Book Notes / Notes de lecture

Heiko A. Oberman. *The Two Reformations: The Journey from the Last Days to the New World*. Ed. Donald Weinstein. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003. Pp. xix, 235.

Reading Heiko Oberman is one of the signal joys of Reformation scholars, and with the appearance of this posthumous volume, that joy is considerably attenuated. This book contains much unpublished material, and those chapters that are not new have been rescued from more obscure locations. Weinstein's careful editing captures Oberman's intent to show the respective contributions of Luther and Calvin to the modern world. And in what amounts to an extended aside, Oberman once and for all demolishes the link between Luther and the virulent form of German nationalism under the Nazis. True to form, Oberman teaches us how history is done best. Coupling his characteristic style and preternatural insight with a lifelong knowledge of his sources (grown to a level of intimacy very few achieve), Oberman refreshes our understanding of Luther and Calvin. Under Oberman's brush, Luther emerges with an immediacy and a powerful eschatological dimension even as he loses his ability to direct the very events he set in motion; and Calvin positively exudes a warmth no one, given a passing familiarity with his *Institutes*, would have expected. The four chapters on Calvin are brilliant; Oberman's methodological versatility is inspired, and his ability to move through his material with both speed and grace amounts to the historian's equivalent of perfect pitch. This volume invites close reading, and is a fitting distillation of Oberman's deep commitment to his art.

SEYMOUR BAKER HOUSE, Mount Angel Seminary