. Certain, it makes no claim to being "a biography" and the declaration that its "problems and difficulties" "did not arise until after the death of Christ" is, to say the very least, superficial, if one accepts, as he professes to do, the authority of Mark and Q.

The author denies the historicity of all physical miracles and argues definitely against the resurrection of the body of Jesus.

From its standpoint, it is serious and aims to be helpful, and is splendidly done. One who knows the splendid gentlemen who financed the publication cannot but wonder whether they were fully aware of the attitude of the book.

W. O. CARVER.

Companions of the Way: A Handbook of Religion for Beginners. By Edward Mortimer Chapman. Boston and New York, Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1918. 192 pp. \$1.25.

A handbook of Christianity, not of religion in its most general sense, is what we find here. It is a fresh, incisive, untechnical, spiritual and practical interpretation of the essential facts and factors in the making of a Christian and living the Christian life. The author seeks not at all to find the "least common division" of Christian doctrine or experience. Rather does he aim at leading one into appreciation of the Christ life and ideal as to be grasped and realized in largeness, in fullness. It must be said that he goes a bit too far in avoiding the dogmatic and leaves one in suspense as to the Person of Christ, more than is best.

Designed for young people, the book is stimulating for people of any age. Keeping "beginners" in mind, the interpretations are yet so vital as to instruct and stimulate many more mature Christians if only by means of "stirring up their pure minds by remembrance".

There are six chapters, including an Introduction, dealing with the essential elements in a Christian, with Faith, Conduct, "Making One's Soul", and the principles and practice of recreation. It is an unusually fine book on religion—Christianity in its practical aspects. It is manly, human, exalted.

W. O. CARVER.