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## Book Review. - Literatur

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**Book Review — Literatur**


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All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

**The Bible Book by Book for Students.** By Rev. Wm. Stuart. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 115 pages, 5¼×7½. Paper cover. Price: 60 cts.

The author presents a brief outline of every book in the Bible. The book, while exhibiting the Reformed doctrine (e. g., "Lord's Supper symbolizes and means salvation," etc., p. 15), will prove helpful in studying and analyzing the individual books. We do not agree with the author that the Song of Solomon "is a song of the love of marriage in Eastern language and imagery. The persons are Solomon and Shulamith and the daughters of Jerusalem." "The idea of the love of husband and wife sets forth the love between Jehovah and His people." (P. 48.) The Song is an allegory describing the mutual love of the Lord and the Church. Neither does Solomon in Ecclesiastes "write from the point of view of the irreligious man, who does not take God nor the life to come into consideration" (p. 47). What the author evidently means to say is that some of the passages are written from this viewpoint and the arguments of the ungodly answered by Solomon, who stresses the need of fearing and trusting the Creator and Judge of all mankind.

TH. LAETSCH

**The Glory of the Manger.** By S. M. Zwemer, D. D. 232 pages, 5½×7. Price, \$1.50.

**Who Is This King of Glory?** By W. H. Johnson, D. D. 217 pages, 5½×7. Price, \$1.50.

**The Riches of His Grace.** By John Schmidt, B. D. 247 pages, 5½×7. Price, \$1.50.

The American Tract Society, 21 W. 46th St., New York, requested, in a Prize Book Contest, popular treatises on the essential evangelical doctrines and out of the 116 manuscripts submitted selected 13 for publication, among them our three books, Dr. Zwemer's book receiving first prize.

These three books display the great wealth the Church enjoys and is offering the world. They are worth reading. And what makes them particularly worth while is the great wealth of Scripture-proof with which they operate. This is the *glory of the manger*: The Son of God became man, born of the Virgin Mary, in order to gain salvation for us through His birth and His death ("Do not separate the glory of the Manger from the glory of the Cross," page 183). And He gained salvation for all of us, for all men. Dr. Zwemer, until recently professor at Princeton Theological Seminary, emphatically states: "In His incarnation Christ did not identify Himself with a part of the human race or with elect members of that race but with the whole family of humanity. . . . All are lost in sin, and He came to seek and to save the lost." (Pp. 157, 162.) For all men there is immense wealth in Christ. On the last page

Pascal is quoted: "Jesus Christ is the center of everything and the object of everything, and he who does not know Him knows nothing of the order of the world and nothing of himself. In Him is all our felicity and virtue, our life, our light, our hope; apart from Him there is nothing but vice, misery, darkness, despair, and we see only obscurity and confusion in the nature of God and in our own."

*Who Is This King of Glory?* His is the glory of God become man, the glory of the vicarious sacrifice, the glory of ruling a holy people ("Christian ethics finds its center in Jesus, the Son of God, and in His death upon the cross," p.204), and His "the glory of the Captain of salvation bringing many sons to glory" (last page). There are those who cannot see this glory because they will not see their sin; they believe in "a god without wrath who drew men without sin into a kingdom without judgment by the ministrations of a Christ without a cross." (P.186.) They want no Savior, but our boast is: "Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ; Thou art the everlasting Son of the Father."

And now for "*the Riches of His Grace*"! What the God-man gained for the sinners through His vicarious life and death He distributes with the lavish hand of grace. Study the meaning of this word, grace. In thirteen chapters (Two Religions, The Nature of Grace, The Enemies of Grace, Grace in the Old Testament, Grace in Jesus Christ, Grace in St. Paul, Grace Elsewhere in the New Testament, The Effectiveness of Grace, the Rejection of Grace, The Ethical Power of Grace, The Gifts of Grace, The Means of Grace, The Outreach of Grace) Pastor J. Schmidt of the Lutheran church of Blacksburg, Va. (now professor in Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia, S. C.), describes the nature, the workings, and the glory of it. "Every non-Christian religion says, 'Something in my hand I bring,' while only Christianity says, 'Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to Thy Cross I cling.'" (P.11.) "Could any illustration impress upon our minds the fact that salvation is wholly of God more than the Lord's word to Nicodemus 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God'? (John 3:3.) For never are we so completely dependent as at birth. Nothing that we have, not even life itself, is due to ourselves. We do not bring God down, nor do we climb up to Him. God comes seeking—John 3:16. . . . To claim merit in oneself is at the same time to reject the absolute grace of God." (P.92f.) The natural man hates nothing so much as the concept of grace. "Others reject the Gospel because it reflects upon the worth of man. . . . Pride is the great enemy of grace." (P.149.) "The natural man is a born enemy of Christianity. . . . The natural man is a born Roman Catholic" (p.30) and likes the creed of Will Durant, which "redefines" the Christian faith "as sincere acceptance of the moral ideas of Christ." (P.70.) But those that know their poverty shall find immense wealth. "The Gospel of God's free grace is an all-sufficient gift. Its riches are beyond computation. This book and all others that may be written can only reveal a little of the hem of His garment. . . . Grace comes to each individual with the particular things he needs and desires. It is the grace of the unsearchable riches of Christ that we are permitted to share with all men.—1 Pet. 3:10,11." (Concluding paragraphs.) "Thus

the Gospel of grace triumphs. It meets every need of the human heart, if only the Church has the faith and courage to employ this apparently inadequate and absurd weapon." (P. 147.)

What makes these books particularly valuable is the wealth of Scripture material they offer. Chapters 4—7 of *The Riches of His Grace* are exclusively exegetical, and "exegetical" in the sense that they simply present and emphasize the simple statements of Scripture. The other two books follow the same principle. They are content with the Scripture proof. And they are lavish with it. These writers know that you cannot give too much of it. It does not weary the Christian. And the simpler the language and argument, the better the Christian likes it. Take this section in *The Glory of the Manger*, page 172 f.: "The scriptural evidence . . . can be summarized because first of all, the names, attributes, peculiar works, and the worship due to the Creator are also ascribed to Christ. 1. Names. God," etc. 6 Scripture statements. "2. He is called the *Son of God* in a peculiar sense and as eternally begotten." 3 passages. "3. He is called *Lord* in more than fifty New Testament passages." Two are listed. "4. He performs the *works* of God. In creating," etc. 11 passages. "5. Christ possesses the *attributes* of God, eternity," etc. 10 passages. "6. Christ receives the *worship* of men and angels." 7 passages. That is the method employed in the old-fashioned catechism instruction, *Christenlehre*, and *Katechismuspredigten*. Here is a prominent theologian who does not disdain to employ it in a theological treatise. Let us not delude ourselves with the idea that the times call for a better mode of presentation.

We are sorry to say that in these books some dross is mixed with the gold. We cannot understand why Dr. Zwemer should believe in the deity of Jesus simply because Scripture teaches it and yet deny, on page 25, the instantaneous Creation, even though Scripture plainly teaches it. And one is still more surprised when he supports his denial by appealing to the Ninetieth Psalm and quoting that with Him a thousand years are as one day and one day as a thousand years.—Other cases of bad exegesis: 1 Tim. 2:15 is quoted as indicating the Virgin Birth: "She shall be saved *by the Child-bearing*." (P. 48.) "In these words ('If He called them gods,' John 10:35) Christ asserts the essential divinity of man by his origin and destiny." (P. 171.)—"Socrates is one of the five great historic figures raised up of God as harbingers of a new era and, in a sense, preparatory leaders for the coming of the King of Righteousness. He prepared the way for Plato and Paul." The others are Alexander the Great, Judas Maccabeus, Julius Caesar, Herod the Great. (P. 27 f.)—The Gospel is preached to the dead, in Hades. (P. 201.)—Whether one teaches premillennialism or postmillennialism or a-millennialism, "matters comparatively little." (P. 218.) (We can easily forgive the lapsus in the statement that "in 1854 Pope Leo (instead of Pius IX) set his seal on the doctrine of her [Mary's] immaculate conception.")—Dr. Johnson ascribes too much to Christian experience: "The ground of full assurance is found in the sphere of religious experience." (P. 18. See also p. 144.)—"The Sabbath is the oldest and most sacred of human institutions." (P. 24.)—The five reasons given on pages 156 ff.

for the credibility of the gospels (the first being "the strong and practically uniform tradition in the early Church that they were written by the apostles") carry great weight, but one is surprised that the chief reason is not mentioned—their inspiration. (Dr. Johnson believes in their inspiration.)—The claims of the radical critics are disallowed. But a concession is made to the literary critics with reference to "the apparently abrupt ending of Mark 16 at v. 8." (Pp. 28, 55.)—The thesis of *The Riches of His Grace* being: salvation is wholly by grace, we do not see how the author can make the statement: "We determine what kind of soil we shall be when the seed of the Word comes to us." (P. 153.)—The statement on page 64: "Essentially there is not so much difference between Luther and Calvin on the question of predestination as their followers, in times of controversy, have thought" must be greatly modified.—"Repentance is but the turning from our sin, and God desires us to turn to Him in glad trust." (P. 135.) That is a wrong definition of repentance.—The chapter on "The Means of Grace" is very weak. It lacks the Lutheran emphasis. The review of our book appearing in the *Lutheran* of August 7, 1940, too, says: "The reviewer regrets that more prominence has not been given to the discussion of the means of grace."—Like Zwemer, Schmidt teaches a Hades salvation. "The eternal fate of those who have never been confronted by an effective choice for or against Christ is another matter entirely, concerning which we can conclude only that God, who judges all men in accordance with their opportunities, will judge them also in love." (P. 155.)

Cast aside such dross in studying these three books. Appropriate the great wealth they offer.

TH. ENGELDER

**The Vicarious Atonement through Christ.** By Prof. L. Berkhof. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. 184 pages, 5½×8. Price, \$1.50.

**The Manual of Reformed Doctrine.** Same author; same publishers. 372 pages, 5½×8. Price, \$1.50.

**Summary of Christian Dogmatics.** Same author; same publishers. 197 pages, 5¼×7¾. Price: cloth, 60 cts.; paper, 40 cts.

Professor Berkhof of Calvin Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, Mich., is perhaps the outstanding orthodox Reformed dogmatician today. He follows closely in the footsteps of Hodge and Warfield, representing the strict Calvinistic trend in America. His style is direct and simple, yet vivid and dignified, and his works possess the charm of one who speaks with sincerity and conviction. His *Vicarious Atonement through Christ* is a historically valuable monograph, offering rich historico-dogmatical material in a condensed and readily intelligible form. Interesting for the Lutheran student is the chapter on the "Objections to the Doctrine of a Limited Atonement," in which he shows why he holds to a "restricted design of the atonement." He bases his denial of the *gratia universalis* on what he believes to be convincing Scripture-proof, but no interpretation denying universal grace does justice to the passages which so clearly teach this doctrine.

Professor Berkhof's *Manual of Reformed Doctrine* is an abridgment of his *Reformed Dogmatics* (3 volumes) and is intended for high-school and college classes as also for instruction of older catechumens. In the preface the author writes: "I have tried to give a rather comprehensive and yet concise statement of the Reformed conception of the truth," to which the reader must agree as he studies the book, since nowhere the presentation is superficial. The arrangement of dogmatical heads follows that of the author's *Dogmatics*: Introduction; Doctrine of God and Creation; Doctrine of Man in Relation to God; Doctrine of the Person and Work of Christ; Doctrine of the Application of the Work of Redemption; Doctrine of the Church and the Means of Grace; Doctrine of the Last Things. The *Manual* offers a wealth of dogmatical material in a popular, yet scholarly presentation and presupposes on the part of the student great willingness to study the Christian doctrine thoroughly. The lucid, synoptic arrangement of the subject-matter makes the study of the book a pleasant task, though in its confutation of Lutheranism it at times does not adequately represent the Lutheran doctrine (e. g., baptismal regeneration, p. 239).

Berkhof's *Summary of Christian Doctrine* is an abridgment of the *Manual*, designed for less advanced classes; but also the *Summary* makes the study of the Christian doctrine no child's play. The arrangement of the subject-matter is very much like that in the *Manual*, but here only absolute essentials are offered, while exhaustive lists of Scripture-passages are printed out for memory work, with "questions for further study" and "questions for review." For formal study both the *Manual* and the *Summary* may be recommended to our pastors.

J. THEODORE MUELLER

*Living Religions and a World Faith.* By William Ernest Hocking. New York. Macmillan Company. 291 pages, 5¼×8.

This book is a glaring—and a terrifying—example of the lengths to which man's foolishness will go when it sets aside the eternal verities of the one inspired Book and its revelation concerning the way of salvation. The author, going way beyond the ordinary variety of unionism, here advocates a syncretism which would have shocked even the most rabid exponents of such practices a few decades ago. The philosophy which guides the discussion of the book may be seen from sentences like the following: "God is in His world, but Buddha, Jesus, Mohammed, are in their little private closets, and we shall thank them, but never return to them. Such is the spirit of world citizenship at this moment." (P. 22.) That the author is acquainted with the claim of Christianity as to absolute authority is apparent from his chapter on "The Way of Radical Displacement." (P. 143 ff.) But he condemns and spurns this way as being unsound, inadequate, and, to a large degree, doomed to failure. And so he proposes a synthesis, one far more daring than that offered by Hume, a synthesis whose criteria are individuality, organic unity, and consistency. And then he has the temerity to state: "I believe that we shall see in the Orient the rise of a Christianity [?] far outpassing that which we of the West have conceived." (P. 187.) He believes, and he states it in bold-face: "Christianity is not yet

ready to serve as a world religion." (P. 249 ff.) To this he adds another thesis: "Our present Christianity does not include all that other religions have." (P. 254 ff.) Suffice it to say that the religion which the author proposes as his final solution has nothing whatever in common with that which Jesus taught and for whose proclamation St. Paul gave decades of his life, finally sealing his faith with his martyrdom. We are committed one hundred per cent. to the Christianity of Christ crucified and resurrected.

P. E. KRETZMANN

**Selections from Hellenistic Philosophy.** By Gordon H. Clark, Wheaton College. F. S. Crofts & Co., New York. 1940. 267 pages, 4½×6½. Price, \$1.25.

An elegantly bound, attractive little volume. Are its contents important? As everybody knows, Hellenistic philosophy is not studied nearly as much as that of the classical period in Greek literature. Who would think of spending as much time on Seneca or Marcus Aurelius as on Plato or Aristotle? The general opinion is that in Hellenistic philosophy (dating from about 300 B. C. to 500 A. D.) one deals with what is senile, or decadent; hence the authors representing it are usually merely mentioned, not read. But Dr. Clark undoubtedly is right when he advocates that we take a different attitude. He very properly points out that to assume that during so many centuries Greek philosophy was characterized by nothing but decay is unreasonable. He reminds us, too, that during this period there came the religion of Jesus Christ, through whose influence the heathen schools of philosophy were gradually closed. In addition, he tells us on the opening pages that the view that Hellenistic philosophy concerns itself with nothing but ethics is erroneous, and he mentions several instances of solid contributions to science during this period. We, too, should like to see the study of Hellenistic philosophy receive more attention in our theological circles. It seems to us that Christian theologians might profitably delve into this material more than is commonly done. After all, it is the philosophy of the age when our Savior dwelt visibly among men and the apostles planted the Church and gave us our inspired New Testament. We cannot understand this age too well. To read the writings that were produced at this time, to study the inscriptions and the papyri that come from this period, to acquaint oneself with the thought patterns dominating the thinking and the literary expressions of that day, equips us for a fuller understanding of the language of the New Testament and the views of the people for whom it was intended. The book consists of a preface and six chapters (Epicureanism, the Stoics, Plutarch, Philo Judaeus, Hermes Trismegistus, Plotinus). The work is intended as a volume that can be used in teaching Hellenistic philosophy. Every chapter includes a discussion of the topic and contains quotations from the most important sources. It is, then, a work offering source-material. Naturally, the selections submitted are given in an English translation. The author has carefully checked the translations and here and there adds a critical or otherwise enlightening note. Since works on the philosophy of Plutarch and of Philo as well as selections from the Hermes Trismegistus

literature are comparatively rare, we have here a welcome addition to present-day philosophical and semitheological literature. The learning and the carefulness of the author deserve high commendation.

W. ARNDT

**Seven Religious Isms.** By Herbert M. Wyrick. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. Price, 50 cts.

We announce this book because of its chapter on Anglo-Israelism. The author devotes about fifteen pages to this ism, whose basic theory is that the English race constitutes the lost ten tribes of Israel.

F. E. MAYER

**The Oxford Book of Christian Verse.** Chosen and edited by Lord David Cecil. Oxford at the Clarendon Press. 560 pages. Indexed. Price, \$3.00.

This is the latest volume in the Oxford University Press poetry series, which includes the *Oxford Book of Carols*; the *Oxford Book of English Verse (1250—1918)*; *Poems*, by Robert Bridges, and others. The editor and compiler has selected the poems in this anthology with the view of presenting such only as "are consistent with the doctrines of orthodox Christianity." He has deliberately confined himself to poets born in the British Isles, with the exception of the American Thomas Stearns Eliot, founder of the modern school of English poets.

In an introduction of twenty-two pages Lord Cecil gives a very readable survey of the Christian poets of England and rightly says that a collection of English Christian verse is "both a history of Christianity in England and an exhibition of the varieties of the religious temperament." His selections range from the pre-Reformation stage to the present day. He describes our age as an age of doubt, especially among poets, not many of whom write about religion.

He includes selections from the writings of 130 poets. Quite naturally, we find among them many of the great names from the field of English hymnody, although the book is in no sense an anthology of hymns.

For all those who love poetry the volume will be of great interest and permanent value, as many of the poems are not readily available otherwise. Pastors will find many quotable lines and stanzas for use in their sermons and addresses. One or two short selections will be sufficient to illustrate. Here is Robert Herrick's "Grace for Children":

What God gives and what we take,  
 'Tis a gift for Christ His sake:  
 Be the meal of beans and peas,  
 God be thanked for those and these.  
 Have we flesh, or have we fish,  
 All are fragments from His dish.  
 He His Church save and the king,  
 And our peace here, like a spring,  
 Make it ever flourishing.

Here is "Before the Beginning" by Christina Georgina Rossetti:

Before the beginning Thou hast foreknown the end,  
 Before the birthday the death-bed was seen of Thee:  
 Cleanse what I cannot cleanse, mend what I cannot mend;  
 O Lord All-Merciful, be merciful to me.  
 While the end is drawing near, I know not mine end;  
 Birth I recall not; my death I cannot foresee:  
 O God, arise to defend, arise to befriend;  
 O Lord All-Merciful, be merciful to me:



And in the modern manner, these lines from Thomas Stearns Eliot's "From 'the Rock'":

There shall always be the Church and the world,  
And the heart of man  
Shivering and fluttering between them, choosing and chosen,  
Vallant, ignoble, dark, and full of light,  
Swinging between hell gate and heaven gate;  
And the gates of hell shall not prevail.

W. G. POLACK

**Proceedings of the Sixty-Third Convention of the Central District, assembled at Fort Wayne, Ind., June 17—21, 1940.** Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 93 pages, 6×9. Price, 29 cts.

Besides an essay on "The Importance of Prayer in the Life of a Christian," by Rev. J. W. Acker, given in condensed form, this report offers a paper on "The Scriptural Position with Reference to the Responsibility of the Church toward Welfare Works," read by Prof. E. E. Foelber, one of the most satisfactory presentations of this much-discussed subject that has come to our attention. We urge our pastors to invest the small sum required for the purchase of this report. The report of the District Mission Board was submitted in a rather novel manner, in the form of an imaginary interview between an interested and interesting layman and the Director of Missions, Committee No. 14 (Recommendations on Mission Work) coming in at opportune moments with their recommendations to the convention.

TH. LAETSCH

**Lutheran Annual 1941.** Literary Editor: Dr. J. T. Mueller. Statistical Editor: Rev. S. Michael. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 196 pages. Price, 15 cts.

**Amerikanischer Kalender fuer deutsche Lutheraner auf das Jahr 1941.** Literarischer Redakteur: Dr. J. T. Mueller. Statistischer Redakteur: P. S. Michael. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 196 pages. Price, 15 cts.

Our old *Annual* and *Kalender* appear again in the old, accustomed form, color, and contents. The number of pages is larger than ever and the information offered on these pages really remarkable. There should be no need of urging the sale of these necessary vademecums of every member of the Synodical Conference synods. The usual calendar material and factual and statistical material on all these synods fill all but 27 pages of the sizable book; on the latter is offered a very brief biography of our departed President, Dr. F. Pfoth, and a great number of little stories and clippings of educational or devotional character.

THEO. HOYER

#### BOOKS RECEIVED

*From Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.:*

Concordia Collection of Sacred Choruses and Anthems for More Ambitious Choral Organizations. No. 56: "The Lord Is My Light." Mixed Voices and baritone solo. By J. C. Wohlfeil. 6 pages. Price, 25 cts.

*From the Bible Institute Colportage Assn., Chicago:*

By-Paths in the Bible Country. By Charles A. S. Dwight, Ph. D. 128 pages, 5½×8. Price, \$1.00.