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## Book Review. - Literatur

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## Book Review

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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.

**Jesus in the Light of History.** By A. T. Olmstead, Professor of Oriental History, Oriental Institute, University of Chicago. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. 1942. 317 pages, 5½×8½. Price, \$2.75.

No one can turn one or two pages of this book without realizing that he is dealing with the production of an immensely learned scholar. Professor Olmstead is known for his *History of Assyria* and his *History of Palestine and Syria* and articles in various journals as well as for his work as teacher in the Oriental Institute in the University of Chicago. Throughout his career he has occupied himself with the history of the ancient Orient, and he possesses a most enviable amount of information on the Near East at and before the time of Christ. If any person is well qualified to examine and solve the chronological problems that confront us in the literature of the eastern part of the Mediterranean world in the classical age, our author is that person.

Dr. Olmstead can co-ordinate the historical data which we meet in an ancient writer with many other historical facts given in the literature of the respective time. We find him making use of the Old Testament, the Apocryphal literature of the Jews, the Talmud, rabbinical works, Josephus, Tacitus, and early Christian writers like Eusebius. At certain places we meet references to Babylonian writings that have come down to us.

With particular interest both the Old Testament and the New Testament student will read the description of Jerusalem found pp. 56—93. Professor Olmstead has been on the spot and has himself investigated and can speak with authority on the questions pertaining to the various localities and scenes of the ministry of Jesus in the holy city.

When we come to examine Dr. Olmstead's views on Gospel criticism, we find that he courageously dissents from views which in many circles have come to be considered definitely established as resting on facts. According to his opinion John's Gospel is very early in its origin and is altogether reliable, and he follows its narrative very closely—a position which, as everybody knows, is the very opposite of the one which is in favor in critical New Testament circles today. He states that the discovery of the Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri II have shown that the late dates formerly assumed by critical scholars for the writing of the Synoptic Gospels cannot be held, but must be discarded in favor of earlier ones. (P. 289 f.) A scrap of a manuscript of the Gospel of St. John coming from a year not later than 135 A. D. convincingly demonstrates, so he points out, that the assumption so common in critical circles today of a late date for its composition is wrong.

In what is most important we cannot agree with Dr. Olmstead, and that is in his view of the character of the Gospels and of our Lord. To him the Gospels are merely human productions containing errors,



and Jesus is the son of Joseph and Mary. (P.2.) The pre-suppositions of this book are entirely naturalistic. We are not surprised to see that off and on the old rationalistic interpretations for the explanation of miracles are employed. The account of the death of John the Baptist is colored by folklore. (P.131.) The episode in which Jesus is reported to have walked on the sea is to be viewed, so Dr. Olmstead thinks, not as including an actual walking of Jesus on the water. What happened was that Jesus walked by the sea and was approaching the boat. When the disciples wished to take Him into the boat, they at once were at the shore where they intended to disembark. (P.140.) According to our author, Jesus did not look upon Himself as the promised Messiah whom John had announced. (P.141.) At several places in John's Gospel Dr. Olmstead assumes there must be a gap, that is, something has been omitted.

As to the beginning of the ministry of Jesus, we find that Dr. Olmstead holds it occurred in December 28 A.D. This date, of course, makes the ministry of Jesus rather brief, giving it a duration of about one and one-third years. Most startling is the statement that he thinks Jesus was born about 20 B.C. He finds a foundation for this view in the words of the Jews addressed to Jesus (John 8:57), "Thou art not yet fifty years old and hast Thou seen Abraham?" It is very evident, however, that these words do not at all assert that Jesus was close to the age of fifty. They merely state that he was still a comparatively young man and yet made the claim of having seen Abraham, which to them seemed quite ridiculous. Dr. Olmstead argues that Jesus must have been about fifty years old, for otherwise he would not have been accepted by the people as a Prophet. No definite proof is offered for this strange view. The only thing that the author can point to is the custom of the Orient to show reverence to older people.

We have to say, then, in conclusion that while we admire the learning and the skill of Professor Olmstead and can well utilize many of the things which he places before us on the basis of his researches, we regret that he has remained outside the wicket gate and not entered the blessed realm where Jesus dwells as the great God and sin-atoning Savior.

W. ARNDT

**A Creed for Free Men. A Study of Loyalties.** By William Adams Brown. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. 277 pages, 5½x8. Price, \$2.50.

Books by the scholarly Dr. Brown are worth studying. Not for the purpose of learning theology. Dr. Brown does not believe that the Bible is an infallible guide. He declares: "The Bible means to the Church today not simply what it meant to the men who wrote it. . . . Generation after generation has discovered meanings in its teachings of which its authors never dreamed. . . . It needs continual reinterpretation in the light of expanding experience 'and must not' be made a dogmatic textbook." (Pp. 212, 227, 230.) Nor does our author believe in the deity of Christ. "Christian faith sees in Jesus what science sees, a man like other men with human limitations both of body and spirit. But it sees more. It sees in him God's Word, a voice through which the eternal



God is saying to His children things which it is important for them to hear." (P.181.) — Note the capital in "His" and the lower case "him." (The phrases: "The divinity of Jesus" [p.260], "the man Jesus in whom God had become incarnate for the salvation of mankind" [p.226], do not mean that Jesus is God, but that he is a great, a "divine" man.) Another statement to show that our book does not teach the Christian theology: "The central doctrine" of Christianity is that "of a personal God who has endowed men with freedom and summons them to brotherhood." (P.164.) A final statement covering this point: "Nearly fifty years ago my old teacher Adolf Harnack used a sentence which has lingered in my memory ever since. He was lecturing to a class of university students upon the teaching of Jesus, and he took up the objection that Jesus had been greatly overrated as a teacher, because when followed to its source, there was nothing which he had said which *some one else had not said before.* 'Very true,' said Harnack, 'but think how many things they said that Jesus did not say.'" (P.39. — Our italics.) Still, our book has some value. We are interested in knowing what solution of the various problems disturbing the social, political, and international economy Social Philosophy has to offer. We, the statesman and the layman, want to know the best answer which reason, operating with natural religion and with so much of Holy Scripture as it can accept, gives on the questions agitating the social and political world. Dr. Brown answers them, on the whole, acceptably. His wide reading, his knowledge of social psychology, keen analysis of the present situation, and calm judgment has produced a valuable contribution to the "democratic philosophy of life." This is the first article in his Creed for Free Men: "There is something in each human individual which gives him a value which society is bound to respect." "The second article in the democrat's creed is that each individual owes a duty to society. . . . A third article in the democrat's creed is that men, as we see them today, are imperfect and therefore need discipline. . . . A fourth article in the democrat's creed is that however imperfect men are, they are capable of becoming better and that the most effective way to help them to be better is to show that you trust them." (P.182 ff.) We note, of course, that this betterment takes place only in the sphere of natural religion. And we note further that these findings, being based on natural reasoning, do not possess absolute certainty. They do not constitute a "creed," in the strict sense. Our author himself says: "In these days of triumphant science, where the discoveries of yesterday become the commonplaces of today, it is hard to be certain of anything. . . . Nowhere does the attempt to reach a satisfying creed seem more hopeless than when we consider man himself. . . . Still the search for a satisfying philosophy goes on." (Pp. 8, 32, 38.)

We submit a few more noteworthy statements: "There is a tendency in liberal circles to identify the cause of Christianity with that of political democracy. But Christianity is a very old religion and has found it possible in the course of its history to live at peace with many kinds of political philosophy." Again: "What we know as modern democracy owes its inspiration in no small measure to this new contact with an old book." (Pp. 164, 229.) — "A layman may not decide how far the com-



prehensive generalizations which are put forth from time to time by specialists fall within the legitimate domain of science or are in fact an excursion into the field of philosophy." We take it that this is a diplomatic way of saying that much of what is palmed off as science is simply guesswork. Again: "As we follow the scientist in these higher and more difficult parts of his research, we find that the number of questions increases to which he can give us no certain answer." (P. 52 f.) — "Nor can even reason promise the certainty we seek. . . . There are the so-called arguments for the existence of God. The name is a misnomer. One cannot prove by any argument that God exists. For God is the major premise from which all proof must start. The most that reason can do is to translate into the technical language of the schools certain very simple considerations which in every age have made it easier for men to believe in God than to disbelieve in Him." (P. 178.) — "They have learned how easy it is to arouse the enthusiasm of the crowd by a catchword. They know that, however improbable a statement may be, you have only to repeat it often enough, and you will find people to believe that it must be true." (P. 34.) — Here is a particularly fine gem: "In an essay on the ideal teacher the late Professor George Herbert Palmer of Harvard has described some of the qualities which make the true teacher a typical democrat. First, he tells us, a teacher must have an aptitude for vicariousness; second, an already accumulated wealth; third, an ability to invigorate life through knowledge; and fourth, a readiness to be forgotten. Professor Palmer goes on to explain what he means by these somewhat cryptic attributes. By a talent for vicariousness he means that the teacher must find his larger satisfaction not in what he does himself in the world of scholarship, but in what he helps his students to accomplish; by accumulated wealth he designates the store of wisdom which the teacher has acquired by long association with the scholars who have preceded him; by an ability to invigorate life through knowledge he means that he must think of the truths which he tries to share not as abstract propositions existing in their own right, but as convictions which when appropriated may vitalize and transform character; and finally by readiness to be forgotten—the teacher's ultimate virtue—he means that willingness to lose self in the life of others." . . . (P. 189.)

The book is valuable for another reason. It exemplifies the aims and methods of unionism. "Christianity provides a religious basis for a fellowship of the democratic type better than any other existing religion. For more than a generation Christians have been making experiments in Christian fellowship and have made the surprising discovery that in the measure that they were frank in the recognition of their differences they have been able to appreciate the extent of their agreements." On the basis of this partial agreement the unionists hope to establish "the fellowship of men of good will in every land," embracing Rome, the liberals of every description, Jews and heathen. "Such organizations as the National Conference of Christians and Jews and the World Parliament of Religions show that beneath all differences there are common experiences and convictions which make spiritual fellowship possible." The unionists appeal to Christ's example. "He found



striking examples of faith in those of other race and creed—the Roman centurion, the Syrophenician woman. Faith in the Father God is not confined to the so-called theistic religions." And the unionists operate with dishonest formulas of agreement. "The World Council of Churches is a fellowship open to all Churches which accept Jesus Christ as God and Savior, each Church being the judge of the meaning it puts into these words." Is it possible that men would openly advocate the use of ambiguous formulas of union? That church bodies would accept a document as a basis of agreement which permits different interpretations and let "each Church be the judge of the meaning it puts into these words"? And if such a document cannot be manufactured, dispense with all creedal limitations. "One of the articles of the constitution of the World Council provides for the calling of world conferences without creedal limitation in which all who believe in the brotherhood of man and wish to co-operate in realizing a world-wide fellowship may be included." (Pp. 164, 165, 167, 250, 252, 257.)

TH. ENGELDER

**Our Lady, Mediatrix of All Graces.** By Raphael V. O'Connell, S. J. John Murphy Company, Baltimore. 121 pages, 5×7½. Price, \$1.00.

**Mary in Her Scapular Promise.** By John Mathias Haffert. The Scapular Press, Sea Isle City, N. J. 249 pages, 5½×8. Price, \$2.50. (Available also in a 50 cent paper cover edition.)

We purposely place these two books side by side for review, since we here have a revelation of actual conditions within the Roman Catholic sect indicating just how far this Church has gone in substituting Mary for Christ. The reader who has a complete file of the *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY* is referred to two articles which have appeared: "Maria Mediatrix Omnium Gratiarum," IV:881—889, and "The Progressive Revelation of the Antichrist," XIII, 120—136. The two books lying before us furnish the most comprehensive and incontrovertible evidence for the correctness of the conclusions drawn from the publications of Roman Catholic magazines and printing establishments. Both these books bear the *Imprimatur* of Catholic prelates, the first that of the Archbishop of Baltimore, the second that of the Bishop of Camden. If any theologian of any Protestant body still has doubts regarding the Papacy with its earthly head as the Antichrist *kat'exochen*, as clearly delineated in various parts of Holy Scripture, he is hereby earnestly urged to procure copies of these books and read for himself. The very Table of Contents tells a story which seems almost unbelievable, for these are its chapter headings: Mary, a New and Better Eve; Mary and the First Good Tidings; Mary Co-operatrix in the Redemption; Mary's Co-operation a Direct Concurrence in the Work of Redemption; Mary, Our Mother; Foundation of Mary's Spiritual Motherhood—1. Merit of the Divine Maternity, 2. Consent to the Incarnation, 3. Union with Christ on Calvary; Mary, Mother of Divine Grace; Mary, Our Mediatrix; Mary, Mediatrix of Grace—1. Acquisition of Grace, 2. Distribution of Grace; The Universal Mediation of Mary; What Is Meant by "All Graces"? To Whom Does Mary's Mediation Extend; The Church at Mary's Feet; In What Mary's Mediation Consists; Degree of Certainty of What Pre-



cedes; Devotion to Our Lady. As one peruses this book, it is quite impossible to escape the impression of blasphemous statements, which occur again and again on its pages. Of course, the Messianic promise Gen. 3:15 is retained in the false translation: She shall bruise thy head. Then we find such sentences as the following: "It might appear, then, that Mary's co-operation in the redemption of mankind was purely remote or indirect. She was the mother of the Redeemer, but, further than that, she had nothing to do with the work of redemption itself. Such would seem to be the correct statement of the Protestant view. But it is far from being the traditional view of the Catholic Church, as enshrined in her liturgy, in the teaching of the Fathers, and in the hearts of her children everywhere. The language of her great doctors would seem indeed to be gross exaggeration, unless it be interpreted as embodying the idea which they had of the co-operation of our Lady in the work of redemption as a whole; that is to say, of Mary's part not merely in the mystery of the Incarnation considered by itself alone, but in that mystery regarded as the first necessary step in the affair of the salvation of mankind." (P.29f.) A statement ascribed to St. Germanus of Constantinople is quoted with approval: "O Virgin Mother of God, man was rendered spiritual when the Holy Ghost came down upon thee, as upon His temple. No one, O most holy, is filled with the knowledge of God, unless through thee; no one, O Virgin Mother, escapes from death, unless through thee; no one is ransomed, unless through thee; no one receives the benefit of mercy, unless through thee; through thee, who hast deserved to enfold God within thee!" (P.38.) "The Incarnation looked forward to the Passion as to the condition of our ransom, and the Son of God became man that we might have life through His death. That, in fact, was why Mary's consent was needed, and why God left it to her free choice to say whether or not she would accept a dignity involving so great a sacrifice." (P.52.) "The idea that is current everywhere among the faithful represents Mary as at every moment interesting herself in our behalf in heaven, and procuring for us by her actual intercession all the graces whereby we hope to attain salvation." (P.76.) "She is the *breath* of Christians, the *root* of liberty, restored by her to the human race. Better still, she is the *cause* of *salvation*, the mother of universal salvation, the salvation of the world, the salvation of all men even to the ends of the earth. She is the *common source* of our happiness, of our renovation, in a word of all blessings; the *repairer* and *restorer* of the human family, the *redemption* of mortals: through whom we have passed from death to life, from darkness to wonderful light. She is the *royal bridge* uniting heaven and earth, the *hope* of Christians, and their *only hope*; our refuge and our strength." (P.78.) And so we could multiply excerpts showing the unbelievable blindness of the author and of all those who follow him in his false doctrines concerning Mary.

But if we are shocked by such expositions, we are completely dumb-founded when we read, in the second of the books listed above, that all those who wear the brown scapular of the friars connected with the Carmelite order are given this assurance: "Receive, my beloved son, this habit of thy order: this shall be to thee and to all Carmelites a



privilege, **THAT WHOSEVER DIES CLOTHED IN THIS SHALL NEVER SUFFER ETERNAL FIRE.**" (P.10.) The history of the scapular is then given, with a description of the various modifications which the garment (?) has undergone, especially through the legislation of Pius X, in 1910. In the later discussion of the merits of the scapular we find statements like the following: "Thus the Scapular is not only an assurance of salvation after death, it is even now a powerful means of grace. In instituting such a simple but complete devotion, Mary continually binds herself, as it were, to intercede for us. Truly, then, is the Scapular her sacrament: it is a visible pledge of her intercession, the very channel of grace." (P.56.) "The whole meaning of the Scapular derives from this, Mary's gift of herself to us in the words of its promise. When she descends, surrounded by the pomp of heaven, to say that whosoever dies under her mantle shall be saved, does she not clearly mean that while she has brought us all forth to divine life in the pain of her Son's crucifixion, she has come down mystically to retake us into her womb that she may bring us forth at death to an eternal life?" (P.112 f.) There are passages much more amazing than these, for we have an entire chapter devoted to the discussion "The Promise Extended into Purgatory," another on "Mary, Our Way." It is clear, from books and articles like these, as they are now appearing in increasing numbers from the pen of Roman Catholic writers, that the way is being prepared, not only for bolder declarations in the field of superstition and idolatry, but actually for the substitution of Mary for Christ in the work of atonement and for her practical deification. This is what O'Connell says in the preface of his book: "Recently a very important step was taken by the Holy Father in the appointment of a special commission of theologians, with three branches, one to sit in Rome, another in Belgium, and a third in Spain, whose duty it should be to examine the question maturely and from every angle, and to give their verdict as to whether or not the *universal mediation* of our Lady is capable of being defined as a dogma of faith." (P.8.) We have already pointed out that this dogma will undoubtedly be promulgated together with that of the assumption of Mary, which has, in effect, been a doctrine of the Roman Church for centuries. There is a section in every library commonly headed Mariology. This shall have to be changed to read "Mariolatry." *Ceterum censeo Papam verum Antichristum esse.*

P. E. KRETZMANN

Proceedings of the Sixty-Third Convention of the Eastern District.  
Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo., 1942. 100 pages,  
5½×8½. Price, 26 cents.

Proceedings of the Nineteenth Convention of the South Wisconsin  
District. 50 pages, 5½×8½. Price, 11 cents.

Proceedings of the Sixty-Third Convention of the Western District.  
63 pages, 5½×8½. Price, 18 cents.

Here are three really worth-while reports. In the *Proceedings of the Eastern District* an essay by Pastor H. Meier on "Congregational Life in Apostolic Times" is published. The essayist presents the Scriptural



doctrine under the following heads: I. Local Congregations, II. The Public Ministry, III. Public Worship, IV. Christian Beneficence, V. Church Discipline, VI. Missions, VII. The Christians and the World. The lessons of Scripture are constantly applied to our time and day in a very practical and profitable manner. We would like to call the attention of our readers to the following resolutions of the Eastern District. On page 83 we read: "The following suggestions of the Teachers' Conference were accepted: 1. That more Kodachrome pictures, similar to those made under the direction of our Executive Secretary, but pertaining to Christian education in our District, be made as soon as possible. 2. That the Executive Secretary be commended for bringing the matter of Christian education to the people in the course of his illustrated lectures and that he be encouraged to do so in even greater measure in the future." On page 97 the question is asked: "Should not the church make some provision for children of families in which the husband is called to the colors while the wife has been "drafted" in civic service? The committee to which this matter was referred brought in the following recommendations: 1. That our Eastern District take the initiative in making plans for the care of these children during the periods of the day when the mothers must be absent from the home. 2. That the President of the District appoint a committee 'for the duration' to study the question thoroughly and to offer suggestions to the congregations of the District. 3. That all congregations of the District be urged to make a study of this question in their own particular community and to make adequate preparations for the eventual care of such children, either individually or conjointly with neighboring congregations. 4. That all congregations take advantage of every mission opportunity that may present itself also in this line of work."

The report of the South Wisconsin District offers a paper by Pastor Th. Gohlke on "The Relation of Sanctification to Justification and Its Implications," the first two sections of which had been read at the convention in 1940. On pages 40 to 43 the mode of procedure at elections is published which was adopted by the convention. "With a few exceptions the report contains the old approved mode of elections done into English." The District has found that its business was facilitated by the mimeographing of the important reports to be considered by the convention to such an extent that it resolved that "henceforth all important reports and memorials which are to be considered by the convention be mimeographed and placed into the hands of our delegates." P. 47.

In the report of the Western District *Proceedings* a brief abstract of a paper by Pastor Virtus Gloe on "The Church's Ministry of Mercy" is published on pages 13 and 14, and another essay by Pastor L. Dippold, also in abridged form, on "The Importance of Holy Baptism for Our Christian Life," pages 15 to 33. The report on Young People's Work stressed particularly the need of training our young people for active service in the congregation and the church at large. TH. LAETSCH