September 2015

Shailer Mathews Correspondence

Shailer Mathews 1863-1941

Marion Cobb Fuller
*Maine State Library*

Hilda McLeod
*Maine State Library*

Maine State Library

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MATHEWS, Shailer.

Born at Portland, May 26, 1863. - Died October 23, 1941.
Dr. Shailer Mathews,
5736 Woodlawn Avenue,
Chicago, Illinois.

My dear Dr. Mathews:

When I read your very interesting
criticism of Lippmann's "Preface to morals", in the Current
History Magazine I was reminded that you are not as yet
represented in our Maine Author Collection. If I have written
to you before, please pardon me if I seem insistent. Since
Maine has the honor of numbering you among her writers, I am
very desirous of having the privilege of adding your
books to our collection.

The Maine State Library is assembling autographed
copies of the works of authors born in this state. These books
are not for loan, but constitute a permanent exhibit known as
the Maine Author Collection. We do not ask you to give us
your books—we are very willing to pay for them—but we do ask
that you autograph each one, and we hope that you will add,
also, an inscription or a note about the writing of it, especially
if it happened to be written in this state.

To add to the collection's value as a
reference source, we are collecting biographical and critical
material about our authors and their works. Will you
send us some information about yourself, something more personal
than Who's Who offers, please, and, if possible a picture of the
house where you were born as well as a photograph of yourself
so that we may have in our files first hand information about
you for the use of present and future students of Maine's
literary history. Clippings about you and your will be very welcome
and all correspondence with you will be preserved.

We realize that granting our request may
occasion you some bother but we trust that you are sufficiently
interested in your native state to wish to help make a collection
of the works of its writers representative and complete. The
collection already numbers several hundred and one of its interesting
features is the diversity of the books included in it.
Dr. Shailer Mathews

#2

We hope that it will be convenient for you to send us very soon the books which you consider most representative of your best work, a complete set, if you care to send them. Please make your bill for the books in duplicate to the Maine State Library.

Very truly yours,

[Signature]

MAINE STATE LIBRARY

BY MCF
November 12, 1929

My dear Miss Fuller:

I shall be glad to do as you say, autograph some books for you. I wish I had them on hand to give them to the Library, but I have not.

I am sending you a photograph. The house in which I was born was destroyed in the Portland fire. So I am afraid it has escaped the immortality which it deserves!

I have so many books to my credit, or discredit, that I do not believe it would be worth while to send on more than four or five, which should include my work in history, as well as in the field of theology.

I am afraid that my biographical material would not be very interesting. The main facts can be found in Who's Who, as you have discovered. If I think of anything else I shall be glad to send it to you.

Very truly yours,

Miss Marion C. Fuller,
Maine State Library,
Augusta, Maine.
Dr. Shailer Mathews,
Divinity School,
University of Chicago,
Chicago, Illinois.

My dear Dr. Mathews;—

Thank you for the picture which has just arrived and for your letter. We are very glad to have both to add to our Maine Author files.

We hope that you will be willing to list for us the four or five of your books which you consider most representative of your work, and then we will order them sent from the publishers to you for your autograph. We know that all this is causing you a lot of bother, but we hope that your prompt response to our former letter indicates that you are interested in our collection. We very much wish to have it contain autographed copies of at least a selection of your books.

Very truly yours,

MAINE STATE LIBRARY

BY MCF
My dear Miss Fuller:

In reply to your letter of November 18, I would say that it is not any bother to give you these titles and I hope they will be of use to you.

- The Spiritual Interpretation of History – Harvard University Press.
- The Faith of Modernism – Macmillan.
- Jesus on Social Institutions – Macmillan.
- The Contributions of Science to Religion – Appleton.

Very truly yours,

Miss Marion Cobb Fuller,
Maine State Library,
Augusta, Maine.
March 26, 1932

Dr. Shailer Mathews,
5736 Woodlawn Avenue,
Chicago, Illinois.

My dear Dr. Mathews;-

We are mailing to you today a copy of your recent book *The Growth of the Idea of God*, which we wish to add to our Maine Author Collection. Will you be so kind as to take the trouble to autograph and inscribe it for us?

Very truly yours,

MAINE STATE LIBRARY

Enc.

Address label
15¢ returned postage
April 4, 1932.

My dear Mrs. Fuller:

In accordance with your request of March 26, I have autographed the copy you sent me of my recent book, *The Growth of the Idea of God*, and I am returning it to you by this mail.

Very truly yours,

Mrs. Marion C. Fuller,
Maine State Library,
Augusta, Maine.

SM:KH
April 8, 1932

Dr. Shailer Mathews,
The Divinity School,
University of Chicago,
Chicago, Illinois.

My dear Dr. Mathews;-

Thank you for autographing for us a copy of your recent book, *The Growth of the Idea of God*. We received the book this morning and we take pleasure in adding it to our Maine Author Collection.

Very truly yours,

MAINE STATE LIBRARY

BY MCP
January 24, 1935

Dr. Shailer Matthews
The Divinity School
University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Dr. Matthews:

We have noticed the announcement of publication of your latest book, CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIAL PROCESS, which we of course will want in our Maine Author Collection.

You have been kind enough to inscribe the previous books for our Collection; therefore, we are ordering the publishers to send you a copy, which we hope can claim a moment of your busy day for an autograph.

We are glad to be able to add another Matthews book to our Collection, especially such an inspirational book as CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIAL PROCESS promises to be. May we congratulate you upon the publication of this book.

Very truly yours

Maine State Library

Secretary
January 30, 1935.

Miss Hilda McLeod, Secretary,
Maine State Library,
Augusta, Maine.

My dear Miss McLeod:

I am very glad to autograph your volume of CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIAL PROCESS which I am returning herewith.

I came in contact with your Library last summer when from my farm in Monson I engaged one of your libraries. I shall do so again this year. I think it is a wonderful enterprise on your part.

Very truly yours,

[Signature]

SM/M
February 4, 1935

Dr. Shailer Matthews
The American Institute of
Sacred Literature
The University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Dr. Matthews:

CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIAL PROCESS has arrived, and we wish to thank you for kindly autographing this book.

Thank you, also, for the generous words for our library service. We are glad that you enjoyed the library last summer, and we anticipate the pleasure of again serving you.

Your splendid contribution to our Maine Author Collection is received with thankfulness for such inspirational work, and with pride that we can claim you as a Maine Author.

May we congratulate you upon this book, and wish you future success.

Very truly yours

Maine State Library

Secretary
"Christianity and Social Process"

Dr. Shatter Mayhem, Summer Resident of Maine, Writes Another Book of Social Value

With many theological ac­tor in life being like a film of clay under the batter­
ing of modern scientific research, too often giving people, including college and university students, in a distressing debris of doubt and insecurity, there is one effort to be found in such a work as Dr. Shatter Mayhem has just written, "Christianity and Social Process."

Maine knows Dr. Mayhem, as well as Illinois where he is dean­emeritus of the divinity school in the University of Chicago. For his ancestral home is beautifully located in Monson, overlooking a hill-enshrined lake and within sight of Borestone's shining peak. Dr. Matthews and his family pass successive summers, his delight then being the oversight of his ex­tensive orchard.

Once every season he is invited to the village church, which always is crowded to the doors with friendly people from far and near, to talk about things of the spirit. His is a gentle soul, benign and fatherly. Wide travel and long years of research and thinking have imbued his words with philo­sophic tone. He is a type from whom one absorbs far more than he merely says.

Maine people also know Dr. Matthews as an author of over a score of books along religious lines, including such titles as "The Social Gospel," "The Church and the Changing Order," "The Faith of Modernism," and "The Growth of the Idea of God."

This new book, "Christianity and Social Process," is really a col­lection of lectures deliv­ered in the last two years under that Foundation, and in the fra­ternal spirit of non-parli­amental Religions. In his introduction, Dr. Matthews addresses the East and Indian sects and interested hope they may study the social as­pects of their religions in the same spirit.

There are seven chapters of in­terpretative nature, all pertinent to present-day problems in the Christian church and in religious life generally. Dr. Matthews in the first chap­ter on "Religion and Social Behavior," takes exceptions to treating Christianity "as a system of truths interpreted as if there were neither time nor space, historical relativity nor social process, hum­ans beings nor religious institu­tions, but only true or false formulas." Religions should be studied historically.

Religions have differing tech­niques but a common function, that of "setting up personal relations with superhuman activities upon which is superimposed the individual dependent." Religion as a search for truth is only part of the pic­ture. It also is a form of social ac­tion, affecting other behaviors. Experiment with natural forces eventually is made, in a machine, doing what the gods once were asked to do.

But he believes abandonment of religious conventions has within it the possibilities of moral tragedy. Ideals must be found more far-reaching to meet needs of a new social order, the religions tend to champion the status quo. Another facet appears in the chapter on "Christianity as an aspect of western civilization," with Jesus as an ideal and revealer of God and savior of man. "Jesus himself rather than his teaching has been the center of Christian­i­ty," significantly points out the author; but morality not mystics is the soul of this movement. Men should love their enemies and for­give, as they seek forgiveness. In the "religious aspect of the evolu­tion of Western civilization," the theme is developed at length.

Then Dr. Matthews considers "The Social Morality of the Christian Religion." To point to failings in human performance is not scientific judgment. As time goes on, in the West and in the East, he be­lieves "there will be evolved from the social process mores and insti­tutions capable of carrying forward this basic idea of the value of the human individual as he grows more personal because of a faith in the presence of a Heavenly Fa­ther." Still further differentiation is due.

"Christianity and the Individual" traces historical dogma about fall­en man and human salvation and continued existence after death. He warns against mistaking for Chris­tian individualism the vagaries of self-realization which mean self-con­ centered pleasure. Happiness is the outcome of perfection, not the reverse. It is interesting to find that Dr. Matthews, in the face of mod­ern social and economic problems, believes the rationalization of privilege by intelligent technique will be directly furth­ered by a sense of the worth of personality.

The church, he insists, must re­gard intelligent morality as the channel of divine help, and that it can be of exceptional serv­ice to a social order by raising leaders of moral self-direction which it demands. Monasticism and non-participation in social life should be avoided. The church can develop responsibility for a social order.

To pursue the thread of Dr. Matthews' reasoning thru the re­main­ing chapters is worth while, because it invites reading of the book at length. It is the purpose of this sur­vey to provoke exactly this thing. Numerous agreement in details, but it is well that so provocative and thought­ful a book should receive widespread consider­ation.

In "Christianity and the Morality of Groups," Dr. Matthews reviews the terrible results of identified religious loyalties with political rivalries, where coercive methods have displaced Christian ideals. It is the church and Christian ideals which may prevent the infantilism of human nature and coerced uniformity. Christian values must be put to work intelligently.

It is logical for the author next to consider "Christianity and Eco­nomics." He reviews the period thru which work was deemed Bib­lically imposed on man, and wealth as means of dispensing charity. Now people have lost confidence that wealth can produce security; and the great question is whether love and co-operation can form a basis of secure economic life. The social gospel is outlined, and the basic need is pointed out that human rather than economic welfare must be final. "Society," he affirms, "has not really become moral until personal considerations are superior to the strictly economic."

Again, he insists, "The prin­ciples of Jesus, not more than the prin­ciples of any other teacher, have magical power. They will not work unless people are ready to take those dominant elements of their behavior. Also: "A larger recogni­tion of human values in industry is imperative if civilization is not to fall into a welter of revolutions."

There is room for meditation—and action—it this thought: "It is a terrible indictment of any religion if it shows itself incapable of such intelligent extension of its moral ideals (to establish human values above economic efficiency), and if it is like the orthodox church of Russia, it must be destroyed in order that human values may be forward." In his final chapter, Dr. Mat­thews considers "Christianity and Internationalism," a sketchy history. Finally National recognition of rights of other Na­tions emerges; and the possibility of National morality. Religion should no longer sanctify em­nities. He is discerning enough to see that international peace is more than pres­ervation of the status quo set by war. It is intelligent adjustment of racial and economic conflicts; it is the formation of a society of Na­tions for living together; and inter­national mores must be de­veloped. "Today the world faces the choice between a morality of Na­tions, and revolution, war, chaos and misery."

Dr. Matthews is not arbitrary in his purpose of tolerance and a judi­cial mind. He faces facts with impartial mind and points out possible courses that may be taken. He expects no mil­lennium at once. But he has faith and hope in essentially Christian ideals when intelligently put to work by individuals and Nations.
"Creative Christianity"
By Shailer Matthews

Maine Religious Educator Summons Churches to Deal with Social and Economic Problems with Intelligence and Love and If Need Be Sacrifice

(Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn.)

For a pertinent book of religious nature, which is an effort to "discover whether Christians can be induced to carry their faith into social conditions," comes from a Maine author, Dr. Shailer Matthews, Dean Emeritus of the Divinity School of Chicago University. Dr. Matthews is a native of Monson; and for many seasons, when not abroad, he has spent his summers on the old homestead in Piscataquis county where his young orchard has been his hobby. Well-known as an author of numerous religious books, Dr. Matthews has collected for this new volume, in its neat green cover, the substance of the Cole lectures which he delivered last year. There is emphasis on the historical background, with a discussion not of social panaceas but of trends and possibilities as to Christian influence.

First he considers creative Christianity with love operative in group action. Incidentally, he discredits the argument that it would be sufficient if all individuals were made Christians to ensure the solution of social problems. Co-operative technique is essential. His creative message resolves itself into expressing a need of creating moral discontent, arousing enmity against social evils which injure one's fellowman. He sees clearly how the church can divorce itself from its age by leaders who ignore or mishandle their opportunities. Love as a basis for all human relations provides for justice, not mere preservation of privilege.

In analyzing the creative organization, Dr. Matthews looks for a church which conserves not orthodoxy but real values. A religion must not become an end in itself.

Under the chapter heading of Christianity as a social ferment the author takes up missions and Christian responsibility for social evils. "The message of Jesus is a call to the privileged to give justice. If they do not make the sacrifice involved," he warns, "with a significance that recalls the prophetic nature of Bishop B. Stanley Jones' last book, "Christ and His Substitute for Communism," "the underprivileged will seek to obtain justice by force." Then he challenges the church: "How can such an alternative be faced indifferently?"

"Christianity and Modern Culture" is a chapter heading under which he debates theology and science and presents his conviction that religion can be enriched by acceptance of new knowledge. The church can avail itself of modern psychology. It also can deal with economic problems in the impending crisis, "adopting the most effective aid of the sciences as it evangelizes the inevitable. As science discovers methods that promise most for personal welfare, it is the duty of the church to induce men to recognize and accept them. Otherwise men will reply upon terror to gain what love is unwilling to give."

The last chapter deals with "Christianity in a Changing World" and new obligations with regard to family, politics, business and international relations. He believes that "just as the problems set by the rise of the middle-class power were incapable of solution under old political forms, so in our modern world the new conditions of economic life can be faced only by some type of united action which the State alone can furnish. In such a critical situation the indifference on the part of Christians to the need of moral and intelligent politics is discouraging if not disconcerting."

In a word, Dr. Matthews is convinced that Christianity must "more rationalize nationalism"; that some group must be established in which national mores can be developed. Nationalism is not an end but a means, an instrument for human welfare.

This too briefly outlines major themes in this new work. Dr. Matthews is a scholar and ripe student of history. He is dispassionate in his treatment of stirring questions. Yet he is direct and forceful, with a constructive program for the churches and Christian people. His is a summons to action that is intelligent and love-motivated.

Like Bishop Jones' book of this spring Dr. Matthews' volume is peculiarly significant in its prophetic warnings. Both agree that in this perilous waiting period, before definite trends take shape toward adjustment or toward violence, there is imperative need for Christianity to be a vital, salvaging and directing force, with emphasis on human values.

It is a book not to be overlooked by thinking people, alert to the world crisis. It is easy reading. But it needs pondering and then—he would say—quick action.
August 20, 1937

Cokesbury Press
810 Broadway
Nashville, Tennessee

Gentlemen:

Please send a copy of CREATIVE CHRI­S­TIANITY to the following address:

Dr. Shailer Mathews
The American Institute of Sacred Literature
The University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois,

and send the bill, in duplicate, to the
Maine State Library.

Very truly yours,

MAINE STATE LIBRARY
BY

hm

SECRETARY
August 20, 1937

The Macmillan Company
60 Fifth Avenue
New York City

Gentlemen:

Please send a copy of NEW FAITH FOR OLD
to the following address:

Dr. Shailer Mathews
The American Institute of Sacred Literature
The University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois,

and send the bill, in duplicate, to the Maine
State Library.

Very truly yours

hm

MAINE STATE LIBRARY
August 20, 1937

Dr. Shailer Mathews
The American Institute of Sacred Literature
The University of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Dr. Mathews:

We notice that the Maine Author Collection lacks a copy of each of your most recent books; NEW FAITH FOR OLD and CREATIVE CHRISTIANITY.

We are therefore requesting the publishers to send you a copy of each, trusting that with your usual kind interest, you will inscribe the books and send them to us for the collection.

We hope your summer is a pleasant one, and that its days have not all been spent in the city.

Very truly yours

MAINE STATE LIBRARY
BY

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SECRETARY
October 25, 1937

Dr. Shailer Mathews
5736 Woodlawn Avenue
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Dr. Mathews:

The copy of CREATIVE CHRISTIANITY which you have been so kind as to autograph and send on to us for the Maine Author Collection, has been received, and it is with pleasure that we add it to the collection.

We anticipate receiving NEW FAITH FOR OLD, which we ordered from the Macmillan Company at the same time that we placed the order for CREATIVE CHRISTIANITY. We enclose a label which you may use to send the other book, and sufficient postage, we trust, to cover the mailing charges on both.

Sometime, when you are again in Maine, we hope you will be able to call at the library and autograph several books of yours which we have in the collection, but which lack this individual touch.

We are always very grateful to you for your interest in this project, and for your continued cooperation in autographing the books for us.

Very truly yours

MAINE STATE LIBRARY
BY

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Encls.

SECRETARY
Miss Hilda McLeod,
Maine State Library,
Augusta, Maine.

My dear Miss McLeod:

The publishers sent my New Faith for Old and Creative Christianity to my address at the University of Chicago. They were not forwarded, and I found them on my return a few days ago. I have autographed each, and have sent them on to you. I hope they reach you safely.

I spent four months this summer — barring a hurried trip to Europe — in my old farm at Monson, so I am a pretty good Maine citizen yet.

My address will be the University of Chicago for the winter.

Very truly yours,

Shailer Mathews
October 29, 1937

Dr. Shailer Mathews
5736 Woodlawn Avenue
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Dr. Mathews:

NEW FAITH FOR OLD has reached us, and we thank you for autographing the book for the Maine Author Collection.

We hope your vacation at Monson was a pleasant one -- such a beautiful spot for an old farm! And indeed, we never cease to claim you as a Maine person, nor to be proud of that fact.

Very truly yours

MAINE STATE LIBRARY
BY

hm

SECRETARY
November 9, 1938

Dr. Shailer Mathews
5736 Woodlawn Avenue
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Dr. Mathews:

Congratulations are due you once more for an outstanding contribution to your particular field of literature. The book, THE CHURCH AND THE CHRISTIAN, has already been added to the lending section of our library; and we are requesting the publishers to send a copy to you, which we hope you will inscribe for the Maine Author collection, in continuation of your gratefully remembered kindness.

We hope that your summer was a pleasant one, and that you had opportunity to escape to your Monson farm for at least a few weeks.

Very truly yours

MAINE STATE LIBRARY
BY

hm
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SECRETARY
December 5, 1938

Dr. Shailer Mathews
5736 Woodlawn Avenue
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Dr. Mathews:

Thank you very much for so kindly autographing the Maine Author Collection copy of THE CHURCH AND THE CHRISTIAN.

We are particularly glad to add such an altogether fine volume to the exhibit, and appreciate anew the privilege of claiming you as a Maine author.

Very truly yours

MAINE STATE LIBRARY

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SECRETARY