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## Book Review. - Literatur

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**Book Review — Literatur**


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**The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World.** By Hendrick Kraemer, Professor of the History of Religions, University of Leyden. Harper & Brothers. 1938. 455 pages, 6¼×9¼. Price, \$3.00.

**The Christian Faith in a Day of Crisis.** By Charles S. Macfarland, General Secretary Emeritus of the Federal Council. Fleming H. Revell Co. 1939. 226 pages, 5×7½. Price, \$1.50.

Among the thirty-two books which Dr. Macfarland selected for review out of more than three hundred volumes as best representing the trend of religious thought during 1938 is *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*, which Prof. Kraemer wrote for the guidance of the World Missionary Conference at Madras in 1938. We quote a few statements from Dr. Macfarland's review: "This book is of special value to American readers, not only on general grounds, but because its thought is that of a Continental near- or part-Barthian, and is quite different from the American approach in *Rethinking Missions*. . . . What is first needed is a clear consciousness of what the faith of the Church is. The realism of the Bible and the Christian faith 'simply takes seriously the fact that God is God and that, if He is God, His will is the ground of all that is.' Theology should be what its name implies, 'a tale about God.' . . . We reach the heart of the author's discussion in 'The Attitude towards the Non-Christian Religions.' The religion of the revelation in Christ revolves around two poles. 'The first pole is knowledge of God of a very special kind that upsets all other conceptions of God or of the Divine.' (The reviewer asks, Why the term 'upsets'?) . . . If the reviewer understands Barth, or unless Barth has changed his oft-changing view recently, Professor Kraemer does not share the Barthian view of natural theology. . . . The section of the volume analyzing and interpreting 'the non-Christian systems of life and thought' is perhaps the best part of it. It leaves little or no place for the seeming approaches to syncretism in *Rethinking Missions*. . . . The missionary approach has changed. The impression that these religions were adequately approached by taking them as a vast and decaying section of the spiritual life of mankind, 'steeped in darkness and error, has turned out to be utterly erroneous.'" The concluding paragraph of the digest and review states: "No pastor or teacher can afford to neglect this volume. It needs to be read with a certain amount of unconcern for some of the author's theological bases. While Professor Kraemer partakes of Barthian positive ways of putting things, he does not betray the lack of intellectual humility that characterizes Barth, and the most liberal evangelical thinker will find relatively little to challenge in the most fundamental positions of this study, even though it may not measure up to its rather over-amplified characterization by the Archbishop of York."



We will say that no man who is dealing with missions can afford to neglect this volume. Nowhere else will he find such thorough, complete, and up-to-date information on the non-Christian religions. And much of the advice given the missionary is good. The theology of the book, however, is not good. It is, in the first place, the Calvinistic theology, which is not Christocentric, but theocentric. See the pertinent statement in Macfarland's review. And, in the second place, "the most liberal evangelical thinker will find relatively little to challenge in the more fundamental positions of this study." This praise of the book by the liberal Macfarland condemns it. Dr. Kraemer is not, indeed, an extreme liberal. He chides "the Liberals, with their often diluted conception of Christianity," who "are making the Chinese the victims of their liberal and generous idealisms" (p. 383). Macfarland criticizes him for this, for using the term "upsets." In a letter to Kraemer he states: "In your use of the word 'upsets' I should say that you overstate, in other words, that all 'revelation' is one whole, even though we may not see the relationship between the various forms taken by revelation. There are, of course, differences of degree which are so great that they become differences in kind. However, I should prefer to say 'transcends' and 'modifies' instead of 'upsets.'" But while Kraemer will not go with the extreme Liberals, he also refuses to go with the Fundamentalists. "The guilt of the Fundamentalists is not less great. From this whole fundamentalist-liberal controversy the Chinese can hardly get another impression than that Christianity is either a set of tenets about the Virgin Birth, the infallibility of the Bible, an external and juridical conception of atonement, etc., or the triumphant rejection of 'such myths'" (p. 383). No, Kraemer is not an extreme Liberal (he insists on "the intrinsic inadequacy of man's religious efforts for the solution of his crucial religious and moral problems," p. 308, and declares: "It is not alone the Eastern mind that is constitutionally disinclined to accept the Gospel, but the human mind everywhere" p. 56); but he is a liberal for all that. He speaks of the "sacred oracles" of the great non-Christian religions, of "their magnificent religious philosophies" (p. 328 f.), and declares that "the assertion of the Christian claim of paramount exclusive religious truth is a wrong and utterly inadequate translation of the apostolic and prophetic nature of the revelation in Christ" (p. 302). Furthermore, he does not believe in the infallibility of the Bible. "The Old Testament is not immaculate" (p. 330). And "the human mind, in Islam as well as in Christianity or elsewhere, expresses its desire for a sure guarantee of religious certitude in the clumsy form of the literal inerrancy of the document in which God's revelation is told" (p. 218). Worst of all, he presents the doctrine of the atonement in the vaguest and haziest terms. The best he can do is to say that "God revealed Himself in Christ as the holy and loving Travailer for the redemption and restoration of the world" (p. 74). "The Incarnation means that God wants, even passionately wants, contact with man and thus through the act of His revelation shows His belief in the possibility of contact" (p. 131). He is careful to avoid anything that looks like a "juridical conception of atonement." We agree with Macfarland that the liberal thinkers will find relatively little to challenge



in the most fundamental positions of Kraemer's theology. Macfarland does not agree fully with the Archbishop of York, who says in the Foreword: "This volume is likely to remain for many years to come the classical treatment of its theme—perhaps the central theme for Christian thought in this age of multiform bewilderment." Macfarland says that this is a rather overamplified characterization. Neither do we agree with this characterization, but for a different reason. It cannot allay the multiform bewilderment of this age. And if the Christian message is brought to the Chinese and the others according to the directions of Professor Kraemer, it will only bewilder them the more.—We should like to quote one more sentence: "Christianity (Ya Chiao) is one of the five religions of China, and according to the testimony of well-informed men it is the best-hated and the best-liked religion of the five" (p. 378). Is that the result of the preaching of the Liberal or of the Gospel-missionary?

Dr. Macfarland's review of Dr. Kraemer's book sufficiently indicates the spirit of his own book. But a few additional remarks will not be amiss. We read on page 29: "Every American minister should read at least one book of such theologians as Barth, Brunner, Kierkegaard, Berdyaev, Heim, Maritain, and others, as well as—and perhaps, to some extent, in place of—the better-known Niebuhr, Fosdick, and Brown." Most of the books surveyed and endorsed by Macfarland were written by Liberals, radical and less radical Liberals, and contain mostly philosophic speculations. They cannot tell us what "the Christian faith" is. In the review of R. Niebuhr's *Beyond Tragedy* we read: "Resting upon Paul's description of the ministers of the Gospel, 'as deceivers, yet true,' we are told that 'what is true in the Christian religion can be expressed only in symbols which contain a certain degree of provisional and superficial deception.' Christianity has transmuted primitive religions and artistic myths and symbols without fully rationalizing them. The creation, the fall of man, the incarnation, the final Judgment, cannot be fully rationalized. We are 'deceivers, yet true,' when we proclaim the coming Kingdom. The Tower of Babel myth reveals the truth, etc. . . . In God's punishment of the builders of the tower by confounding their language 'we have another mythical profundity which is not literal truth and yet is profoundly true'" (p. 80). Let Hugh Vernon White tell us what "the Christian faith" is. We quote from the review of his book *A Working Faith for the World*: "White seeks to justify 'liberal Christianity' as 'the true Christian faith.' . . . Christianity will have its opportunity, but it must be a Christianity freed from . . . Lutheran otherworldliness. . . . It must translate God's will into terms of personal and social morality, and its faith will be 'firmly grounded on a metaphysic of Christian theism' and 'an ethic of Christian lore.' . . . 'The principle of Christianity is that of an ethical religion or of a religious morality'" (p. 112 ff.). It is the old story: Rationalism, Modernism, finds the essence of Christianity in moralism. And Macfarland thinks well of this: "In this volume we have a good primer for perplexed Christians."

Reviewing the book of a lone conservative (H. Sasse, *Here We*



*Stand*), Macfarland writes: "The reviewer has given enough of its contents so that the reader hardly needs to have attention called to the seeming absence from it of intellectual humility. . . . But, perhaps happily, there are many Lutheran leaders in Europe who do not find as many irreconcilables as Sasse does as between Lutheran and other intellectual understandings of the Gospel" (p. 37 f.). "How far Professor Sasse represents German Lutheran thought at the moment it would be hard to estimate. If he does to any appreciable degree, we would seem to be back in Marburg with Luther and Zwingli, leaving the World Conference on Faith and Order at an *impasse*" (p. 203). Yes, Sasse and some other Lutherans have not progressed beyond Marburg.

TH. ENGELDER

**The Bible and Things to Come.** By David Freeman, Th. M., pastor, New Covenant Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, Pa. Introduction by Prof. J. Murray, Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, Pa. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 139 pages, 5¼×7¾. Price, \$1.00.

Pastor Freeman presents in this volume nine fairly brief discourses on the ever popular and important subject of Biblical eschatology under the following headings: "The Second Coming of Christ and Salvation," "When will Christ Come?" "The Signs of Christ's Coming," "The Jews, Their Conversion and Their Land," "The Man of Sin," "Will There Be a Millennium?" "After Death—What?" "The Day of Judgment," "The Final State." A faithful student of Dr. Machen, the writer champions his famous teacher's amillennialistic doctrine, refuting the chiliastic views very strikingly. With regard to the "conversion of the Jews" he declares that, while their recovery or salvation will be racial or national, "not all Jews will be saved when Christ comes." Had the apostle meant this, "he would have to be understood as teaching that all the Gentiles are to be saved." But "any idea of a universal salvation is foreign to the teaching of the Bible" (p. 69). However, the Jews as a nation will be saved "only in the way in which they are converted now" (p. 77). In other places the author makes it clear that only the elect in Israel will be brought in, and that *before* Christ's coming. While he admits the cogency of many of the arguments declaring the Papacy to be the Antichrist, he denies that the Pope is the "son of perdition," though his reasoning at this point is extremely weak, and he completes this discussion with a hazy conjecture. Rejecting millennialism in its dual forms of "pre" and "post," he writes: "One thing is certain—the Book of Revelation and the rest of the Bible do *not* teach that the saints will come back to this earth to engage in battle or to reign upon an earthly throne" (p. 103). On the whole, it is the conservative Presbyterian theology of Charles Hodge which the reader finds represented in this in many respects helpful book. In the Preface, Pastor Freeman says: "Underlying each discourse is the acceptance of the Bible as the *inspired and inerrant Word of God.*" Since the topic of the "last things" is at this time much under consideration and in controversy, it may be well for our pastors to treat it in sermonic lectures as does the author, whose addresses may be studied with profit. J. THEODORE MUELLER



**Neue Forschungen und Texte zur Geschichte der deutschen Bibel.** Herausgegeben in Gemeinschaft mit Kurt Bedeh und Erich Zimmermann von Hans Vollmer. Mit 4 Bildtafeln und 4 Initialen. 1939. Akademische Verlagsgesellschaft Athenaion, Potsdam. 76 und 237 Seiten  $6\frac{3}{4} \times 9\frac{1}{4}$ . Preis: RM. 24.

Dies ist nun schon der neunte Band dieses epochemachenden Werkes auf dem Gebiet der deutschen Bibelforschung, und es soll von vornherein betont werden, daß dem Herausgeber alle Achtung gebührt für die Ausdauer, mit der er die sich gesteckten Ziele verfolgt. Daß in diesen neun Bänden gesammelte Material ist von solcher Wichtigkeit und von solchem Wert, daß kein Forscher auf dem Gebiet der deutschen Bibel des Mittelalters es sich versagen darf, die gebotenen Abdrude und Nachdrude zu Rate zu ziehen. In dem vorliegenden Bande treten uns zwei neue mittelalterliche Übersetzeramen entgegen, nämlich Johann Bischoff, der Wiener Minorit und Hosprediger, dessen Bemerkungen zum deutschen „Evangelarium“ abgedruckt sind, und Nikolaus Straub, der Notar in Halle war, von dem die sogenannte Leipziger Handschrift eines Evangeliums herrührt. Der Hamburger Psalter in scriinio 142, der zuerst geboten wird, enthält die Psalmen 1—71, 6 und 73, 2—76, 20. Der Übersetzer folgt der Vulgata und bietet manche Härten, die ernstliche Sprachstudien benötigen. Die Bemerkungen und Anmerkungen des Herausgebers sind für den intelligenten Gebrauch der Übersetzung fast unentbehrlich. Der zweite Teil des Bandes bietet „Dat nyge Testament tho bude“, das heißt, die älteste niederdeutsche Übertragung des Lutherschen Neuen Testaments (September 1522) von einem unbekanntem Verfasser im Druck der „anonymen Hamburg-Druckerei“ (Presse der Reher), Hamburg 1523. Luthers ganze Vorrede ist in der Übersetzung mit aufgenommen, und der Herausgeber dieses Teils, Kurt Bedeh, wirft mit seinen vielen Anmerkungen immer wieder Licht auf schwierige Stellen. Viele der Lutherschen Übersetzung eigentümlichen Sprachwendungen sind in dieser plattdeutschen Übertragung beibehalten, wie Bedeh immer wieder zeigt, und es zeigt sich auch hier, daß jede Übersetzung der Bibel zugleich auch exegetischen Wert hat. — In einem Beiheft dieses neuen Bandes bietet D. Hans Vollmer „Legenden aus deutschen Historienbibeln des Mittelalters“, die zum Teil auf apokryphischen, zum Teil auf pseudepigraphischen (wie z. B. The Archko Volume) beruhen. Der Band reiht sich seinen Vorgängern würdig an und sei hiermit allen Bibelforschern auf das entschiedenste anempfohlen.

P. E. K r e h m a n n

**Adolf Schlatter und Wilhelm Lütgert zum Gedächtnis.** Von Paul Althaus, Gerhard Kittel und Hermann Strathmann. Verlag C. Bertelsmann, Gütersloh. 1938. 55 Seiten  $5\frac{3}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$ . Preis, kartoniert: RM. 1.50.

**Das Schrifttum von Professor D. A. Schlatter.** Zusammenge stellt von Pfarrer Rudolf Brezger. 89 Seiten. Preis, kartoniert: RM. 2.50.

Am 19. Mai letzten Jahres ist D. Adolf Schlatter, langjähriger Professor der Theologie in Tübingen, im hohen Alter von 85 Jahren gestorben, und das Erscheinen der beiden obengenannten Schriften legt es nahe, noch etwas über diesen Theologen, der in die Geschichte der Theologie der letzten fünfzig Jahre gehört, etwas zu sagen. Beide Schriften sind erschienen als Hefte in den „Beiträgen zur Förderung christlicher Theologie“, die von Schlatter und dem bekannten neutestamentlichen Lexikographen Hermann Cremer begründet worden sind, jetzt im vierzigsten Jahrgang stehen und eine Reihe bedeutamer und wertvoller theologischer



Monographien gebracht haben, von denen auch eine Anzahl in dieser Zeitschrift und in der früheren „Lehre und Wehre“ angezeigt worden sind. Jetzt werden diese „Beiträge“ herausgegeben von Prof. D. Paul Althaus in Erlangen. Schlatter war ein eigenartiger Gelehrter, und als ich eine Vorlesung von ihm in Berlin, wo er damals Professor der Theologie an der Universität war, besuchte, war er durchaus nicht ein besonders anziehender Dozent, und man mußte sich an seinen stark schweizerischen Dialekt erst gewöhnen. Er hat auch keine eigene Schule gegründet, und doch hat er weitgehenden Einfluß in engeren und weiteren Kreisen ausgeübt. Er gehörte nicht der lutherischen Kirche an, sondern war und blieb reformiert, wie ja die ganze bekannte Familie Schlatter zu dieser Kirche gehörte. Auch in seiner Theologie war er eigenartig und durchaus nicht orthodox. Sein Werk „Hilfe in Bibelsnot“, so manches Gute und Schöne es auch enthält, hilft nicht aus der Not, weil er die ganze, volle Inspiration der Schrift in Abrede stellt und Irrtümer in der Schrift statuiert, und seine Versöhnungslehre greift das Herz des Christentums an, da sie das „für uns“ nicht voll und ganz anerkennt. Er hat jedoch in seinen Werken, die sich fast über das ganze Gebiet der Theologie mit Ausnahme der praktischen Theologie erstrecken, besonders auf exegetischem und historischem Gebiete, Bedeutendes geleistet, das von denen, die zu prüfen verstehen, mit Nutzen gebraucht werden kann. Er hat selbst die Geschichte seines Lebens in einem interessanten kleinen Buch, „Erlebtes“, wiederum ganz in seiner eigenartigen Weise, beschrieben. Dabei war er gar nicht darauf bedacht, Ehre und Ansehen zu erlangen, und forscht und arbeitete unermüdlisch weiter, unbekümmert darum, ob die theologische Welt auf seine Schriften achtete oder nicht. Als sein fünfundsiebzigster Geburtstag gefeiert wurde, erzählte er von einem Kollegen, der ihn einmal so charakterisiert habe: „Schlatter, ein religiöses Genie, eine wissenschaftliche Null“; er selber fügte dann hinzu: „Hier im Saal sitzt kein religiöses Genie, steht auch keins — verstanden? Religiöses Genie gibt es nicht! Wissenschaftliche Null — nun, das wird sich zeigen.“ (S. 18.) Nach dem Erscheinen des ersten Teils seiner „Theologie des Neuen Testaments“ schrieb Schlatter an den Verleger: „Jetzt, wo Sie das Ganze übersehen, verstehen Sie wohl, warum ich ganz bescheiden und doch recht froh auf die Darstellung Jesu hinsehe. Es ist nicht viel drin, was nicht in den Evangelien steht, und das macht mich froh. Natürlich hat mich das, was ich über die geschichtlichen Zustände des ersten Jahrhunderts weiß, immer begleitet, aber es drängt sich nicht vor. Es lag mir nicht daran, den Gelehrten zu spielen. Es ist auch kein einziger schöner Satz darin. Es hat mich manchmal der Wunsch gefaßt, stöhnend zu schreiben, mit padender, hinreißender Stärke der Empfindung; aber ich konnte nicht. Es war mir immer wieder so zumute, als ob ich mich vordrängen und den Herrn mit meiner Verebbarkeit empfehlen wollte. Es lag mir einzig daran, deutlich zu sein, so gut ich kann, wahr zu denken, wie ich's vermag; es dünkt mich, es sei doch etwas vom Bilde Jesu drin.“ Zwei Tatsachen mögen illustrieren, ob Schlatter eine wissenschaftliche Null war. Im Jahre 1902 erschien seine Studie „Sprache und Heimat des vierten Evangelisten“ und wurde zwanzig Jahre lang in der sogenannten kritischen Auslegung des Johannevangeliums nahezu ignoriert. Noch in der Mitte der zwanziger Jahre hat einer der prominentesten Kommentare sie nicht einer einzigen Erwähnung für wert gehalten. Im Jahre 1922 schrieb aber der bekannte Oxford Professor Burney sein Buch *The Aramaic Origin of the Fourth Gospel* und erzählt, wie er erst nach Abschluß dieses Buches „the highly important work by Professor A. Schlatter“ kennengelernt habe, in dem seine



Diese schon "in the fullest possible manner" durchgeführt sei und das "a marvel of industry and intimate knowledge" des palästinischen Quellenmaterials sei. Prof. Gerhard Kittel, der Herausgeber des großen „Theologischen Wörterbuchs zum Neuen Testament“, erzählt in seiner „Bedenktrede auf Schlatter“, daß ein anderer bekannter Gelehrter, der auch in dieser Zeitschrift schon öfters erwähnte Prof. Sir Edwin Hoskyns in Cambridge, ihn in Tübingen besucht habe und, obwohl er viel theologische Literatur gelesen hatte, von Schlatter so gut wie nichts wußte, weil eben in der einschlägigen Literatur sein Name eine verhältnismäßig geringe Rolle spielte. Kittel nahm ihn dann mit zu Schlatter, und der Eindruck, den Sir Edwin beim ersten Besuch hatte, war so tief, daß er nun allein jeden Tag, während Kittel selbst in der Universität beschäftigt war, den Besuch wiederholte und daß er sich beim Abschied von Tübingen sämtliche Bücher Schlatters kaufte und mit nach England nahm. Als Hoskyns 1937 starb, hinterließ er einen fast fertigen Kommentar des vierten Evangeliums, und dasjenige Buch, das sich bei seinem Tod als das zerlesenste auf seinem Schreibtisch fand, war Schlatters Johanneskommentar. So könnten wir noch mehr von Schlatter und seinen Werken sagen, wenn es der Raum gestattete. Wir erwähnen nur noch, daß das erstgenannte Heft vier Beiträge enthält: Altbaus: „Zum Gedächtnis der abgerufenen Herausgeber der ‚Beiträge‘ Schlatter und Lütgert“; Kittels „Bedenktrede“ über Schlatter, im Festjahr der Universität Tübingen gehalten; Altbaus: Schlatters „Gabe an die systematische Theologie“, und Strathmann schreibt über Wilhelm Lütgert, der ebenfalls ein auf exegetisch-historischem Gebiete vielgenannter Theolog der Neuzeit war. Von Schlatters literarischer Tätigkeit gewinnt man einen Eindruck aus dem zweiten Heft, das 74 Seiten mit den Titeln von Schlatters Werken, Artikeln und Predigten füllt.

L. Färbringer

**Expository Preaching.** By R. Ames Montgomery, Professor of Homiletics. Fleming H. Revell Company. 90 pages, 5×7½. Price, \$1.00.

This book can be read in three hours. The first two chapters are very encouraging. Present conditions in the world are described, and over against these the Word of Scripture is said to be the only means to bring about a change for the better. Therefore no *topical* preaching, which neglects the Word, but *expository* preaching, which presents the Bible in its fulness and in its application to the spiritual needs of man. "There must be a revival of doctrinal preaching." "There is the Scriptural doctrine of sin that is greatly neglected in the preaching of today." Great preaching, says the author, calls for *theological* greatness. The increasing emphasis on liturgical values or the participation of the congregation in the service, he says, has developed from a conviction that such rituals are necessary to meet religious needs. "They would save the worship hour from the hazard to which poor preaching has too often subjected it."

All this has been well said. But even when reading the first chapters, we became somewhat doubtful whether the author, in spite of some statements which seemed to indicate it, would clearly state and emphasize the Scriptural doctrine of the vicarious atonement as the only remedy against sin and as the real content of Scriptural Gospel-preaching. In chapters III and IV the author attempts to show how expository preaching should be done. He uses the Gospel according to



**St. Matthew as an example.** His outline fails to bring out the real *Gospel* content of that New Testament book. That is not a true exposition of the Bible which does not clearly present that truth for the sake of which it has been given, to wit, that "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, *being made a curse for us,*" Gal. 3:13.

But if those preachers who preach *topical* sermons on *short* texts, which present hardly any sermon material, preaching platitudes instead of enriching the Scriptural knowledge of their hearers and supplying all their spiritual needs, could by the reading of Montgomery's book be persuaded to discontinue that practice in favor of real *expository* preaching, the small purchase price paid for it would be a very good investment.

J. H. C. FRITZ

**Handbook for Congregational Officers.** By Theo. Graebner. 136 pages, 4½×7¼. Paper binding. Price, 50 cts.

**The Yoke Made Easy.** By Alfred Doerffler. 119 pages, 5×7¼. Paper binding. Price, 35 cts. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

Both of these books are well known in our circles and have fully proved their worth in the experience of many a pastor and parishioner, so that it will not be necessary to recommend them again to our readers. Concordia Publishing House has done well in offering these books in a paper-cover edition and materially reducing the prices. We hope that this reduction will encourage many congregations to buy a number of Dr. Graebner's books and to present a copy to the pastor, to all old church officers at once, and to all newly elected officers at their induction. Pastor Doerffler's book well serves as a gift for the sick and ailing, the shut-in, the convalescent, in fact, any one that is at times down-hearted and dejected. The comfort and admonition from God's own Word as dispensed in this book will help to ease the yoke of many a Christian. Pastor Doerffler's book is still available in the more substantial cloth binding, at 75 cts.

TH. LAETSCH

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