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Walter Rauschenbusch: Selected Writings (Review)

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fine accomplishment, C. C. Goen for his work as editor, and the Seven Locks Press for a handsome book.

Lilly Endowment, Inc.
Indianapolis, Indiana

ROBERT WOOD LYNN

Walter Rauschenbusch: Selected Writings. Edited by WINTHROP S. HUDSON. Sources of American Spirituality. New York: Paulist Press, 1984. v + 252 pp. \$14.95.

The centrality of personal religious experience and its increasing inseparability from social concerns in the thought and career of Walter Rauschenbusch permeate this volume, part of a series on the history of American spirituality. These themes will not surprise those who have read much of Rauschenbusch or are acquainted with Robert T. Handy's *The Social Gospel in America, 1870-1920* (1966). Nevertheless, they merit reemphasis and the kind of elaboration provided in Winthrop S. Hudson's introductory chapter and well-chosen portions of Rauschenbusch's own letters, addresses, prayers, and books.

The selections begin with a letter written shortly before Rauschenbusch's death, in which he stated: "My life would seem an empty shell if my personal religion were left out of it" (p. 46). From his youthful conversion to those penultimate words, he maintained an evangelical emphasis on individual regeneration and piety. As a pastor in the 1880s and 1890s, he wished to bring people into personal relations with Christ. Writing about missions in 1892, he defined their primary purpose as "the extension of faith in the crucified and risen Christ"—this was "first in the order of importance, first in the order of time" (p. 67). As his commitment to social reform intensified, he insisted on its linkage with personal religion. His writings are full of pithy statements uniting the two. He declared the gospel to be "one and immutable," called for "a revolution both inside and outside," and criticized "one-sidedness" in either the personal or social direction. In his later writings he probed the meaning of the Social Gospel as a "distinct type of religious experience" (p. 202).

Given Hudson's past interest in transatlantic relationships, it may be surprising that he focuses principally on the American evangelical rootage of Rauschenbusch's spirituality. There are occasional references to European figures, especially William Arthur's *The Tongue of Fire* (1856), a holiness work, but no systematic discussion of English and German influences. The influence of the family of Leighton Williams during Rauschenbusch's early years in New York City looms larger in importance than any other particular "source." In addition, there is little explicit analysis of shifts in Rauschenbusch's understanding of personal religious experience in relation to changes in his understanding of society, though the raw materials for it are here.

The selections themselves impress one with the emotive power of the Social Gospel and with the trenchancy and vividness of the best of Rauschenbusch's prose.

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The Magdalen Metaphysicals: Idealism and Orthodoxy at Oxford, 1901–1945. By JAMES PATRICK. Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1985. xlv + 190 pp. \$18.95.

James Patrick recounts the thought of four Oxford philosophers who attempted to carry on the idealist tradition of T. H. Green against the prevailing realist and logical positivist academic philosophies. Their approach was rooted in Greek metaphysics and in literature. C. C. J. Webb, J. A. Smith, C. S. Lewis, and R. G. Collingwood were not a "school," for they disagreed on many points, but they shared a conviction that contemporary thought had betrayed Western civilization, a betrayal that could be halted only by reemphasizing the place of religion and history in philosophical thinking. Smith excepted, they as Christians believed that Christian theology was at the heart of Western social and intellectual as well as religious experience and was capable of making worthwhile, even vital, contributions to modern thought. They all sought to heal the separation of religion and reason and to restore the lost unity of European thought.

Historians should find this book stimulating and useful, but ultimately unsatisfactory. The essays on Collingwood and Lewis are the best. Patrick challenges the prevalent interpretation of Collingwood by insisting that orthodox Christianity was at the center of his philosophical work and that Collingwood's chief interest was in arguing the positive relationship between Western thought in all realms and Christian theology. Collingwood's conception of "historical thinking" was at the heart of this argument, but Patrick neglects what he meant by this phrase and especially the epistemological problems involved in historical knowledge. Similarly, Lewis's apologetic books are described, his conversion chronicled, but whether his writing succeeded philosophically is left unclear.

The shortcomings of the book's two strongest parts are related to its most serious weakness. An inexcusable error (p. 12) which confuses G. E. Moore's *Principia Ethica* with Bertrand Russell and A. N. Whitehead's *Principia Mathematica* suggests, as do other passages, that Patrick lacks the knowledge of intellectual history in this era needed to carry out the analysis his subject requires. The position of the "positivist-modernist-realist" adversary never adequately emerges. Neither Patrick nor his principals engage its issues and criticisms. The uninformed reader will be left to wonder why this philosophy was so persuasive and why the attacks of the four had relatively little impact