

4. SOCIOLOGY.

A Man and His Money. By Harvey Reeves Calkins, Stewardship Secretary in the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Methodist Book Concern, New York and Cincinnati, 1914. 353 pp. \$1.00 net.

This is a very effective presentation of the doctrine of Stewardship. The author has a fine faculty for clear statement and illustration, and brings home to the reader in a telling way the facts of the divine ownership and human stewardship of wealth. He rightly insists that, from the Christian point of view, the fundamental trouble in our present situation is that we have lost the sense of divine ownership. The phrase even when we use it and profess to believe it really means very little to us, or at best has a very vague meaning. It does not really influence modern Christians very much either in their methods of acquiring wealth or in their modes of using it.

But while I can say what has been said very heartily, the book seems to me to have some rather serious defects.

The author seems to imply that the divine ownership of wealth is an idea peculiar to the Hebrew religion and to Christianity; or at least that it was in these religions the principle received any special emphasis. As a matter of fact, it has been a principle in all the earlier types of religion. ..

Again when the author deals with economic questions, his thought is a little cloudy. Especially is his conception of "value" hazy. It is important for writers who deal with the Christian doctrine of wealth to have a basis of clear scientific knowledge of economics.

Dr. Calkins teaches the duty of tithing with great emphasis; but goes too far, making it a law binding upon the Christian conscience. It is a questionable procedure to take out one law of the Jewish theocratic commonwealth and make it a law for Christians under all conditions to the end of time. The principle of divine ownership which underlay the law of tithes in the Jewish commonwealth is, of course, eternal; but is that principle to be applied always and everywhere just as it was in that particular system?

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