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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 18, Mo.

Luther and the Scriptures. By Dr. M. Reu, Wartburg Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa. The Wartburg Press, Columbus, Ohio. 211 pages (paper binding), 5½×8. \$1.00.

The publishers say of this volume, "This is the last work of the late Dr. M. Reu." The Preface informs us that this treatise "is based upon lectures delivered in 1938 at the Luther Academy at Dubuque, Iowa. They, however, are here much enlarged and the extensive Notes appended are entirely new." That we are here dealing with an important publication is apparent from the headings of the chapters: 1. Introduction; 2. Scriptures Become the Sole Authority for Luther; 3. Luther's Preface of the Epistle of James Is Not Proof for Another Attitude; 4. Scripture Remained Luther's Sole Authority until the End of His Life; 5. Luther Never Admitted Any Error in Scripture; 6. Even Those Parts of Scripture that do Not Concern Our Salvation were Considered Errorless by Luther; 7. Absolute Inerrancy, However, Luther did Not Ascribe to Our Present Text, but Only to the Original Drafts of the Biblical Books; 8. Luther Knows of No Mechanical or Dictated Inspiration; He Rather Emphasized Human Co-operation; 9. Not Luther, but Other Lutheran Theologians of His Time were on the Road to the Mechanical Theory of Inspiration.—The Notes are very extensive; they cover 72 pages. The bibliography which concludes the volume occupies 6½ pages. What makes this treatise particularly valuable is the use made in it of the most recent Luther research and of the Weimar Edition of Luther's Works, which contains materials not found in the former editions of Luther. To show what is here submitted a quotation from Luther inserted in chap. 8, which is concerned with proving that Luther did not identify inspiration with dictation, may be put down. "In the Church Postil Luther says in the sermon for the 25th Sunday after Trinity (St. Matthew 24:15-28): 'In this chapter is described the conclusion and end of both kingdoms, that of Judah and that of the whole world, but the two Evangelists, Matthew and Mark, mingle the two and do not keep the order that has been preserved in Luke, for they are concerned only about telling and repeating the words without troubling themselves as to the order in which the words were spoken.' 'So understand that Matthew here weaves together and combines the end of the Jewish nation and of the world, mixes them into one dish. But if you wish to understand it, you must separate it and apply the parts to their respective ends.'" In the same chapter Dr. Reu takes up the question whether a distinction is to be made between the young and the later Luther, a distinction which once upon a time was quite popular. Dr. Reu remarks, "Then it was fashionable to assert that the 'freer' statements were characteristic of the young Luther and the others of the older Luther, who had already to a large degree lost his

freedom of judgment. If anything at all has been proved by our citations from Luther, it is certainly this, that this once so popular distinction between the young and the old Luther, even in what related to Holy Scripture, is a purely imaginary idea that is contradicted by the sources themselves. It is true that in the beginning Holy Scripture was not the only authority for Luther, but it became more and more so in the course of time. At all times, however, he regarded it as the inerrant Word of God."

Our readers are aware that the doctrine of the inspiration and the inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures is discussed very widely in the Lutheran Church these days. It is fortunate that this excellent treatise of Dr. Reu is now available. In our view it would be profitable for conferences to make a joint study of what is here presented. The results would be very beneficial.

W. ARNDT

Golden Nuggets from the Greek New Testament for the English Reader.

By Kenneth S. Wuest. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. 122 pages, 5½×8. \$1.00.

By the same author, same publisher, same format, same price per volume:

Treasures from the Greek New Testament for the English Reader.

Untranslatable Riches from the Greek New Testament.

Philippians in the Greek New Testament.

First Peter in the Greek New Testament.

Galatians in the Greek New Testament.

(There is another volume in the series, entitled *Bypaths in the Greek New Testament*, which was not before the reviewer.)

All Bible students, theologians and laymen alike, have reason to be very grateful for this set of books on the New Testament. If the user will only keep in mind that the author, unfortunately, holds wrong views on the millennium and on what is commonly known as dispensationalism, and that he does not teach the transmission of grace through the Sacraments, he will undoubtedly obtain a wealth of information and profit from the perusal and the constant use of these books. For the author makes it clear on practically every page that he believes in the Vicarious Atonement, in justification by faith alone, in the verbal inspiration of the Bible, and in all the other doctrines which are truly fundamental in the Christian's spiritual life.—To set forth individual points of merit in the volumes before us would cause this review to assume the proportions of a booklet itself. For that reason we shall confine ourselves to indicating some of the most impressive sections of the books. In the sixty-two sections of *Golden Nuggets* the author, for example, in a few sentences clears up the text of Eph. 4:12, showing that the last two designations of the verse refer to a pastor who has also the gift of teaching. "The two gifts go together in the divine economy, and it therefore follows that a God-called pastor is to exercise the didactic ministry. That is, his chief business will be to teach the Word of God." With reference to Luke 1:1-4, the conclusion reached by the

author is: "So Luke claimed to have closely investigated the facts that he had received and to have done so through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, which fact guarantees the absolute accuracy of the record."— In *Treasures from the Greek New Testament* there are nineteen sections, many of which are relatively longer than those in the first volume. Those which we found particularly valuable are the discussions of the word "grace" in the New Testament, "Greek Grammar and the Deity of Jesus Christ," "About Anointing," where the difference between ἀλείφω and χρίω is very well set forth, and other paragraphs. The difference between θεότης and θείότης is ably presented, so that the translation of Col. 2:9 is offered: "For in Him corporeally there is permanently at home all the fullness of the Godhead."—The volume entitled *Untranslatable Riches* has only four sections, since the author offers longer discussions on the following important topics: Paul's Doctrine of Verbal Inspiration; Paul's Last Words to Timothy; The Exposition of the Greek Text of Hebrews VI; and Light from the Greek on the Ministry of the Holy Spirit. The reader will understand, of course, that the author frequently uses the word "unsaved" for "unconverted." As a matter of fact, by virtue of objective justification all men are included in the miracle of Calvary, the trouble consisting in this, that very many people in this *massa redempta* do not accept the proffered grace in and through Christ.—In the volume *Philippians in the Greek New Testament* the section on chapter 2:5-11 alone is worth the price of the book, for the author effectively disposes of the kenoticism of Modernism. He states, for instance: "He did not empty Himself of His deity, since Paul says that the expression of His deity was a fact after His incarnation, that expression implying the possession of the essence of Deity. He set aside the *outward expression* of His deity when expressing Himself as a bondsman." (P. 67.)—The other two volumes of the series are likewise commentaries, and there we have the same excellencies that characterize the other expositions of the author. Now and then an expression creeps into the text which shows the chiliastic tendencies of the author, as in his use of the word "rapture," but this fact is more than counterbalanced throughout by the clear explanations of both individual words and entire sections. The present writer intends to place these excellent studies in the New Testament on his shelf of books which will be consulted constantly. They are far superior to expositions that have appeared in recent years, reminding one constantly of the series "Bibelhilfe," which had come over from Germany with some degree of regularity until the outbreak of the war. We feel sure that the Lutheran pastor who buys individual volumes of this set or all of the books will feel well repaid, also because of the fact that the price is certainly reasonable.

P. E. KRETZMANN

The Cathedral of Christian Truth—Studies in Romans. By William C. Coltman, D. D. Fundamental Truth Publishers, Box 388, Findlay, Ohio. 306 pages, 5×8. \$1.50.

The author of this volume of addresses on Romans is pastor of the Highland Park Baptist Church in Detroit, Mich. A fellow member of his denomination, well known through his scholarly work in the New

Testament field, Dr. J. R. Mantey, says in the brief Foreword, "Dr. Coltman has given us an excellent demonstration in this volume of the best type of expository preaching. I trust it will help many ministers not only to become expository preachers, but also better preachers." In Lutheran circles it goes without saying that sermons should be expository, that is, that they should expound the text which is read to the congregation as the basis of the sermon. If we in this respect can learn from Dr. Coltman, we should be grateful. Approaching the volume from this point of view, we can say that the book deserves high commendation. The author fixes attention on the chief thought or expression of the section which he discusses, and he makes it live for us, expatiating on it with material from the Epistle and other parts of God's Word. Some expository preaching gets to be dull and powerless because the preacher tries to marshal all the thoughts and details of argument in the section he discusses, and as a result he can dwell on no thought sufficiently long to make it register in the consciousness of his hearers. The human mind being what it is, you cannot achieve good results by hurling one fact, one truth after the other, in quick succession at the hearers unless all these facts and truths are at once discerned to be closely connected so that they form one complete whole. Again, even in expository preaching there must be illustrations brought in from the outside to make the meaning of the holy writer easily grasped and vivid. The author has fulfilled these requirements. The reviewer is bound to say that Dr. Mantey's encomium is not merely the customary foreword appraisal of an interested friend or patron.

There is, moreover, the added grace of gripping, telling phraseology. Speaking of Romans 2, the author has chosen the caption, "Good Folks Lost." The first sentence reads, "It is a well-known fact that the Bible assures us that bad men may be saved, but it is not quite so well known that the same Book makes clear that good folks may be lost. God's Word not only holds out hope for the worst, but it points out the hopelessness of the best" (p. 68). Many similar samples could be adduced. As to the doctrinal soundness of the book, we do not know whether the author has grasped Paul's thought with respect to "all Israel," Rom. 11:26; his language is somewhat ambiguous. Generally speaking, the apostolic teaching is proclaimed in its fullness. May the book become a good influence among the clergy of our country in the direction of sound expository preaching.

W. ARNDT

BOOKS RECEIVED

Every Teacher a Trained Teacher. Prepared by the Board of Christian Education Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States. Author: A. C. Mueller. 7 pages.

Opening a Parochial School. How to Go about It. Prepared under the Auspices of the Board for Parish Education, Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States. Author: A. C. Stelhorn. 12 pages.

Weekday Schools of Religion on Released Time. Prepared by the Board of Christian Education, Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States. Author: Clarence Peters. 7 pages.

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