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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.

Notes from a Layman's Greek Testament. By Ernest Gordon. W. A. Wilde Company, Boston. 371 pages, 5½×8¼. Price, \$2.00.

The author of this book, as the publishers' blurb informs us, is a layman who in the good old days, when at college, studied Greek. He evidently has retained his love for this language and still enjoys reading the Greek New Testament and pondering the rich meaning residing in the words and expressions of the original. The author says in the preface (p. 3), "The notes which follow are chiefly the fruits of personal meditation with some material from other reading. This last has been summarized, expanded, or rewritten as the case may be and is drawn from older sources, such as Bengel, Hengstenberg, Godet, Trench, and others. The author's purpose has been to make accessible to the general Christian public suggestive material for personal Bible-study, for the prayer-meeting, and for the Sunday-school." The method followed by the author is simple. Taking the various books of the New Testament in their order, he selected, as he studied them, those passages which appeared to him particularly striking and added remarks that he believed pertinent. Like the comments of Bengel, what he says is brief. There is no attempt at elaborate interpretation. Human authors are seldom quoted. The writer, as is proper, endeavors to interpret Scripture by Scripture, and hence he often cites parallel passages. As is to be expected, the selection of passages made by the author is not always that which everybody else would make. Thus from Matt. 18 the only verses selected for comment are 19, 20, 21. Now and then the author pauses for a longer discussion of the subject. There are forty such little chapters inserted at the respective place. Among the topics treated are "The Magnificat of the Old Testament and that of the New" (p. 65), "Genesis and John" (p. 122), "The Doctrine of the Trinity" (p. 199), "Luke the Beloved Physician" (p. 269), "The Scripture Foreseeing the Papacy" (p. 320).

To give the readers an idea of the manner of interpretation followed by the author, we print here what he has to say on Luke 10:40, "But Martha was cumbered with much serving." The Greek word translated "cumbered" is *periespato*, "pulled around," that is, called from one pressing duty to another. Naturally, her attention was "divided," as the root word for "careful," *merimnas*, means, and she was troubled, disturbed (*thorubaze*, from *thorubos*, a tumult). The mistress in charge of a large house with the numerous guests of the Passover season would find her duties tumultuous and clamoring. The word translated "she came to him" may have a suggestion of querulousness, if not of imperiousness. It is *epistasa*, "and standing up to him, she said, Lord, dost thou not care?"

How gentle his reply, "Martha, Martha, . . . but one thing is needful." Was he referring to the fourth verse of Psalm 27, "One thing have

I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord, to behold the beauty of the Lord?"

Certainly this was the wish of Mary.

Paul defines this (good) part, *merida*, in Col. 1:12, where he speaks of the Father as making us meet or "worthy" for the *merida*, the portion of the inheritance of the saints in light.

This is the Psalmist's word in New Testament setting. (P. 84.)

At a few places we have to disagree with the author. Thus the comment on Matt. 1:21 seems to assume that the promise of salvation from sin proclaimed by the angel has reference to sanctification (not justification), p. 15. On p. 331 the author in speaking of 2 Pet. 3:12 says, "It should be noted that the verse 'whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things' is a negative to all theories of the transubstantiation of bread and wine into the corporeal body of Christ." We agree with him in his rejection of the doctrine of transubstantiation. But if he holds that it is impossible for Christ to be corporeally present in the Lord's Supper we, of course, demur. The passage from Acts 3:21, which he quotes, need not mean that the heavens received Jesus but may express the thought that Jesus received the heavens. At any rate, any view teaching that Jesus now is shut up in the heavens is contrary to the analogy of faith. Cf. Eph. 4:10; Matt. 28:20.

Generally speaking, this work is entitled to our commendation.

W. ARNDT

**The Christian's Attitude towards His Government and on War.** By L. J. Roehm. Reprint from CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY, May, 1941. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 24 pages. Paper. Price, 10 cts.

**The Christian and War. What Should Be the Christian's Attitude?** By Henry Ostrom. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. Paper. Price, 25 cts.

Pastor Roehm's article was worth reprinting. The theses which it unfolds, such as: "Civil government is ordained of God for the establishment of justice, the protection of life and property, and the maintenance of law and order in human society," "In the exercise of its obligation to protect the land, the government may find it necessary to wage war," "The question whether the government is waging a just or an unjust war is not for the Church to determine but must be referred to the conscience of the individual," the Christian must be exhorted "in time of national stress to uphold the government loyally and to resist only when commanded to sin," are worth rereading and restudying.

Henry Ostrom's pamphlet deals specifically with pacifism. Its opening sentence is: "If it is a Christian duty to oppose war and to refuse to be a soldier, then let us all be conscientious objectors and pacifists." It shows that it cannot be the Christian's duty to refuse, under all circumstances, to be a soldier by pointing to the *Epistle to the Romans* which says of the ruler that "he beareth not the sword in vain" (Romans 13). "In the Bible," the author says, "the Christian soldier is never referred to as a murderer, but he is given honorable classification. John the Baptist did not bid him mutiny in order to accept John's

baptism." The pamphlet also stresses this Biblical teaching: "If the government shall command him to violate his personal allegiance to God, the Christian's appeal is to God above all governments, to live or die as did so many glorious martyrs."—The pamphlet forsakes Scriptural grounds when it operates with the millennium in general and, in particular, with the postponement-theory, change-of-program-theory of certain dispensationalists. When the pacifist appeals to the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:39: "That ye resist not evil"), this impossible answer is given: That belongs to "the early teaching of Jesus." "A change was made by Jesus in His revealed program." "The kingdom of heaven having been rejected" by the Jews, the regulations of the Sermon on the Mount must await the establishment of the millennium. "The Kingdom cannot appear until Christ Jesus comes and brings it."—Then these regulations will be in force and can be carried out. TH. ENGELDER

**The Meaning of Revelation.** By H. Richard Niebuhr. The Macmillan Company, New York. 196 pages, 5¼×7¾. Price, \$2.00.

When a Christian theologian thinks of "revelation," he has in mind God's self-manifestation, imperfectly in nature (the existing universe, the order and progress in history, the witness of conscience), perfectly in Scripture, for here (in the Gospel) the *Deus absconditus* (for nature can never tell who the true God is and what is His relation to the world of erring men) reveals Himself in the supreme *doxa* of His grace and mercy. But H. R. Niebuhr is not a Christian theologian in the orthodox sense. To him God's self-disclosure is a historical process, rationally conceivable and philosophically demonstrable. In his disquisition he evaluates such antipodal philosophies as those of Plato and Kant, Troeltsch and Barth, Bergson and Brunner. With his Reformed orientation (his father was an "Evangelical" pastor in Missouri), however, he ultimately finds himself in the camp of "existentialism" (*sola gratia* in a Barthian sense, God's sovereignty, eternal life). Niebuhr's unique monograph requires slow and often painful reading (for lack of clarity), but is interesting, nevertheless, because here the orthodox theologian finds demonstrated the futility of rationalistic speculation to motivate and define the *mysterium fidei* involved in God's self-revelation. No amount of rationalizing profits at this point; attempted rational explication here proves itself only ambiguity, obscurity, and self-deception. As God is incomprehensible in His essence and operations, so also the *modus* of His self-disclosure to man surpasses human understanding. This fact Niebuhr's investigations prove, for despite all his assertions to the contrary he moves on safe ground only when in his speculations he remains within the bounds of traditional orthodoxy. Man can have a saving knowledge of God only by faith in the Word of Scripture; whenever man chooses another way of knowing God, he finds himself groping in darkness. For the Christian it is sufficient that God has revealed Himself in the precious Gospel for his salvation, and he rejoices in the privilege of knowing the truth by continuing in Christ's Word. (Cf. John 8:31,32.) The meaning of revelation is given us by Christ Himself in John 17:3.

J. THEODORE MUELLER

**The English Church and the Papacy. From the Conquest to the Reign of John.** By Z. N. Brooke, M. A., Cambridge, at the University Press. XII and 260 pages. Price, \$3.00.

This is not a new book (1931), but it has only now come to my attention. It is reviewed here because it will be of value to those among us who are interested in the history of the English Church.—Since time immemorial history has been used for propaganda purposes. History deals with facts; and since "facts are stubborn things," propaganda material takes the appearance of incontestable truth when it is ostensibly based on historical facts. Such use of history may be deceptive; history does not lie, but history writers may, even without telling an untruth; they may lie by omission, by wresting facts out of their true historic connection and sequence, etc.—With reference to the history of the English Church two claims are often made by propagandists of opposite views: The English Church was never subject to the Pope, and the English Church was always subject to the Pope. The present author's object was to examine extant records for the time noted and find a definite conclusion. The book consists of a preface, an introduction, two parts, and an appendix. In the introduction the author establishes what was the law in the Western Church and that the English Church was a part of this Western Church, not a separate Church; the term *ecclesia Anglicana* has no particular nationalistic meaning, being the equivalent of *ecclesia Gallicana*, *Scotiana*, *Hibernicana*, *Daciana*, *Hungarica*; it means the Church, the same Church, in a particular country. The same Canon Law applied to all parts of the Church; and the English Church recognized it as English Church law, possessed, and used the same collections of Church laws that were employed in other parts of the Church. There is no shred of evidence to show that the English Church in the eleventh and twelfth centuries was governed by laws selected by itself.—Part I of the book contains a detailed, technical account of how the author arrived at this conclusion; an interesting example of thorough critical use of historical sources.—There was, however, a question: Who was to be the master of ecclesiastical officials, Pope or king? This the author discusses in the second, the most interesting part of the book: The Relation of England with the Papacy. "It might seem obvious that if the Pope was acknowledged to be the Head of the Church, he had the first claim to their obedience. But this was not so obvious to a generation brought up in the contrary tradition and accustomed to the idea that obedience was due to the ruler ordained of God. . . . While the attitudes of both Pope and king were clear and consistent throughout, the attitude of the bishops soon became clouded and confused. At first, indeed, they were whole-heartedly on the side of the king. They adopted the traditional standpoint, and they supported him both from conviction and from motives of interest. But gradually the study of the law began to have its effect, and they were in a difficult position. They were bound by it to obey the Pope; they were pledged by their oath to the king and bound often by their fears and self-interest, and also they were still convinced of their duty to God's anointed. Hence they were in a serious dilemma, in which they

were sometimes relieved, sometimes still farther embarrassed, by other factors, such as the changing fortunes of the contest of Empire and Papacy, the political situation and its effect on the power of the king, and the use, whether arbitrary or otherwise, that the king made of his authority over them. The story is a complicated one, but on the whole the process of change, once it has begun under the influence of the law upon ecclesiastical opinion, is fairly constantly in one direction." In other words, while there is in the English Church originally an attitude of independence from Rome and acknowledgment of the king as head of the Church (partly because of the twofold origin of the English Church, partly because of the old Saxon principle that the king manages all matters of community interest, including religion), in these centuries the English Church was brought in line with all the Churches of the continent: Subservience to the Pope; and in the days of John Lackland and Innocent III, the phrase in the Magna Charta guaranteeing liberty to the English Church means liberty to be under Papal control; it is directed against the king, not against the Pope.—It is a fine example of the oft-repeated story, how in the eleventh and twelfth centuries the power in the Church was centralized in the Papacy, beginning with Leo IX, founded chiefly on the Pseudo-Isidorean Decretals and the writings of Gregory the Great and perfected by Gregory VII and Innocent III.

THEO. HOYER

**Working with God's Word. A Handbook for the Teaching and Learning of Bible History.** By W. A. Schmidt, F. H. Weber, and S. J. Roth. 123 pages, 8×11. Lutheran School Service, 2343 N. Bond St., Saginaw, Mich. Price, 45 cts.

In this work-book for beginners in Bible history we have before us the happy results of the combined efforts of three men whose experience in the field of Christian education entitles them to an immediate hearing. It is a work-book designed to accompany the *Elementary Bible History* published by Concordia Publishing House. The lessons are so planned as to lead the pupils into a thorough examination of the text of the respective Bible stories to find the factual content of each one in succession. The helps for each lesson include not only the ordinary fact questions, but also true-false questions and statements, completion statements, and review questions for eighteen units of stories, which will prove of great value in testing the results of teaching and in providing periodic summaries. The authors state in their concluding remarks: "A complete and exhaustive lesson treatment was not attempted by the writers. Some lessons are so rich in content that it would take several pages to unfold the truths contained therein. Many doctrinal truths and applications were purposely reserved for treatment in connection with the *Advanced Bible History*. Teachers will know how to adapt and supplement the exercises to meet the needs of their pupils and the religion course of their school." The book should prove of great value also to pastors, especially such as are in charge of summer-schools, Saturday-schools, and similar part-time agencies. Considering the amount of material offered in the book, the price is certainly most reasonable.

P. E. KRETZMANN

**How to Discuss the Story. Junior II (609 pages) and Intermediate II (698 pages), 5½×7¼.** By Dr. M. Reu. Lutheran Book Concern, Columbus, O. Price, each, \$2.00.

In the May, 1941, issue of this journal we reviewed two volumes written by Dr. Reu which both have the title "How to Discuss the Story" and which are intended for the classes designated as Junior I and Intermediate I. The two volumes now before us belong to the same series. As the title indicates, they are intended for the classes called Junior II and Intermediate II. There are two cycles of Bible stories treated in these four volumes. The volume for Junior I treats the stories forming one cycle and the volume called Junior II treats the stories forming the second cycle. The same stories are again treated in the volumes called Intermediate I and Intermediate II respectively. As a result the volumes for Junior I and Intermediate I treat the same stories, just as do the volumes intended for Junior II and Intermediate II. The selection of the stories is based on Dr. Reu's work, "Wartburg Lesson Helps." This does not mean, however, that these books can be used only where the same selection of stories forms the basis of the Sunday-school lessons. The manner in which the various stories are here treated will indicate to a teacher how he may successfully undertake the teaching of any Biblical narrative. It is not necessary to repeat here what was stated in the May number concerning the method followed by the learned author. After what was sketched there it suffices if we say here that the books before us have the same character as those previously discussed. They reveal reverential scholarship, deep pedagogical insight, and remarkable skill of interpretation. The volumes are heartily recommended to our pastors and teachers.

W. ARNDT

**Keeping the Faith.** By W. E. Schuette. Published by The Wartburg Press, Columbus, Ohio. 227 pages, 5½×7¼. Price, \$2.00.

This book presents sermons for the dedication of a church, a chancel, an organ, for harvest home, ordination, installation, minister's funeral, seminary day, etc.; also ten brief Lenten addresses delivered during Holy Week in the Loop at Chicago and in Down-town Baltimore.

The author introduces his book with an "Apology," a defense for his manner of preaching. He says that there "has been a wide variety of notions on the subject." He believes that "no specific pattern of preaching can be acclaimed either the only pattern or even the best of several patterns. . . . I hold that every preacher should be in a large degree a law unto himself as to his preaching. No one has authority to bind him with rules of form or style." This is not as revolutionary as it sounds, nor is it intended to be, for the author adds, "To be sure, some demands he must obey. God, who has made him a preacher, demands that he always exalt the atoning Christ. The truth demands that he be loyal to it. Logic demands orderly and consistent thinking. Language demands that it be not violated and manhandled. The meaning of the word 'preaching' demands that he remember that it is not rambling, not declaiming, not stage-acting, that preaching is not the presentation of disconnected data, not philosophic moralizing. Other-

wise, let every preacher be himself. His sermons should bear evidence of his individuality." The author also holds that a sermon will not do anywhere but should "be prepared for the place and the time and the occasion of its delivery," it must supply the needs of the hearers. He also says that preaching has "only one great theme," to wit, "God's love as extended to fallen men in the atonement by the blood of Jesus, our Savior; and there is only one Savior to preach."

All this is well said; it is good advice. The sermon should preach Christ, be constructed along the lines of fundamental rules of good speech, and be individualistic. That Dr. Schuette's sermons measure up to these requirements is what we like about them. He has real texts, not mere fragmentary words of Scripture taken out of their context. He has clear outlines, announcing theme and parts. We should, however, in some of the sermons desire to see a better use made of the text. In one of the Lenten addresses, on Matt. 11:28-30, the text is not in evidence at all after it has been read. After all, the purpose of selecting a text is to preach *that* text and *make the hearers conscious that this is being done*. Even though we carry out the thought of the text, we take too much for granted if we think that the hearer will know it without direct reference being made to it. The reference to the text will help to impress the hearer that the important thing of the sermon is to hear not what the preacher says but what God says.

What our pastors will especially appreciate in the homiletical structure of these sermons is that, while not ignoring good homiletical principles, they are not *stereotyped* in their presentation of the subject matter. In an attempt to be individualistic and to speak the language of the man of today, some preachers ignore what is fundamental for good sermonizing.

J. H. C. FRITZ

**A Philosopher's Love for Christ.** By William Hazer Wrighton. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 119 pages, 5½×7¾. Price, \$1.00.

Here is a series of twelve meditations on passages from a Biblical book rarely treated in sermons or Bible classes, Solomon's Song of Songs. The author, William Hazer Wrighton, Head of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Georgia, proves himself a humble lover of Him who is altogether lovely and whom he has learned to love as his only but all-sufficient Savior. In glowing language, embellished with many Scripture quotations aptly selected and with poetry of exquisite beauty, the learned author pours out his heart's love to the Bridegroom of the Church, to whom his wife had led him, Christ crucified, who has become to him also the Power of God and the Wisdom of God. To the author, Christ is the center of the Song, so often misinterpreted. Chapter VI, entitled "The Loveliness of Christ," is treated in the following subdivisions: The purity of His life; the richness of His redemption; His infinite wisdom; the strength of His salvation; His beautiful words; He is altogether lovely; is He yours? In Chapter IX, "Love's Seal," we read, "Christ has your name as a seal upon His heart forever. No circumstances of sorrow or distress can break that seal. No foe, human



or demonic, can blot out that name, for it shall stay forever. Sun and stars may cease to shine, but your name will never be removed, it is sealed there by eternal grace and protected by everlasting love. That is why Christ is in heaven, He is there 'now to appear in the presence of God for us.' (P. 84.) "True love is strong as death. The love of Christ is even stronger than death, for He defeated death and took away its sting and left it powerless before our challenge, 'O death, where is thy sting?' It has never been the same foe since the Lord Jesus in infinite love was obedient to His Father even unto death; for He was forsaken of God, and 'the pains of hell got hold on Him.' He tasted death for every man. . . . Deep were the waters our Lord passed through when He came to reveal His love for us. He went through waves of bitter hatred, billows of judgment rolled over Him, He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Denied, deserted, betrayed, crucified; many floods passed over His soul when He was being made sin for us. The Lord caused to meet on Him the iniquities of us all. Yet His love was not quenched. 'Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end.' The waters were deep.

'But none of the ransomed ever knew  
How deep were the waters crossed,  
Nor how dark was the night that the Lord  
passed through  
Ere He found His sheep that was lost.'

If all that His love has already passed through could not destroy it, who shall separate us from that love now? It has already triumphed over tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and sword. Even now we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us; and as for the future, we are 'persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.' (Pp. 86, 87.)

Particularly commendable is the author's insistence on the written Word as the means of grace. On page 114 he assures us, "In my thought the incarnate Word and the written Word have been inseparably linked together." Quoting John 15:3, he writes, "The Word of Christ is the efficient cause of our being cleansed from sin." (P. 42.) We have found no reference to the Sacraments as means of grace. On eternal election we read, "It was by Jesus Christ that grace had its real inauguration. John 1:17." . . . Sovereign grace chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, and what was done then was 'to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved.' Eph. 1:6. Sacrificial grace made it possible to fulfil the sovereign purpose of grace. 2 Cor. 8:9."

TH. LAETSCH

#### BOOKS RECEIVED

*From the Board of Publication of the United Lutheran Church in America, Philadelphia:*

**The Keeper of the King's Inn (A Christmas Interlude).** By Robert Harris Gearhart, Jr. 75 pages, 5×7¾. Price, 75 cts.