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Book Review — Literatur

The New Testament and the Laws of Evidence. By Harry Rimmer, D. D., Sc. D. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mich. 1938. 119 pages, 5½×8. Price, \$1.00.

With pleasure we announce the appearance of another volume from the prolific pen of Dr. Rimmer, known as an intrepid defender of the divine character of our Bible. In tilts with enemies of the Scriptures this book can render valuable services. Its aim is to show that, if the New Testament books are examined according to the well-established laws of evidence, their trustworthiness and reliability will become manifest. The writer has acquainted himself with legal procedure and adduces a number of interesting court decisions that have a bearing on his thesis. Quite fascinating and amazing is the account of the trial in which a professor of the University of Chicago, a higher critic, employing the methods he uses in establishing relationships in the Old Testament, endeavored to show that H. G. Wells, the famous English novelist, in a certain instance was guilty of plagiarism — an attempt which one tribunal after the other called ridiculous (cf. p. 14 ff.). The four chapters of the book have these captions: 1. "The Legal Value of the Gospels as Evidence"; 2. "The Integrity of the Witnesses"; 3. "The Amazing Record of Critical Injustice"; 4. "The Firm Foundation of the Christian Revelation." In general we have found the presentation clear and convincing. Here and there the author under the impulse of passionate zeal indulges in an overstatement. His book would be more effective if he refrained from judging the motives of the higher critics (cf. p. 73). We wish that, if a second edition should be called for, the author would carefully scrutinize every statement and either expunge or modify those that cannot be proved.

W. ARNDT

Der Heilige Gottes. Eine Erläuterung des Markus-Evangeliums. Von Lic. Eduard Ellwein. 112 Seiten 6¼×9¼. Chr.-Kaiser-Verlag, München. Preis: RM. 2.80.

Diese kurze, packende, für das Christenvolk bestimmte Erklärung zum Evangelium des Markus erschien zuerst zwischen 1936 und 1938 in dem Blatt „Deutsche Evangelische Erziehung“, fand da aber eine so glückliche Aufnahme, daß sie nun in Buchform erscheint. Sie will der geistlichen Auserbauung und Stärkung der Gemeinde dienen und hat, wie der Autor sagt, nur ein einziges Anliegen: daß der „Heilige Gottes“ auch uns heilig werde. Bekannt ist Ellwein als Verfasser verschiedener theologischer Werke, besonders aber als Übersetzer von Luthers Vorträgen über den Römerbrief. In seiner Erklärung legt er das ganze Evangelium als verbindlichen Text aus, ohne daß die wissenschaftliche Erkenntnis dabei zu kurz kommt, in zehn Kapiteln: Der Anfang, das erste Auftreten Jesu in Galiläa, die Phariseer im Widerspruch mit der freien Gnade Jesu, Gleichnisse, Wundertaten, weitere Wirksamkeit Jesu in Galiläa und in den angrenzenden Gebieten, der Weg zur Passion, letzte Wirksamkeit Jesu in Jerusalem, die Leidensgeschichte, Ostern. In kurzen Sätzen und Abschnitten findet man hier viel tiefergehende Erregung zusammengedrängt, aber doch auch nicht zu schwer für das Volk.

Manchmal stimmt man dem Autor nicht zu, z. B. in seiner Auslegung der Worte Jesu „Es stehen etliche hier, die werden den Tod nicht schmecken, bis daß sie sehen das Reich Gottes mit Kraft kommen“ (S. 57). Erfüllt hat sich diese Weissagung Christi doch, und juist so, wie dies der Schreiber, wenn auch etwas unbestimmt, andeutet. Seine Kritik über den reichen Jüngling (S. 68 f.): „Dies ganze, freie Herz für Gott, das fehlt ihm“, ist doch kaum genügend. Es fehlte diesem Jüngling wahrlich noch weit mehr. Doch stören diese Unebenheiten nicht den Genuß des Büchleins als Ganzes. Wir wünschen, man hätte solche Werke hierzulande in englischer Sprache. Für unsere theologische Jugend, die im Deutschen zumeist schwach ist, empfehlen wir diese Erklärung auch gerade wegen des einfachen, edlen Deutsch, das der Autor so fein zu schreiben vermag; für uns selbst war es ein seltener Genuß, das Ganze von Anfang bis zu Ende lesen zu dürfen.

J. T. Müller

The Religion of Jesus the World Religion. By W. L. Evans. Fleming H. Revell Company, N. Y. 63 pages, 7½×5. Price, 75 cts.

The following extracts characterize the theology and aim of the social-rehabilitation churchmen. "Jesus taught a world-religion of one God for all, and it was a pure religion free from all forms and certainly was undefiled. It was the kingdom of heaven in the hearts of men, and its component parts were 'brotherhood, creative service, and self-forgetfulness.'" (P. 59.) "Abraham Lincoln was once asked why he had not united with some church or denomination; to which he replied: 'I have not felt myself free to unite with any church because of their long statements of creeds and doctrines. But when any church will inscribe over its altar as its sole qualification for membership the condensed statement of Law and Gospel by our Savior: "Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart," and: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," that church will I join with all my heart and with all my soul.' This great American emancipator had a spiritual kinship with the greater Emancipator of all mankind." (P. 39.) "The two great commandments of the Bible, the Sermon on the Mount and the Golden Rule, all emphasized by Jesus, would heal all our social and economic ills and bring in the kingdom of heaven on earth. This is the great objective in the religion of Jesus." (P. 50.) "The state and nation can solve all their problems with the religion of Jesus if the great principles of Jesus be applied to our needs. All wars, of every nature, economic, political, social, and religious, would be no more. Mutual trade relations between all nations would be established, and all helpful relations on a cooperative basis between states and nations would be worked out for the mutual good of all. This would bring to pass a new world-order of things and would bring to pass the kingdom of heaven among men." (P. 13.) — The foreword was written by Dr. L. R. Scarborough, president of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

TH. ENGELDER

Nachfolge. Von Dietrich Bonhöffer. Chr.-Kaiser-Verlag, München. 229 Seiten 6¼×9¼. Preis: RM. 4.40, geheftet; 5.60, gebunden.

In seinem Bestreben, vollen Ernst mit der Notwendigkeit der Heiligung im christlichen Leben zu machen, verwirft der Verfasser leider den Unterschied zwischen rechtfertigender und heiligender Gnade. Sein erster Satz lautet: „Billige Gnade

ist der Todfeind unserer Kirche." Auf derselben Seite schreibt er: „Billige Gnade heißt Gnade als Lehre, als Prinzip, als System; heißt Sündenvergebung als allgemeine Wahrheit, heißt Liebe als christliche Gottesliebe. Wer sie bejaht, hat schon Vergebung seiner Sünden.“ „In dieser Kirche findet die Welt billige Vergebung ihrer Sünden, die sie nicht bereut und von denen frei zu werden sie erst recht nicht wünscht.“ Gewiß, es gibt einen Mißbrauch der freien Gnade Gottes, und gegen diesen Mißbrauch muß der Prediger mit der Schrift aufs ernstlichste zeugen. Aber das berechtigt einen nun nicht, mit dem Verfasser den verhängnisvollen Fehler zu begehen, in die Definition der rechtfertigenden Gnade die Heiligung als einen wesentlichen Teil aufzunehmen. Wir lesen z. B.: „Es war dieselbe Gnade Christi, . . . die den untreuen Petrus in die letzte Gemeinschaft des Martyriums rief und ihm damit alle Sünden vergab. Gnade und Nachfolge gehören für das Leben des Petrus unaufhörlich zusammen.“ Der letzte Satz ist ja unzweifelhaft wahr. Aber nicht wahr, weil der klaren Schrift widersprechend, ist die Behauptung, daß dem Petrus erst damit alle Sünden vergeben wurden, daß durch die Gnade er in die letzte Gemeinschaft des Martyriums gerufen wurde. Vergebung der Sünden hatte er einzig und allein um des vollkommenen Verdienstes Christi willen. Weiter sagt der Verfasser: „Wenn Luther von der Gnade sprach, so meinte er sein eigenes Leben immer mit, da er durch die Gnade erst in den vollen Gehorsam Christi gestellt worden war. Er konnte gar nicht anders von der Gnade reden, als eben so. . . . Die Erkenntnis der Gnade war für ihn der letzte radikale Bruch mit der Sünde seines Lebens, niemals aber ihre Rechtfertigung. . . . Sie war ihm jeweils ‚Resultat‘, freilich göttliches, nicht menschliches Resultat. Dieses Resultat aber wurde von den Nachfahren zur prinzipiellen Voraussetzung einer Kalkulation gemacht. Darin lag das ganze Unheil. Ist Gnade das von Christus selbst geschenkte ‚Resultat‘ christlichen Lebens, so ist dieses Leben keinen Augenblick dispensiert von der Nachfolge. Ist aber Gnade prinzipielle Voraussetzung meines christlichen Lebens, so habe ich damit im voraus die Rechtfertigung meiner Sünden, die ich im Leben in der Welt tue. Ich kann auf diese Gnade hin sündigen; die Welt ist ja im Prinzip durch Gnade gerechtfertigt.“ (S. 7, 8.) Der Verfasser tut Luther unrecht oder hat ihn gründlich mißverstanden. Luther wußte wohl zu unterscheiden zwischen rechtfertigender und heiligender Gnade. Gewiß, die rechtfertigende Gnade heiligt auch den Menschen, und wer nicht durch die Gnade geheiligt wird, der ist auch nicht gerechtfertigt oder hat die rechtfertigende Gnade wieder verherzt. Aber wenn Luther von der rechtfertigenden Gnade redet, so schließt er nie sein durch die Gnade in den vollen Gehorsam Christi gestelltes Leben mit in den Begriff der rechtfertigenden Gnade ein, selbst wenn dies Leben das von Christo geschenkte Resultat ist. Luther schließt vielmehr mit der Schrift geflissentlich jegliches Werk und Tun des Menschen, sei es durch natürliche Kräfte oder durch die Gnade hervorgebracht, von der rechtfertigenden Gnade aus. Man lese doch Röm. 3, 28; 4, 1—5; 11, 6. Der Verfasser vergißt, daß nach Luther und der Schrift die freie Gnade Gottes in Christo prinzipielle Voraussetzung der Rechtfertigung sowie der Heiligung ist, ohne welche Voraussetzung es überhaupt keine Möglichkeit christlichen Glaubens und christlichen Lebens gibt. Nach Röm. 5, 18 und 2 Kor. 5, 19 ist eben Sündenvergebung eine „allgemeine Wahrheit“, hat Gott schon in Christo die Welt mit sich selber versöhnt, ihr die Sünde nicht zugerechnet, ist schon durch eines Gerechtigkeits die Rechtfertigung des Lebens über alle Menschen gekommen. Der Mensch nimmt diese längst geschehene Rechtfertigung und Vergebung im Glauben an und gelangt so in den Besitz der für ihn erworbenen, für ihn vorhandenen, ihm im

Wort angebotenen Rechtfertigung. Das ist klare Lehre der Schrift, die dem Vorwurf des Verfassers, daß man dann auf Gnade hin sündigen darf, allen Grund nimmt, Röm. 6.

Diese Vermischung von Gesetz und Evangelium zieht sich durch das ganze Buch hindurch, so daß man mit großer Vorsicht alles prüfen muß, zumal der Verfasser auch in andern Punkten von Gottes Wort abirrt. So sagt er, daß Paulus „Gliebschaft am Leibe Christi ganz an die beiden Sakramente bindet“. „Nicht das Wort der Predigt bewirkt unsere Gemeinschaft mit dem Leibe Christi; das Sakrament muß hinzukommen.“ (S. 163.) Er bringt mit allem Ernst auf Gemeindegucht, auch Lehrzucht, von der er die trefflichen Worte sagt: „Durch falsche Lehre wird die Quelle des Lebens der Gemeinde und der Gemeindegucht verdorben. Darum wiegt die Versündigung gegen die Lehre schwerer als die Versündigung im Wandel.“ (S. 212, Anm. 20.) Doch nennt er den täglichen Hirtendienst des Amtsträgers die erste Stufe der Kirchenzucht, die brüderliche Vermahnung der Glieder untereinander die zweite. (S. 209.) Der Prediger, der sich vor den Irrtümern des Buches zu hüten weiß, kann mit Vorteil die manchen trefflichen Ausführungen lesen.

T. h. Vä t s j ä

Neue Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Bibel im Mittelalter. Herausgegeben in Gemeinschaft mit Otto Grüters und Erich Zimmermann von Prof. Dr. Hans Vollmer-Hamburg. Mit einer Beigabe: „Handschriftliche Einträge in Bibeln und Gesangbüchern und deren Wert für Familien- und volkstümliche Religionskunde“ von Bruno Goldschmit. Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft Athenaion, Potsdam. 176 Seiten und 25 Seiten 6½×9½. Preis: RM. 24.

Dieses neueste Heft in den Veröffentlichungen des Deutschen Bibelarchivs in Hamburg bietet eine Fülle interessanter Materials nicht nur für den Sachverständigen und Spezialisten, sondern auch für den Nichtspezialisten auf dem Gebiet der Bibelforschung in deutschen Landen. Auf 90 Seiten bietet Erich Zimmermann eine reichhaltige Ausführung über „Die deutsche Bibel im religiösen Leben des Spätmittelalters“, worin er unter anderm auch eingehend die Verbreitung der deutschen Bibel in dieser Zeitperiode beschreibt. Ganz besonders interessant sind die Paragraphen über die Verbreitung der Bibel unter den Laien. Er schreibt unter anderm: „So sind deutsche Bibeln in Laientreisen hauptsächlich bei Fürsten, wohlhabenden Adligen und Patriziern zu finden, nur selten in den unteren Schichten.“ (S. 73.) — Der zweite Teil des Heftes bietet einen Aufsatz über „Die deutsche Bibelichtung des Mittelalters“, der viele bisher nicht gedruckte Bruchstücke bringt. Die vier beigegebenen Bildtafeln erhöhen den Wert des Buches für den Kenner. Wir stimmen dem Verleger durchaus bei, wenn er schreibt: „Auch dieser Band, für den Theologen, den Historiker und den Kulturschriftsteller von höchstem Wert, eröffnet neue, aufschlussreiche Einblicke in das große und reiche Kapitel: Bibel, deutsche Sprache und deutsche religiöse Volkskunde.“

P. E. K r e t z m a n n

Professor J. Gresham Machen, His Life and Defense of the Bible. By W. Masselink. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 175 pages, 5¼×7¾. Price, \$1.00.

Prof. J. Gresham Machen is well known to the readers of the MONTHLY on account of his conservative doctrinal standpoint and his vigorous defense of the Bible, and some will be glad to know a little

more of his life and his life's work. He was indeed an outstanding man in the conflict with Modernism during the last fifteen years. The book consists of five parts: 1. The Life of Professor Machen. 2. The Modernistic Movements which Machen Opposed. 3. The Methods of Machen's Apologetics. 4. What Machen Defended in His Apologetics. 5. Appreciation and Criticism. Our readers know, of course, that Machen was an outspoken Reformed theologian. So is his biographer, a member of the Christian Reformed Church and pastor of a church of this denomination in Grand Rapids, Mich. But he has made quite a thorough study of Machen's life and work, tells us of his youth as the son of a prominent lawyer in Baltimore; of his studies at Johns Hopkins University, where Prof. B. L. Gildersleeve, the foremost Greek scholar of our country in his day, was his teacher and stimulated Machen's love for the Greek language; of his theological studies in Princeton Seminary, where Dr. Francis L. Patton, president of the seminary, William P. Armstrong, the head of the New Testament department, and Benjamin B. Warfield, the dogmatist, were his teachers; of his years spent in Germany, where he studied at Marburg and Goettingen and was brought into contact with the foremost Ritschlian and *religionsgeschichtliche* scholars of those days: Hermann, Juelicher, J. Weiss, Knopf, Bauer, Schuerer, Bousset, Heitmueller and Kattenbusch, some of whom he combated vigorously in his later works; of his teaching days at Princeton Seminary and Westminster Seminary; and of his outstanding books, *The Origin of Paul's Religion*; *What Is Faith? The Christian Faith and the Modern World*; *Christianity and Liberalism*; *The Christian View of Man*; and what seems to the present reviewer the foremost of his works, his brilliant apologetic *The Virgin Birth of Christ*. Machen was a born fighter, and even his commanding stature and his firm and determined speech and delivery impressed the casual observer. He believed in, and defended, the divine origin and inspiration of the Bible and the reconciliation of sinners through Christ's blood; but he also defended the erroneous Reformed doctrines, as every one knows and as is also stated very emphatically in this book. It was a distinct loss to the American Church, which nowadays is so largely tainted with Modernism, when Machen in the prime of his life died on January 1, 1937, in Bismarck, N. Dak., to which place he had gone in the interest of conservative theology. And no one reading this book can fail to be impressed by his personality, his achievements, his scholarship, and his apologetics. Whenever Machen came to St. Louis, he spoke and preached in the interest of his theology, of his Fundamentalist convictions, and of the institutions which he represented, either at the Xenia Seminary of the United Presbyterian Church, when this institution was still located in St. Louis, or at the Memorial Presbyterian Church, founded by the well-known preacher J. H. Brooks and upholding the conservative standpoint to the present day. He also visited our Concordia Seminary and on several occasions mentioned it favorably. I shall not forget his parting words on the occasion of his last visit, when we had discussed theological questions and church conditions. He stated: "We can never get together. You are a Lutheran, I am a Calvinist; our going together would be unionism; but we can, and ought to, defend, every one in his sphere, the divine

origin, inspiration, and authority of Holy Scripture and the redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ, the divine Savior." After he had returned home, he sent me a copy of his book *The Christian Faith and the Modern World*.

L. FUERBRINGER

My Reasonable Service. By Deaconess Ingeborg Sponland. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minn. 158 pages, 5½×8. Price, \$1.00. May be ordered through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

This is the autobiography of Deaconess Ingeborg Sponland. She was born in Norway, where she also received her deaconess training and served in several hospitals for seven years, until her coming to America, in 1891. Here she had charge of the Deaconess Hospital in Minneapolis for thirteen years, during which time she was instrumental in establishing six hospitals in North Dakota and Minnesota.

She became Mother Superior of the Lutheran Deaconess Home and Hospital in Chicago in 1906 and did active service for thirty years there. She retired in 1936 and now, at the request of many friends, has published her life's story.

It is evident that the long years of service in her chosen field has closely associated Sister Ingeborg with the history of deaconess work in our land. Her story is told in a simple straightforward manner and covers in three chapters her childhood and youth, her preparation and early service in her native land; in five chapters her work here in our country is related from her pioneering in the Northwest to her work in Chicago, and a world tour is also described. Our pastors will find the story of Sister Ingeborg refreshing. So will their wives and ladies' aid societies.

W. G. POLACK

The Work of the Lord. By Walton Harlowe Greever, D. D., LL. D. Fleming H. Revell Company, New York, London, and Edinburgh, 1938. 142 pages, 5×7. Price, \$1.25.

In this book, well written, Dr. Greever, the well-known secretary of the United Lutheran Church in America, presents a wealth of thought in reference to the work of the Lord which the Christian is called to do in this world, individually and in cooperation with his fellow-Christians. What the author is aiming at he tells us in his Preface: "Why do the great causes which the Church presents in its program for the advancement of work of the Lord in the world suffer so tragically for proper support? That question challenged an adequate answer. In the search for that answer other questions were raised, and their answers led toward the roots of our deplorable delinquencies. It has become apparent that these great causes are scarcely in the minds of multitudes of the people in the Church at all and that many others who are induced to think of them do not regard them distinctly as the work of the Lord but as enterprises of a few men who call for support in the name of the Church" (P. 7.) The true and clear ring of such statements as the following has impressed us: "The Church requires purity in doctrine and consistency in life from those who present evidence of the divine call to the ministry of the Word." (P. 40.) "The call to worship God is a challenge to the value the individual places upon his personal re-

ligion. The appreciation which one shows for the privilege of worship reveals the place he gives to his religion in his life. If he prefers sleep for his body, the call of the flesh is put above the call of the soul. If he prefers visits with his friends, human social pleasures are put above divine spiritual communion, etc." (P. 52.) "Christian stewardship is exercised to the greatest satisfaction when it is sincere and honest. Very few are enjoying the practise of stewardship in the fullest degree. One is almost horrified at times by the inconsistency between profession and practise." (P. 72.) "It takes a strong character to accept proper adaptations without compromises. Individuals and established congregations should support the policy which places choice men in home mission-fields and should not seek to call them away except where justification is very clear." (P. 107.)

In the last chapter on Social Relationships hardly enough space is devoted to the subject. Dr. Greever, speaking of public movements says: "It is always safe for the Christian to ask: 'Is the cause involved in this movement included in the program of the Church?' If it is a cause which is essential to the glory of God and the welfare of man, it should be found in the program of the Church, or at least should be such that the approval of the Church can be assumed, as in certain purely community or civic movements. If not such a cause, it does not merit the interest or support of Christians; for notwithstanding what good or importance might be attributed to it, its support would involve diversion from causes of far greater good and importance in the program of the Church." (P. 135.) The Church does not as a Church concern itself with purely community or civic movements. These are not within its sphere of activity. But, indeed, the Christian as a citizen should concern himself about these things.

Speaking of the means of grace which God uses, Dr. Greever says: "The Word is the means by which God both reveals and communicates Himself. He cannot be separated from His Word. It is not merely a message recorded or sent or proclaimed, but, as such a message, it is the use of language as the medium in which He dwells and through which He gives Himself. God Himself, not language, is the Word, and the living Truth bears the saving, transforming grace for God's work in the human soul. Language is the form in which man receives and transmits the Word, which is the definite means of grace by which the essential work of the Lord is done." (P. 37.) According to these statements not the written Word, whether read or heard, is the means of grace but God Himself. That is not the conception which the psalmist had when he said, "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path" (Ps. 119:105), nor that of Christ, who in His sacerdotal prayer said: "I have given them Thy Word. . . . Neither pray I for these alone but for them also which shall believe on Me through *their word*," John 17:14-20. The very idea that God through certain means imparts His grace postulates a distinction between God and those means.

Upon the whole the reading of this book is stimulating. It may well serve as an examination of the Christianity of our day and at the same time as an encouragement to greater Christian virility in the life of the individual Christian and that of the Church. J. H. C. FRITZ

Jesus Appeared. By William Dallmann, D.D. Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, Wis. 87 pages, 5×7¾. Price, 30 cts. Order from Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

"This is what the appearance of the risen Redeemer did for Paul. What has the resurrection done for you?" This concluding paragraph contains the theme of this well-written and stimulating booklet. Dr. Dallmann reviews the historical events of the eleven appearances of Christ to his disciples and shows from the subsequent events in the lives of the apostles how they went forth courageously in the faith of the resurrected Lord to evangelize the world. Pastor and people (for whom the booklet is particularly intended) will receive new courage and strength for the great work of the Church. The booklet merits wide distribution.

F. E. MAYER

Martin Luther in English Poetry. Selected and edited by W. G. Polack. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 80 pages. Price, 25 cts., postpaid; dozen, \$2.40, and postage.

In our utilitarian age a book that does not claim to offer assistance for the work and strife of every-day life is welcomed with a little sigh of relief by a reviewer. Evidently there still are people who take time to sit down now and then and offer heart and spirit something higher than the daily grind. May their tribe increase and induce publishers to issue more books like this! Oh, for English equivalents of Gerok's *Palmblaetter*, Theiss's *Gepfueckt am Wege*, Herzberger's *Pilgerklaenge*, Hueschen's *Wo Gottes Bruennlein rauschen!*—This booklet has, of course, an additional appeal. Every Lutheran will naturally be interested in what the great poets have said about our Luther. From a great wealth of material Professor Polack has culled 60 selections covering outstanding episodes in the great Reformer's career. The booklet, bound in gray paper covers, with black title on maroon panel, is recommended particularly as a gift for birthdays or in the Christmas season.

THEO. HOYER

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