

which become tributary to the main stream. Meanwhile also the "approach through Faith and Order" takes us to Lausanne in 1927 where a continuation committee is appointed and the final conference on Faith and Order meets at Edinburgh just after the Oxford conference. Oxford and Edinburgh named committees which met at Utrecht in 1938 and started the World Council on its course. An Epilogue by Dr. Samuel McCrea Cavert brings the World Council up to date.

Dr. Brown interprets with incisiveness as he tells the story and we have flashes of groups and personalities whose lives were built into the structure. Appendices include nine historical documents and there is an Ecumenical Bibliography by Paul G. Macy. The chart of "The Ecumenical Tree" needs revision in the interest of historical adequacy.

While not always objective and although at times lacking in complete accuracy, Dr. Brown has left us a volume which is especially timely as the churches of the world face the aftermath of war and the task of reconstruction.

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### THE REBIRTH OF THE GERMAN CHURCH

By STEWART W. HERMAN. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1946. 297 pages. \$2.50.

Future historians may regard the dozen years of Nazi rule as a decisive epoch in the long story of the Christian Church. In this momentous setting the struggle of the German Church, Catholic and Protestant, against what people on the continent call secularism is of extreme importance. Stewart Herman's *The Rebirth of the German Church* (the title is largely the publisher's choice) is the best recent account of which I know. The British edition appeared in November about a half year after the American. Requests for copies are coming from Finland, Norway, France, Czechoslovakia, and elsewhere, to say nothing of Germany. Everywhere there are people who want to know what happened "inside Germany" particularly with respect to the Church. Dr. Herman's book will whet this appetite. His rapid journalistic style, somewhat in the tempo of Vincent Sheean's *Personal History*, conveys a readable mixture of general impressions and miscellaneous information. One almost expects something like this from a young man who has spent most of his twelve years since graduating from Gettysburg Seminary as pastor of the American Church in Berlin, or in some other ecclesiastical or diplomatic work that has kept him busy in Britain and on the Continent.

*The Rebirth of the German Church*, prefaced with a telling word by Martin Niemöller, brings together both historical and current material. What is left of the one time naziphile German Christians is now, as the chapters indicate, "religious rubble." The collapse of their movement, however, reveals the "faulty structure" of the pre-Hitler church, and discloses the importance of the "confessional rock" which withstood the storm of nazi opposition. The Church's refusal to bless the war or to pray for victory is a tale of "friends amid the foe." The collapse of Germany's military efforts and the effect of allied occupation on religious life receive a

good chapter. The crucial subject of repentance and reform in the church as highlighted in October, 1945, at Stuttgart, is treated with tact and understanding. The author was a member of the ecumenical delegation meeting with German leaders. He was also present at the stirring assembly at Treysa in August, 1945, when the so-called EKID, or Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland, was organised and the time had come for "laying new foundations." From friends and travellers he gathered data for a striking chapter on those who live "between Hammer and Sickle" in the Russian zone. His participation in the commission which visited Germany in January, 1946, to investigate social needs (out of which grew CRALOG or the Council of Relief Agencies Licensed to Operate in Germany), provided material for a vividly tragic chapter on the plight of the people "when winter came" and the illusion of peace and liberation vanished. The concluding chapter sets forth the problems and challenge of peace. Herman concludes, "In many respects the struggle of the German Church has only begun. A new beginning has been made, in fact the Church in Germany seems to have been reborn. But will it live?" (p. 272).

The perplexing problem of the church's struggle for existence in a secularised world has thus been highlighted in the case of Germany. *The Rebirth of the German Church* is not the last word on the subject; actually it is an excellent opening word for the post-war period. Much more remains to be studied and learned before a definitive history of these crucial years can be produced. Dr. Herman has rendered the service of a pioneer. But there are at least two other works which should be known and read in connection with Herman's book. These are Johannes Neuhaeuser, *Kreuz und Hakenkreuz, der Kampf des National-Sozialismus gegen die Katholische Kirche und der Kirchliche Widerstand* (München, Verlag Katholische Kirche Bayern, 1946, 2 vol., 384 and 440 pp.); and the Uppsala theologian's scholarly account of the German church struggle to 1939, Gunnar Westin, *The Protestant Church in Germany and Sweden* (printed for private circulation at the Oxford University Press, 1945, 416 pp.). Unfortunately, both of these works, like so many others of late, have been printed in very limited editions. Other competent European scholars are now at work gathering basic documents and seeking to tell the story before its costly lessons are forgotten. But the material is scattered, destruction especially in cities has obliterated much of what was held as treasure for a day of peace, and hunger and mental weariness stand in the way of any speedy course of action. Nevertheless, the manner in which the church fared and will continue to fare in Germany is a story of ecumenical and global significance.

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