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Book Review. - Literatur

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Book Review

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Lutheran Confessional Theology. A Presentation of the Doctrines of the Augsburg Confession and the Formula of Concord. By C. H. Little, D. D., S. T. D., Professor in the Evangelical Lutheran Seminary of Canada [U. L. C.], Waterloo, Ontario. Concordia Publishing House. 185 pages, 5×7½. Price, \$1.25.

It would be a good thing if people were somewhat better acquainted with the confessions of the Lutheran Church. Some years ago Professor W. W. Rockwell of Union Theological Seminary asked the Lutherans to invite the other Protestant churches to study the Augsburg Confession with them. He said: "Why should not you Lutherans now take the initiative? . . . Why cannot Protestantism agree on its oldest creed, the Augsburg Confession?" Such an invitation "will set the world talking about the Lutheran claims. . . . If Lutherans are to win over the rest of American Protestants to their point of view, they must do so not by denying Lutheran principles, but by their vigorous application." The full understanding of the Lutheran confessions would also bring the Lutheran Synods of America and the world together. If all Lutheran bodies were imbued with the two basic principles of Lutheranism—*sola Scriptura* and *sola gratia*—Lutheran union would be very near. And Dr. Little's exposition of the Augsburg Confession and the Formula of Concord puts men under the influence of these principles. Every page makes it evident that the Lutheran confessions know nothing but Scripture; the Christian Church may teach nothing that is contrary to Scripture and is sure of its teaching because it is taken from Scripture. Our book also brings home to us that the Lutheran confessions know nothing but the *sola gratia*; man can do nothing towards effecting his salvation, and his salvation is due solely to unmerited grace. We read, for instance, on page 98: "The freedom of the natural will is . . . a freedom of choice between various kinds of evil." And on page 100: "This condemnation includes, of course, also synergism, which teaches that a person can assist in his conversion, in other words, that a person can convert himself with the assistance of the Holy Spirit." Page 145: "The Holy Scriptures ascribe conversion, faith in Christ, regeneration, renewal, and all that belongs to their efficacious beginning and completion, not to the human powers of the natural free will, neither entirely, nor half, nor in any, even the least or most inconsiderable, part, but *in solidum*, that is, entirely, solely, to the divine working and the Holy Ghost." And page 175 f.: "Why is one individual hardened, blinded, and given over to a reprobate mind, while another who is in the same guilt is converted? These and similar questions we cannot harmonize, . . . we are not commanded to harmonize them. (Rom. 9:20. Cf. also Rom. 11:33-36.) . . . If any man is saved, he is saved only because of God's predestination and election. If any man is lost, he is

lost solely and alone by his obstinate resistance of God's grace."—The individual Lutheran, too, pastor and layman, will find the study of our book immensely profitable. We want to be sure of our teaching; we want to be sure that God's Word teaches these things; we want to be sure that the doctrine of saving grace is the Scripture doctrine. Then take up this book in which, as in the confessions themselves, "each doctrinal statement is fortified by Scripture passages that prove the doctrine to be the very teaching of Scripture itself" (Preface).

A supplementary section sets forth the doctrines of the Antichrist and of the inspiration of the Scriptures as taught in the Lutheran confessions. We read: "This teaching shows forcefully that the Pope is the very Antichrist. . . . Scripture with its entire voice exclaims that these errors are a 'teaching of demons' and of Antichrist.'"—The closing paragraph of the treatise reads: "From the above citation it is evident that our confessions teach the plenary, or verbal, inspiration of the Scriptures and utterly discountenance the Arminian view that the Scriptures are inspired only in those things that are essential to salvation—a doctrine that would throw everything into confusion and would necessitate an infallible pope or other authority to determine just what Scriptures are to be received as inspired. It is quite certain that our confessions furnish no ground for holding that the Scriptures are inspired only in spots, and that they teach emphatically that the Scriptures do not merely contain, but actually are the Word of God, the living Word that abideth forever."

TH. ENGELDER

Spurgeon's Sermons on the Second Coming. By David Otis Fuller, D.D.
Published by Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids. 147 pages, 7¾×5½. Price, \$1.25.

Spurgeon is an evangelical preacher. This may be seen from such passages in his sermons as these: "First, it will be wonderful that there should be so many brought to faith in Him: men with no God and men with many gods, men steeped in ignorance and men puffed up with carnal wisdom, great men and poor men, all brought to believe in the one Redeemer and praise Him for His great salvation. Will He not be glorified in their common faith? It will magnify Him that these will all be saved by faith, and not by their own merits. Not one among them will boast that he was saved by his own good works, but all of them will rejoice to have been saved by that blessedly simple way of 'Believe and live,' saved by sovereign grace through the atoning blood, looked to by the tearful eye of simple faith. . . . They believed and were saved, but faith taketh no credit to itself; it is a self-denying grace and putteth the crown upon the head of Christ, and therefore is it written that He will be glorified in His saints, and He will also be admired in all them that believe." (Pp. 140, 141.) Spurgeon insists on the Christian life. He says, "In these times of worldliness, impurity, self-indulgence, and error it becomes the Christian to gather up his skirts and keep his feet and his garments clean from the pollution which lies all around him." (P. 39.) Spurgeon, however, is a preacher of the Reformed type. He also is a millennialist, though he seems not to be fanatic in preaching this doctrine; for he says: "I do not understand

the visions of Daniel or Ezekiel; I find I have enough to do to teach the simple Word such as I find in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and the Epistles of Paul. . . . I will not divide the house tonight by discussing whether the advent will be premillennial or postmillennial, or anything of that; it is enough for me that *He will come*, and 'in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man will come.' Tonight He may appear, while here we stand; just when we think that he will not come, the thief shall break open the house. We ought, therefore, to be always watching." (Pp. 102, 103.)

The sermons presented in this volume have been condensed and edited by David Otis Fuller, who is a great admirer of Spurgeon, so much so that he says, "There's no question about it; what William Shakespeare is to English prose, Charles Haddon Spurgeon is to the Christian pulpit. His superb and well-nigh faultless diction, coupled with his burning love for Christ, make for him a niche in the Gospel ministry higher than all others since the days of the Apostle Paul." (Preface.) This is exaggerated praise. However, because Spurgeon was an evangelical preacher, though his sermons show no great doctrinal depth, and because he speaks in straightforward, simple language, his sermons can profitably be read by preachers. J. H. C. FRITZ

The Intention of Jesus. By John Wick Bowman, Memorial Professor of New Testament Literature and Exegesis, Western Theological Seminary, Pittsburgh, Pa. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia. 263 pages, 6×8½. Price, \$2.50.

In an enthusiastic foreword Prof. W. M. Horton of Oberlin College calls this book "revolutionary." There is nothing revolutionary in it from the point of view of the Bible Christian; but unbelieving scholarship will indeed be startled to find a first-rate savant, working with its own tools, arrive at conclusions which are the very opposite of its own positions. The book desires to be strictly scientific; it takes nothing for granted. Conjectures of higher critics on the origin of our four Gospels are approved; the two-source hypothesis, holding that Mark and a collection of sayings of Jesus, the Logia (often referred to by the symbol Q), formed the main basis for our present Matthew and Luke (in addition to which—so the proponents of the theory usually hold—Matthew had a special source and Luke a special source) is accepted. The Scriptures are treated as human documents, in which one may expect to find errors. Placing himself thus entirely on a naturalistic platform, the author defends the conservative position that Jesus proclaimed Himself to be the Messiah-King of Psalm 2 and the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53. He combats the view of Wrede and others that Jesus never stated, either to friend or foe, that He was the Messiah, but that the Church gradually arrived at this exalted idea about His person and work and, assuming that He had spoken of Himself in these terms, put the respective claim into His mouth. Wrede thought the Gospel account of the order of Jesus, addressed to His disciples, not to tell anybody that He was the Messiah, was only one half of the truth, that the full truth was that He never even laid claim to that dignity. The refutation of this blasphemous view is the chief

burden of the book, running more or less through the whole discussion. The intention of Jesus, so it is argued, was indeed to be the promised Ruler and the great Sufferer. If that resolve did not exist in Him before His Baptism, it certainly arose in Him when that sacred act was performed.

Elucidating his positions, the author introduces his readers to modern New Testament literature and acquaints them with the most prominent productions and views. Among the recent writers who are quoted or referred to somewhat extensively are Lietzmann, Bultmann, F. C. Grant, Easton, Manson, J. Weiss, Montefiori (a Jewish writer), and G. F. Moore.

In a formidable way the author opposes Harnack's view that the significance of the teachings of Jesus is exclusively or chiefly ethical and Shailer Mathew's advocacy of the social gospel. How little the positions of these scholars comport with what Jesus says about Himself is demonstrated. Valuable are the remarks which set forth that Jesus was not the nationalistic Messiah many people desired Him to be. The arguments showing that Jesus intended to form a fellowship of which He as Mediator was the center likewise deserve special mention. The investigation of the term "Son of Man" (chap. 4) should be noted. The author's closing sentence (p. 225) that our unique Lord produced the Christian faith not, as some higher critics claim, the Christian faith our Lord, must, of course, receive the hearty endorsement of all who love the divine Gospel. A worth-while feature of the book is the inclusion of a summary, covering one page, for each chapter, the summary preceding the chapter itself. The book is carefully documented. There are various details of interpretation where we cannot agree with the author. In addition to the strictures recorded above, our chief complaint is that several times, for instance, when he speaks of the Virgin Birth (p. 184), his trumpet gives a very uncertain sound.

W. ARNDT

A Survey of Religious Literature. By Dr. Charles S. Macfarland. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 157 pages, 5×7½. Price, \$1.50.

In the present volume, the sixth in the series of books on current theological literature, the secretary *emeritus* of the Federal Council of Churches reviews and summarizes religious books published in 1941 and 1942. It must be borne in mind that Dr. Macfarland's liberalism has definitely determined not only the choice of the books but also the reviews of the respective volumes. Under the following six headings he groups thirty-six volumes, many of which were selections of the American Library Association, as belonging to the fifty outstanding religious books: I. Personal Religion and Preaching; II. Philosophy and Theology; III. The Return to Jesus; IV. The Social Gospel and the World Order; V. Glances at History; VI. As Christians Face the Reality of War. The reading of Macfarland's reviews of significant liberal publications suggests two observations: (1) While some would like to write the epitaph of liberal theology, it seems that A. C. McGiffert is correct when he says, "The report of their [liberal theologians] death is grossly exaggerated." Nevertheless, there is, as Nels Ferré points out, an un-

mistakable trend away from humanism. One wonders what will take the place of humanistic Modernism. According to the résumés of the books which Macfarland considers outstanding, it will not be orthodox theology. Modernism is taking on a new form. Some of the modern theologians, believing that some kind of revelation must take the place of the empirical method (experience), are attempting a fusion of immanentism (man is a potential God) and the doctrine of the transcendence of God. This explains in part the renewed interest in a study of Jesus as "a revelator of God." Others believe that history is the channel through which God's voice comes to man. The school of theologians which seemingly emphasizes the need of "supernatural" revelation (but not the revelation in the Scriptures) has been designated as neo-orthodoxy. (2) That the war has deeply affected the thinking of modern theologians is reflected in current theologians' works. The pacifist Modernist, refusing to accept the Bible as the inspired Word, has no end of theological troubles in this war-torn world. Other modernistic theologians are attempting a re-adjustment of their whole social-gospel program according to the plan of the Federal Council, which has outlined its bases for a just and durable peace in the Delaware Conference.— While Macfarland as a reviewer makes unwarranted concessions to some of the authors (we call attention especially to his review of Theo. Maynard's bigoted and biased *Story of American Catholicism*), nevertheless, on the whole, his survey serves its purpose of acquainting the busy pastor with the writings of current liberal theologians.

F. E. MAYER

In the Time of Sorrow. By William J. Bonner. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids. 137 pages, 5¼×7¾. Price, \$1.00.

This book, by a Presbyterian minister, offers funeral suggestions: committal services, Scripture texts with brief application for the comfort of the bereaved, sermon outlines, illustrative material, and poems. The book is helpful to a busy pastor, especially for its suggested texts and themes. The exegesis was not learned at Concordia Seminary.

H. C. STEINHOFF

Religion of Tomorrow. By John Elof Boodin, University of California at Los Angeles. Philosophical Library, New York. 189 pages, 6×9½. Price, \$2.50.

If anybody wishes to see what man, relying on his reason and his powers of observation and fortified by all the resources of science, will arrive at in pondering the ultimate realities of our existence, he merely has to read this book. There is no attempt on the part of the author to be guided by the Holy Scriptures. They are not entirely brushed aside, but their uniqueness is not acknowledged. They are merely one star in a great galaxy of religious phenomena. Speculating on the nature of the universe, on God and man, on the Whence? and the Whither? and leaning on his intuition and rationalistic conclusions, the author, professor of philosophy at the University of California at Los Angeles, submits findings similar to those which investigators of former ages, starting out from naturalistic premises, have set forth. He be-

believes that what he has elaborated is "only a new statement of the religion of Jesus of Nazareth" (Preface, p.7). Paul would say that here we have another gospel, which in reality is not another one. In speaking of concepts that belong to the natural knowledge of God and the Law, the author now and then presents special insights which afford profit and pleasure. The language, generally speaking, has a poetic quality, and the master poets, as Wordsworth, are drawn on freely. The book does not agree with the atheists, but neither with the Prophets and the Apostles.

W. ARNDT

The Heritage of the Reformation. By J. M. Weidenschilling. Concordia Publishing House. 16 pages, 6×9. Price: 5 cents each; dozen 50 cents; 100, \$3.50.

An appropriate order of service for children or for other groups in the congregation, consisting of the customary material, which may be handled in the form of questions and answers, interspersed with hymns and anthems. As the Preface states: "This service has been prepared primarily for the Reformation season, but it may also be used at any other time of the year." It should prove very effective in arousing and maintaining an active interest in the work of the Lutheran Church.

P. E. KRETZMANN

The Interlinear Literal Translation of the Hebrew Old Testament (cover title: "A New Old Testament—Interlinear"), with the King James Version and the Revised Version conveniently presented in the margin. By George Ricker Berry, Ph.D., of the University of Chicago Department of Semitic Languages.—Genesis and Exodus.—Chicago, Wilcox & Follett Co., 1943. 403 pages. Price, \$4.00.

"Two classes," Professor Berry states, "have been kept in mind in its preparation, those able to grasp the exact force of each Hebrew word and expression and those who may obtain, from the new translation given, added light upon the real meaning of this portion of God's Word." The Authorized as well as the Revised Version, he observes, apparently judged the Hebrew too much by English standards, as idiomatic constructions have been often unrecognized. The Hebrew prose vocabulary, e. g., is small—the same word for Noah's ark is used as for the vessel in which Moses was placed. Or DN in the Piel stem means to have compassion; in the Niphal, to change one's mind. Professor Berry also reminds us that the translations are of the versions, not of the Hebrew text, from which the versions were made.* The versions being translations, are liable to give paraphrastic or abbreviated renderings. "So a variation does not always argue a different Hebrew text."

Footnotes are copiously added from the Septuagint (Swete's edition), the Peshitto (Lee's edition), the Symmachus, the Targum of Onkelos, the Vulgate (Heyse and Tischendorf), and Theodotion. The Genesis text

* This is not entirely correct. The Authorized Version states expressly on the title page, "Translated out of the original tongues: with former translations diligently compared and revised."—The Editors.

is according to Baer and Delitzsch, the Exodus text that of Theile. In addition to paradigms of the strong verb the verbs are furthermore classified, in the explanatory statements, into Pe Nun, Ayin Doubled, Pe Aleph, Pe Waw, Pe Yodh, Ayin Waw, Ayin Yodh, Lamed Aleph, Lamed He, according to the radicals.

The literal translations are placed directly below each Hebrew word, as for instance, Gen. 4:1:

: אֶת־יְהוָה:	אִישׁ	קָנִיתִי
Jehovah (of help the) with	man a	acquired have I

An honest attempt has been made, in the opinion of the writer, of ascertaining the true meaning of the Hebrew text, and therefore the volume should serve admirably well for the double purpose intended.

Nevertheless, those conversant with the Hebrew will find it necessary to consult a Hebrew lexicon, not only to determine the cursory reading in the original, but also to arrive at conclusive evidence in cases where Hebrew scholars differ. Gen. 4:1, quoted herein, is a case in point. Dr. Stoeckhardt translates, "I have acquired (born) a man, that is, the Lord (Jehovah)." Gesenius, in determining אִישׁ or אִתּוֹ, preferably designates it as a token of the determined Accusative, following the ordinary transitive verbs which denote fullness or want. The first verse of the Bible, e. g., employs אִתּוֹ twice: *the heaven and the earth*. To say, then, as numerous translators would, "I have acquired a man of the Lord," would be farfetched, to say the least.

VICTOR W. RICHTER

BOOKS RECEIVED

From Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich.:

Hitler's Short Day. And Other Revealing Messages on World Events. By C. Gordon Brownville, D.D. 113 pages. Price, \$1.00.

More Power in Prayer. How to Pray Effectively. By David M. Dawson. 162 pages. Price, \$1.00.

From Fleming H. Revell Company, New York, London, Edinburgh:

Christ and This Crisis. By Samuel M. Shoemaker. 151 pages. Price, \$1.50.

Prayer for These Times. By Harry G. Post. 166 pages. Price, \$1.75.

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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 for 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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