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Book Review. - Literatur

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Book Review

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

The Five Books of Moses. A re-examination of the modern theory that the Pentateuch is a late compilation from diverse and conflicting sources by authors and editors whose identity is completely unknown. By *Oswald T. Allis*. The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, Philadelphia. 1943. 319 pages, 5¾×8½. Price, \$3.00.

This is a very valuable work, which we recommend heartily to readers who are interested in modern Biblical criticism and are looking for an up-to-date presentation of the true conservative standpoint over against modern, radical higher criticism. Professor Oswald T. Allis is well known in our country as a learned and thoroughgoing scholar in the Old Testament field. He belongs to that famous group of Princeton scholars and is, one might say, the successor of William Henry Green, the "Hengstenberg of North America," Robert Dick Wilson, the best modern conservative scholar in the field of the prophetic books, especially with regard to the historicity and authenticity of Daniel, and John D. Davis, the well-known author of *A Dictionary of the Bible*, a unique production written by one scholar. Dr. Allis taught at Princeton from 1910 to 1929, during twelve years of which he was faculty editor of the *Princeton Theological Review*, well-known for its conservative and yet thoroughgoing scholarship, for which also our Dr. Pieper wrote an article on Luther's doctrine of inspiration. Allis severed his connection with Princeton when the attitude of the faculty became more and more liberal, and was then for seven years Professor of the Old Testament at Westminster Theological Seminary. He is now retired.

In the present work he presents a re-examination of an important and widely accepted theory in the light of modern scholarship and of the archaeological discoveries of recent years, especially of the last decade, which have been so remarkable that they have produced almost an archaeological revolution and have caused not a few to admit or assert that the conclusions of higher criticism must be considerably revised. No one who has read Dr. Allis' articles and reviews, as the present reviewer has read them for years, will doubt his competence to discuss this most important problem of Old Testament criticism, the writing of the Pentateuch. While Dr. R. H. Pfeiffer of Harvard, the author of the most recent *Critical Introduction of the Old Testament* [1941], still maintains that all the laws in the Pentateuch are post-Mosaic and that the final publication of the Pentateuch was not made until about 400 B. C., or about a millennium after the death of Moses, Dr. Allis shows that these laws and the Pentateuch which contains them were attributed to Moses because they were of Mosaic origin, and that the objections to this view made by the higher critics are without any adequate basis in fact.

The book consists, besides a lengthy introduction, of three parts:

First, the documentary hypothesis; second, the development or Graf-Wellhausen hypothesis; third, the present state of the problem. Three appendices are added, followed by copious and very valuable notes, and a double index of authors and subjects and of Bible passages. Throughout the book, Allis upholds over against naturalism and the evolutionary theory the supernatural character and the divine revelation of the Old Testament. Professor Albright, a well-known modern scholar and excavator, states in his book *From the Stone Age to Christianity* that it is his aim "to show how man's idea of God developed from pre-historic antiquity to the time of Christ and to place this development in its historical context." Over against such a theory Allis upholds and defends the truth. In the last sentence of the book Allis states, "that the Pentateuch is not a late, anonymous, untrustworthy composite, but is correctly described as 'The Five Books of Moses,' the man of God. And those who hold this time-honored and thoroughly Biblical view may well rejoice that they are today in a far better position to give a reason for believing that Moses wrote the Pentateuch than was the case a century or even a generation ago" (p. 254). In the chapter on "The Pentateuch and Archaeology" he mentions the most notable discoveries within the forty years of the present century, the Code of Hammurapi (1901), the Assouan and Elephantine Papyri (1904), the Hittite discoveries at Boghazkeui (1906), the tomb of Tutankamon (1922), the sarcophagus of Ahiram (1923), the Ras Shamra alphabet texts (1929), the Chester Beatty papyri (1930). In the last chapter he speaks of the final question "What Think Ye of Christ?" and he confesses unreservedly his faith in the Virgin Birth and in the resurrection of Christ. We would like to give more quotations from this excellent work, but must close with a cordial recommendation of the book to our readers.

L. FUEBRINGER

A Digest of Christian Thinking. By Charles S. Macfarland. 192 pages. 5×7¼. Revell Company, New York.

This is the 1942 volume in the series begun by Dr. Macfarland, now emeritus secretary of the Federal Council of Churches, in 1936. The word "Digest" in the title is used in the broader sense without any implication of systematic or critical treatment of the books surveyed in this series. Properly speaking, the volume is a review of significant books which have appeared in the recent past, so that a digest of them will give an overview of the religious thought of our day. The author classes himself with the "conservatively and preservatively liberal," but his theology definitely colors the entire book with a liberal, i. e., radical, hue. When Edwin Lewis, in one of the books here reviewed, calls "the identification of every bit of social change with the Kingdom of God," "a pernicious modern custom" the author calls this "a gratuitous intrusion." He expresses his doubt whether Jesus identified Himself with "the Son of Man of the apocalypses." And the fact that out of the great mass of literature published in one year Macfarland selects almost exclusively books of the liberal sort not only characterizes the volume as itself a bit of modernistic propaganda, but certainly detracts from its value as a guide to contemporary religious thought. If one did not know that there is a great ground swell of conservatism

going through the Reformed bodies, one would take nothing but a feeling of depression from the reading of this Digest.

Sometimes we don't know whether it is Macfarland who speaks or the author whom he reviews. But if we build into something of a system the ideas which according to the forty-two volumes here passed in review make up 1942 Christianity, we get this picture: "The literalistic error of insisting on the Fall as an historic event has brought confusion on the relation of man's essential nature to his sinful condition." "The idea of a Fall from an original state of perfection is not a scientific statement about the dawn of history." "No authoritarian faith can be made personal." "The idea of total depravity has no place in the teaching of Jesus." "Authoritarianism in theology is a peril to true Christian education." "There is no single authoritative interpretation of the Christian faith in the New Testament." The Federal Council's statements have been "simple and clear expressions of traditional Christianity." "The mission of the Church is that of being a leaven in national policy." Finally: "Protestants share with Catholics the acceptance of a written revelation, progressively interpreted in the course of history." Aside from a good appraisal of Progressive Education (in a review of Smith's *Faith and Nurture*) and some valuable first-hand expressions from Roman Catholic sources on the principles of Church and State, we have gained little of permanent value from the reading of this volume.

TH. GRAEBNER

Mennonite Cyclopedic Dictionary. By Daniel Kauffman. Mennonite Publishing House, Scottdale, Pa. 443 pages, 6¼×9¼. Price, \$2.00.

Mennonites in Europe. By John Horsch. Mennonite Publishing House. 425 pages (with index), 6¼×9¼. Price, \$2.00.

To such as desire special information on the Mennonites in our country or their past history in Europe we warmly recommend these two books for careful study, though the non-Mennonite student will not find himself in agreement with all statements made in them. The *Cyclopedic Dictionary* is a compendium of doctrines, history, activities, literature, and environments of the Mennonite Church, especially in America, making available in alphabetical arrangement a wealth of information to the reader. It offers nearly a thousand biographical sketches of Mennonite leaders and Mennonite families in our country and descriptions of nearly five hundred places of historic interest. To the text proper there is added an interesting "Appendix," consisting of three main topics: 1. Mennonite Centers of Population with Illustrative Maps; 2. Source Material Used in Compiling the Book; and 3. Fifty Fundamental Doctrinal Facts with a Brief Analysis of Each. It somewhat corresponds to the *Concordia Cyclopedia*, though it is much narrower in its scope.

John Horsch's *Mennonites in Europe* is the first volume of a *Mennonite History* which is to be followed by a second, now in preparation, *Mennonites in America* (author, Harold S. Bender). Horsch has become favorably known in our circles chiefly by his excellent *Modern Religious Liberalism*, which is a classic in its field. Born at Giebelstadt, Germany, on December 18, 1867, he came to the United States in 1888 to escape

compulsory military training against which he had scruples of conscience. Here he served on various editorial staffs, but did his main work as editorial member of the Mennonite Publishing House, Scottsdale, Pa., where he served from 1908 to 1941, the year in which he died (Oct. 7). He was a devoted student of Mennonite history and for fifty years a prolific writer on all subjects relating to the Mennonites. He wrote both in German and English, and though he came to America when he was already set in his ways, he developed a style of writing in the language of the land which for simplicity, charm, and idiomatic perfection can hardly be excelled. As a historian Mr. Horsch, of course, writes from the viewpoint of a convinced Mennonite, and at times his judgments are hardly objective, as, for example, when he says that Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin did not approve the principle of general religious toleration (p. 3) or when he says that the Waldenses raised objections to the denial of free will and to the *doctrine of predestination* as taught by Luther and Zwingli. On both these points distinctions must be made, for Luther did not take the same position as did the Reformed leaders. Nor is it sufficient to say that Luther favored the "state church" as did the Reformed leaders. Luther knew well how to distinguish between Church and State and emphatically taught the *separation of Church and State*. The reason why there was no separation of Church and State in the so-called Lutheran countries must be sought in the circumstances over which the great Reformer had no control. Nevertheless, the book is a unique and thorough presentation of the Mennonites in Europe and a crowning achievement of the author's busy lifetime. John Horsch, by the way, was personally a diligent student of Luther, read the periodicals of our Church, and found daily nurture and soul strength in Luther's glorious explanation of the Second Article, as he wrote the reviewer shortly before his death. The book contains numerous pictures and illustrations, special "Notes and References," a carefully selected "Bibliography," and a helpful "Index." It belongs in every seminary library and should be read by all who study Mennonite history.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

The Quest for Preaching Power. By John Nicholls Booth. Published by The Macmillan Company, New York. 240 pages, 5¼×7¾. Price, \$2.00.

The title of this book is attractive; the book itself in answering the question suggested by the title is disappointing. Preaching receives its power by preaching the Word of God, especially the Gospel of Christ, of which it is said that it is "the power of God unto salvation." In the chapter "What Shall I Preach?" the author of this book fails deplorably to give the preacher the right direction. The fact that Mr. Booth is a Unitarian explains that deficiency.

He who in this book looks for some good things that may be said in reference to the technique of the sermon will find them. After all, the technique of the sermon is that of any speech or address. Among other things we are pleased to read that "the majority of our better-known preachers learn their address through the medium of the written manuscript," but that "the manuscript should not be carried into the

pulpit." To emphasize this advice Mr. Booth says, "Psychologists, conducting tests under laboratory conditions, have found that people retain that which is read to them with forty-nine per-cent efficiency. Retention increases to sixty-seven per cent when the thought is expressed, not by reading but by direct address" (p.222). What also gives value to the book is that it reveals the workshop technique of some of the outstanding pulpit speakers of our day. In this connection Mr. Booth says, "A number of our outstanding contemporary preachers who, it is logical to assume, possess a greater gift for sermon preparation than the majority of men, have informed me that they average from fifteen to twenty-five hours each week on their sermons" (p. 201).

J. H. C. FRITZ

Personality and Character Building. By Robert Stewart McElhinney and Henry Lester Smith. Published by Light and Life Press, Winona Lake, Ind. 345 pages, 5x7½.

Books on personality, character training, psychology of self, and similar topics are appearing on the market at regular intervals in our days. Some of these books have little or no value for the Lutheran educator and pastor, since they are based on the psychology of evolutionism. The present authors, both of whom belong to the faculty of Indiana University, have made a contribution to the study of the subject which will have a good deal of value, also for the Lutheran pastor. The discussion of character traits (p. 142 ff.) of the ideal teacher (p. 183), and the entire eighth chapter, "The Sources of Personality and Character," are well written and may well receive careful attention. We fully agree that States may have codes in the field of morality which have definite values for the citizens of the respective States. But the references of the authors to the Christian religion and to the person of Jesus Christ are inadequate throughout. The Christian religion is not a mere system of ethics, nor is Jesus Christ primarily a great example of perfect manhood. The heart of the Christian religion is the story of the Atonement wrought through the vicarious death of the Son of God on Calvary. Around this fact must revolve also every thought which deals with the life of sanctification. The Bible is the absolute criterion of truth also in the field of true morality. It offers both the proper motivation for a life of Christian service and the strength to live such a life out of love for the Savior. We hope to have a more detailed discussion of this important topic in the near future.

P. E. KRETZMANN

Home Builders of Tomorrow. By Warren D. Bowman, Ph.D. The Elgin Press, Elgin, Ill. 123 pages, 5x8. Price, \$1.00.

The practice of premarital counseling is gaining ground in our circles, chiefly because pastors who desire to be real shepherds to all the souls entrusted to them find that their services are sought and appreciated by young people of their congregations. A few pastors have already issued mimeographed sheets or brochures containing some of the most important counseling material in this field, and apparently such guidance has been gladly and thankfully received. The book here presented to the clergy will be welcomed by many men who have

been looking for authoritative information. The author treats the following subjects: *Forming Friendships; The Choice of a Mate; Courtship; The Engagement; Entering upon Marriage*. While we cannot agree with him that a valid betrothal can and may be broken (p. 80), since negative adjustments should be rectified before the consent of the parents is given, we feel that most of the material offered by him is worthy of the most careful study. We were particularly pleased with such statements as these: "Let there be three parties to the engagement, the young man, the young woman, and Christ" (p. 96); "The courtship should be held on a very high level and should not contain any of the intimacies that will cheapen one in the estimation of the other or cause lifelong regrets" (p. 64); "When a young man comes to marry, he does not want second hand goods for his wife and mother of his children, but he wants a pure girl who has not cheapened herself by petting with everyone who comes along" (p. 68); "When physical intimacy leads into prolonged petting, a strain is produced which may give way to immoral practices, and consequently lifelong regrets" (p. 70). There are numerous striking and valuable passages in the book which will cause a conscientious pastor to consult it frequently.

P. E. KRETZMANN

BOOKS RECEIVED

From Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich.:

The Biblical Basis of the Constitution. By Dan Gilbert, LL.D. 81 pages, 5¼×7¾. Price, 50 cents.

20 Illustrated Object Lessons. By W. T. McLean. 46 pages, 5¼×7¾. Price, 25 cents.

What Really Happened at Pearl Harbor? By Dan Gilbert. 48 pages, 5¼×7¾. Price, 25 cents.

Hell over Hollywood. By Dan Gilbert. 50 pages, 5¼×7¾. Price, 25 cents.

From Light and Life Press, Winona Lake, Ind.:

The Monk Who Lived Again. A Tale of South America. By B. H. Pearson. 185 pages, 5×7¼.

From The Danielle Publishers, San Diego, Calif.:

The Real Fifth Column and How It Is Undermining America. By Dan Gilbert. 125 pages.

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It has been our custom to retain the names of our subscribers on our lists for two numbers after the subscription has expired, so that the subscriptions could be continued without interruption in case a renewal came in late. We were very happy to follow this plan at extra expense, but we are now unable to continue this policy because of present conditions.

Our Government has insisted that we reduce consumption of paper and eliminate all possible waste. Because of the restriction in the use of paper it will become necessary to discontinue subscriptions to all of our periodicals with the last number paid for under the subscription agreement. We shall, however, continue our policy of reminding our subscribers of the expiration of the subscription by inserting the usual number of notices in the second last and the last numbers of the periodicals they receive. It is our sincere hope that our subscribers will co-operate with us and the Government by renewing their subscriptions promptly upon receipt of the first notice.

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