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Th. Engelder

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Book Review — Literatur

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

No Salvation Without Substitution. By J. E. Conant, D. D., Th. D.
W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. 171 pages,
5½×7½. \$1.00.

The title promises great things, and the book redeems, to a great extent, the promise. It unfolds the central teaching of Christianity, salvation through the vicarious work of Christ, and not only stresses the fact of it but sets forth the Biblical rationale of it: the justice of God demands the sinner's death, divine love and mercy yearns for his salvation, divine wisdom found the way to reconcile justice and mercy, and thus divine grace forgives sins for the sake of Christ. "Here is the problem before which the greatest minds of all time have quailed and quit, for there appear to be contradictions that no philosophy can untangle." "This is a problem for a God of infinite wisdom! Is it possible that any solution can be found? Certainly not by the wisdom either of man or of angel. . . . Man's wisdom ends, and his philosophy stands dumb and helpless." (Pp. 18, 106.) All of this makes fine reading. Dr. Conant is willing to accept the teaching of Scripture despite the protest of reason. It is to be regretted that he excludes Christ's active obedience from His substitutionary work. (Pp. 125—127.) Then, too, he is too much concerned with showing that "the reasonableness, consistency, and logic of the fundamental facts in the Being of God will be seen to do no violence to the reason with which we are endowed." (P. 19.) After all, our logic is not pure logic. The logic of the natural mind will always find fault with God's ways. Instances where Dr. Conant's logic led him astray: "Adam and Eve had no positive moral character of their own. Innocence they had. . . . The teaching that man was created holy is not borne out either by God's Word or by logic." (P. 481 f.) "Salvation cannot be forfeited. . . . Since our ruin by Adam was so complete that we can do nothing to undo it, our rescue by Christ must be so complete that we can do nothing to forfeit it, else merit comes into the transaction, and grace is banished." (P. 146. — Some bad logic here!) Dr. Conant holds no brief for crass rationalism (see page 55: "*Where Rationalism Began*. Eve first allowed herself to listen and then became willing to consider the 'reasonableness' of what Satan said. . . . Thus having 'listened to reason' instead of *believing* God, she was deceived and blinded . . ."). And we are glad to see that, though occasionally he listens to the voice of reason and logic, on the great question of Substitution and related matters he listens to Scripture and bids philosophy and logic be silent. Where men do that, they learn the meaning of grace: "So if we were required to do the slightest thing either to be saved or kept, there would be a cause in us, grace would no longer be possible, and salvation out of the question. The gift of eternal life is so completely a gift that there can be no cause in us, for it is all in Him. And this is grace!" (P. 149.) They will not try to

argue eternal damnation out of existence: "Hell is an unspeakable reality! And yet there are always those who refuse to believe in the justice of hell. It is only those, however, in whose hearts there is the spirit of criminals against God's government. And it is a matter of common observation that no criminal is fit to judge of the justice of the law he has broken, for he is always prejudiced in his own favor." (P. 98.) They will detest and denounce all forms of Pelagianism: "There is everywhere among the lost an inveterate determination to believe that man not only can but *must* do something to make it possible for God to save. Either the sinner must himself bring about an improvement in his life, or he must help or at least permit God to bring it about, for otherwise salvation would be impossible. To tell the average sinner that as we were born into this world, we are past all possibility of even the least moral improvement would amaze him out of measure." (P. 159.) And if the Pelagian and synergist pleads the reasonableness of his teaching, they will tell him: "Yet this same doctrine of spontaneous generation, scientifically disproved, still persists in the spiritual realm, but without all reason. Men are still determined to believe that by striving after high ideals and noble aspirations we can finally bring ourselves out of the realm of death into that of spiritual life. But neither is spiritual life spontaneously generated. This life also must come from pre-existent life, for it can never be generated by any effort of man. . . . Spiritual life can come into being only as it is generated, begotten, by pre-existent life, and God is the only possessor of that life. We are therefore shut up to Him if we are ever to come out of death into life." (P. 152.)

TH. ENGELDER

Christian Doctrine. By J. S. Whale. The Macmillan Company, New York. 197 pages, 5½×8½. Price, \$2.00.

The reviewer was deeply interested in this compend of doctrinal theology, because it has been widely advertised as a new exposition of the fundamentals of the Christian faith in essential agreement with traditional orthodoxy. A well-known periodical (*The Lutheran Church Quarterly*, January, 1942) introduces its review with the words: "On its jacket this book is described as 'a forthright statement of the Christian faith and its eternal truths.' That is no mere publishers' notice. A reading of the book will justify the promise. Here is Christian doctrine, for the most part the historical doctrinal teaching of the evangelical Church; but its theology is no mere theology of repristination. It is the old theory in a new dress, persuasively presented but without apology or compromise." Of this, however, hardly more than two things are true. The book offers no "theology of repristination," which means, of course, orthodox theology, and "it is persuasively presented." The latter deserves notice in particular. The writer's approach is excellent. His diction and style (he is not afraid to quote French, Latin, and German statements), as also the mechanical make-up of the book, are very good. The compendium has the indescribable charm which inveigles one to read it to the end, and to the end it makes fascinating reading. The author is well-read in Roman, Genevan, and Lutheran theology, and what he has to say he tells in intelligible, dignified, and persuasive language,

almost entirely in that of traditional orthodoxy. For paragraphs and pages the unwary reader will be led to exclaim with the *Quarterly*: "Here is Christian doctrine!" So cleverly the author conceals what really is not Christian doctrine. It is only as the judicious student reads the eight chapters of the book ("The Living God"; "Man and His Sin"; "The Kingdom of God"; "Christ Crucified"; "Mysterium Christi"; "Life in the Spirit"; "Means of Grace"; "Death and the Age to Come") thoughtfully and critically that he will perceive that here is Christian doctrine only on the surface. The author rejects the verbal and plenary inspiration of the Bible, deploring the "narrow biblicism of later Calvinism" (p.16). He acknowledges not one *principium cognoscendi* of divine truth but two (Scripture and the Church), really three: the Bible, the Church, the soul of the believing individual, through all of which the Holy Spirit does His work. (Cf. p.20.) To him the Christian doctrine of creation is not "an historical event but a description of existence, an expression of our adoring sense of the transcendent majesty of God and of our utter dependence upon Him" (p.32). This is Barthian existentialism. He holds to Pelagianism. "Christianity clings to man's perfectibility and his inevitable progress. Sin must not become an obsession. We need not take it too seriously. Quaker George Fox may have sown his wild oats, but they were only Quaker Oats" (p.37). "Paradise before the Fall, the *status perfectionis*, is not a period of history, but our 'memory' of a divinely intended quality of life, given to us along with our consciousness of guilt" (p.52). "Sovereign election means that we are all the subjects of double predestination. We are all rejected in that we are condemned; we are the elected in that we are received in Christ" (p.67). This does away with the Biblical doctrine of election to salvation. Dr. Whale denies the vicarious atonement as the Church in its pure form holds it. The doctrine of substitution does not mean the "simple transference of punishment from the guilty to the innocent." Men "recognize and acknowledge their sin and repent. In this sense they share in the sacrificial offering of the Servant and make it their own" (p.85). This denies the *sola fide*. The author writes: "We need this bold New Testament metaphor ("He who knew no sin was made sin for us") to express the truth that the Savior felt the fact and burden of human sin as though it were his own" (p.88). This denies the reality of Christ's passion. The writer does not hold the doctrine of the Trinity as the Church has formulated it. "The doctrine of the Trinity, *qua* doctrine, is not the heart of the Gospel. Nor—to cite the almost blasphemous error [!] with which the *Quicumque Vult* opens—is belief in its dogmatic formulation necessary to salvation" (p.120). These quotations suffice to show that what Dr. Whale offers in his *Christian Doctrine* is certainly not Christian doctrine in the sense of believing Christianity but only an attempt to present the dogmas of Christendom, by way of Barthian religious philosophy, in a manner acceptable to the reason of liberal English church members. The book might well bear the title "Yes and No," for while using the Christian terminology, it denies the Christian doctrines in their commonly received meaning.

Dr. Whale is president of Chestnut College, Cambridge, England. The eight lectures, expanded into so many chapters, were originally delivered in the University of Cambridge before men and women of all faculties, about six hundred persons attending them throughout. The book represents a triumph of Barthian and other more positive continental religious influences over extreme Modernism and agnosticism in British theological circles.

J. THEODORE MUELLER

Faith and Nurture. By H. Shelton Smith. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons. 208 pages, 5½×8¼. Price, \$2.00.

If philosophy is the handmaiden of religion, it may serve a good purpose, but if religion is made subject to philosophy, the result is hopeless confusion. Of this fact the present monograph offers abundant evidence. It is a study of modern religious education, presenting the following subtopics: Liberal Faith and Protestant Nurture; Beyond the Social-Gospel Idea of the Kingdom of God; Man in Christian Perspective; Faith in the Divine Initiative; the Church—Community of Christian Nurture; Religious Faith and the Democratic School. The author begins by sketching the historic tendencies of Liberalism, beginning with the writings of William E. Channing, Theodore Parker, and Horace Bushnell, of whom the former two definitely aligned themselves with Unitarianism, and the last with a Liberalism which took a definite stand against Bible orthodoxy. The nefarious and blasphemous work begun by these subverters of the truth was continued, in more recent times, by Coe and Soares, as the prophets of evolutionism and Liberalism in modern religious education. With such prophets to proclaim its tendencies, religious education today is definitely anti-Scriptural in its teaching on the person and work of Christ (pp. 22, 24), on the natural condition of the child (p. 30), on the Kingdom concept (p. 34), on the doctrine of sin (p. 92), and in numerous other instances. The author offers some antidote in criticisms scattered throughout his presentation. He states, for example, in connection with the doctrine of sin: "It is the Christian faith that human sin is directed ultimately against God, the ground of human existence and the source of human salvation." (P. 98.) With reference to the assumption of the natural innocence of children the author says: "The child who knows himself as sinner, at least has a basis for repentance, whereas the child who knows himself as good cannot be expected to feel the need of repentance." (P. 123.) Again, he writes: "It is an illusion to assume that the human self may resolve its tensions between egoistic impulse and social community by a recourse simply to reason. Reason can envisage life in its wider dimensions, and it can establish, within limits, norms of judgment, but it cannot provide the dynamic of redemption." (P. 131.) In the concluding paragraph of the book the author states: "It can be seen that one basic source of the secularization of liberal Protestant nurture is modern educational philosophy." (P. 202.) His criticisms throughout the book might have been even sharper than they are. The reading of this book will convince every Bible Christian that there is a definite need for the sound education which the Lutheran Church advocates.

P. E. KRETZMANN

Towering O'er the Wrecks of Time. By Henry F. Wind. Published by Ernst Kaufmann, Inc., Chicago. 128 pages, 5¼×8. Price, \$1.00.

The author says in his preface, "The wrecks of time are once more cluttering up the earth, obstructing God's good and gracious will for the happiness and the salvation of mankind. The world of today presents a sorry picture of sin and evil, of devastation and destruction, a picture so depressing, so discouraging, that the strongest faith of man in the goodness and mercy of God toward His children is tried and tempted. But over all the wrecks of time there still towers the Cross of Christ, the instrument of our redemption from sin and death, the only hope and refuge for a weary, sin-sick world. More than ever before men need to be reminded of this Cross. More than ever, men need to be encouraged to lift up their eyes and to behold this Cross in faith and love. For in this Cross lies the salvation, the only salvation, of a sin-lost world. Through the power of this Cross alone man can make his peace with God and once more live as a brother with his fellow-men.

"There is, therefore, a great need for the preaching of the Cross. And it is with this conviction that these meditations on Lenten texts have been written. May they serve their intended purpose of directing you to the bleeding and dying Savior, that you may behold Him with greater faith and deeper love, to His glory and your salvation in time and in eternity." (P. 7f.) What is spoken in these words is the best recommendation for these Lenten meditations.

The announcement of these twelve Lenten sermons in this book comes rather late for the pastor's use during this Lenten season; however, the Scriptural truths expressed are always needed, especially in these days of great distress in the world. We should preach them "in season, out of season." Besides by their Scriptural contents these sermons recommend themselves by their plain, understandable language and the application of God's truth to the needs of men. For instance, we read, "A mere intellectual conviction of sin is not sufficient before God. There must be a conviction of the heart. The thunder of Sinai must not only beat upon the ear, it must shatter the heart of man in contrition and repentance before God can move his soul by the Spirit's power to place its trust and confidence in the Savior, burdened with man's sin.—Is it not true that all too many Christians do not seem to take sin seriously? Does not the confession of sin appear to be nothing more than the rather casual recitation of an oft-repeated formula in the case of all too many worshipers in the divine services in God's house? Can there be real sorrow and contrition over sin where there is little understanding of the nature and guilt of sin? And where there is no genuine sorrow and repentance, there certainly can be no real appreciation of God's love and forgiveness through Christ, our Savior. Does it not behoove everyone of us to examine himself in this Lenten season? Are we not all guilty of spiritual apathy and lassitude, a serious deficiency in our spiritual health, which may terminate in spiritual death if God does not in mercy grant us renewed spiritual vigor and strength?" (P. 81.)

J. H. C. FRITZ

The War of the "Ages." By Dan Gilbert. Published by Zondervan Publishing House, Michigan. 68 pages, 5½×7¾. 35 cents.

These essays by a conservative writer present trends of modern thought in the social, economic, and political spheres of life. The following topics are briefly treated: I. The American Ideal of Individualism. II. Creative Conservatism. III. The War of the Ages. IV. Radicalism and the Schools. V. The Philosophy of Destructionism. VI. The I. W. W. and the C. I. O. VII. Socialism Enslaves Labor. The Christian preacher should know what people think and do; especially what subversive satanic forces are at work among them. His preaching should reflect such knowledge and counteract whatever sinister influences may be found among those who are entrusted to his care and among such as hear him.

J. H. C. FRIZZ

Significant Women of the Bible. By Alice Campbell Pease. Zondervan Publishing House. Grand Rapids, Mich. 135 pages, 5½×8. \$1.00.

We believe that this book, treating an ever interesting subject, may be of some help to our pastors in instructing such woman societies as exist in their churches. But the book must be used with great care; for while there are whole pages that can be studied with pleasure and profit, it contains also viewpoints and judgments that are incorrect. The author thus says that it is not of vital import whether the creation days consisted of twenty-four hours or of twenty-four eons of time. (P. 13.) Eve is described as the "Mother of Initiative," and her sin is represented almost as a laudable act. "How magnificent Eve stood in her disobedience!" (P. 21.) The deceit of Abraham and Sarai, when claiming that she was merely his sister and not his wife, is described as "an error of judgment." (P. 27.) Delilah, who finally trapped Samson, is lauded because of her loyalty to her lords and represented as a heroine deserving appreciation. (Pp. 73 ff.) Such errors on the part of the writer destroy the usefulness of the book. The women whose lives are described in the volume are Eve, Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Miriam, Deborah, Delilah, Ruth, Hannah, Esther, Mary, the "Hospitable Women."

J. THEODORE MUELLER

Women and the Church. By Louise Miller Novotny. The Standard Publishing Company, Cincinnati, O. 160 pages, 5×7½.

Mrs. Novotny writes in an engaging manner on an important subject which requires the attention of every Lutheran pastor also. While we do not agree with many of the opinions expressed in the book, we still feel free to recommend it to the brethren in the ministry. The discerning pastor will find valuable suggestions on organizing and conducting women's societies within the congregation.

TH. LAETSCH

The Fifth Column in Our Schools. By Dan Gilbert, D.D. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 63 pages, 5½×7¾. Price, 35 cents.

The subtitle of this pamphlet sufficiently characterizes it, namely: Un-American Textbooks; Education in Revolution; Education in Paganism; Spreading Atheist Poison in America. These are also the

chapter headings, together with one bearing the same caption as the entire book. Gilbert's style is well known from his other books, many of which have discussed similar problems. He does not attack these problems with kid gloves. His books are always informational and stimulating. He exposes Beard and Rugg and Einstein, as they should be exposed before the world. At the same time it must be stated that the author frequently does not distinguish between the functions of the Church and those of the State. In this book, as in some of his other publications, he is decidedly in favor of Christianizing the social order. Under our American system we have no business to Christianize the State schools. The answer is rather in the facts presented by the history of our own Lutheran parish-schools. Yet the citizens of America whose children attend the public schools are entitled to a most definite objection to un-American text-books, to Communism in our schools, and to all other tendencies which threaten to undermine the foundation of our civilization. From this angle the book before us is most valuable. The discriminating pastor will do well to read it carefully and then to follow his good Christian judgment in making such deductions as may seem to be required.

P. E. KRETZMANN

Proceedings of the Thirty-Eighth Regular Convention of the Ev. Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States. Fort Wayne, Ind., June 18—27, 1941. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 448 pages, 6x9. 85 cents.

It would seem almost superfluous to advertise this report, for it is an indispensable handbook not only for every official and every pastor of Synod, but also for laymen everywhere. It has been said that the members of our congregations are not familiar with the working of our Church body, that they have only a vague idea of its institutions of learning, that they are entirely ignorant concerning the doctrinal differences which have militated against unity in the various Lutheran bodies of America, and that the entire field of Christian education is foreign to their thinking. We can hardly convince ourselves that this could be true. We well remember that, in the aftermath of the Predestinarian Controversy, in the late eighties and early nineties of the last century, even the laymen in our congregations studied the confessional writings of the Lutheran Church, so that they were able to give an account and a reason for the hope that was in them. Many a voters' meeting could expedite the transaction of its regular business in order to have time for a discussion of the vital doctrinal and administrative questions which are presented in the report of the 1941 convention. The section on Intersynodical and Doctrinal Matters alone might occupy the time of a congregation for a series of meetings. And as we read the reports on our educational institutions, our missions at home and abroad, our young people's work, and of other parts of our far-flung endeavors, we are bound to urge prayerful study of the discussions and resolutions, so that the Lord's Zion may be built also in our midst.

P. E. KRETZMANN

"True or False" Contests on the Bible. By Herbert F. Moehlmann, Chaplain, United States Army. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 62 pages, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$. Price, 35 cents.

True-false tests and contests in Bible-study have gained considerable favor during the last years, and with good reason. If properly prepared, they certainly encourage thinking and stimulate discussion. One should become acquainted with the method and apply it whenever opportunity seems favorable. Apparently this is the case in a very high degree in the "open forum" meetings of Lutheran service centers in the United States army camps. The author offers eighteen contests, some of them covering large parts of the Bible, others confined to individual books. He has undertaken a difficult task, and the questions are of unequal merit. But one who has made this field of testing a study may derive benefit from the perusal of this book. If nothing else, many of the questions may be adapted to special conditions.

P. E. KRETZMANN

God Runs My Business. By Albert W. Lorimer. Published by Fleming H. Revell Company, N. Y. 192 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. Price, \$1.00.

This book may well be recommended for a wide circulation. R. G. Le Torneau, the subject of its story, is a Christian business man who believes that "religion and business will mix when the Lord Jesus Christ enters the human heart." Mr. Le Torneau has three large factories in the United States (Stockton, Cal.; Peoria, Ill.; Toccoa, Ga.) and one in Sydney, Australia. He gives away ninety per cent of his earnings to the Lord's work, and to date this adds up to \$12,000,000. He did not begin his business career with a large financial inheritance but began it as a poor young fellow. His success is due to the fact that he lets God run his business. He is also engaged in widespread evangelistic work. He says, "I wonder if we haven't been getting away from the God of our forefathers. I wonder if we haven't been worshiping the almighty dollar more than Almighty God, who made this world and all the dollars that are in it. I wonder if what this country needs isn't to go back to the God of our forefathers and seek Him first" (p.175). The book is well written, and its contents are highly captivating and strengthening for the Christian faith. At that, the book costs only one dollar. Pastors who have read it will desire to recommend it to their church members, particularly to the business men of their congregation.

J. H. C. FRIZ

Shade of His Hand. By Victoria Booth Demarest. The Westminster Press. Philadelphia. 93 pages. \$1.00.

The author is a granddaughter of General William Booth. In this volume she opens her heart to others who walk in the valley of the shadow and applies the light of God's Word to the various phases and problems of human suffering. It is both comforting and inspiring.

W. G. POLACK

BOOKS RECEIVED

From the Wartburg Press, Columbus, Ohio:

Story Talks for Children. The Village Parson in the Junior Church (Junior Sermons for Boys and Girls). By Karl Rest. 135 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. Price, \$1.00.