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Book Review. - Literatur

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Book Review

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Scripture Cannot be Broken. Six Objections to Verbal Inspiration Examined in the Light of Scripture. By Dr. Th. Engelder. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 498 pages, 6½×9½. \$3.00.

In view of the controversy on the inerrancy of the Scripture which during the last fifty years or so has been in progress in Protestant circles here in America and for a number of years has been troubling the Lutheran camp, too, the appearance of the volume before us is extraordinarily timely. What Dr. Engelder, our esteemed and well-beloved colleague, seeks to defend is precisely the precious truth which is under attack, that everything in the Bible is God-given and without error. The contents of this stately volume were published as serial articles in the *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY* from April, 1941, to December, 1942. The caption used for these articles was "Verbal Inspiration—a Stumbling-Block to the Jews and Foolishness to the Greeks." For the book the shorter and more convenient title given above was chosen. If the question is asked, Why republish what has appeared in a journal? the answer is that requests for such republication in book form were voiced both inside and outside Missouri Synod circles, and that the articles are so valuable in furnishing our clergy useful material in combating a prevalent error that they ought to be at a pastor's elbow for ready reference and study.

The author indicates the scope of the volume in the subtitle "Six Objections to Verbal Inspiration Examined in the Light of Scripture." These objections are: 1. The Bible contains errors; 2. It is marred by moral blemishes; 3. It deals in trivialities; 4. Verbal inspiration is mechanical inspiration; 5. It implies an atomistic conception and use of Scripture; 6. It means the establishment of the legalistic authority of the letter. These six points are examined with great thoroughness. The arguments of the critics are presented in their own words, and then follows the refutation—definite, annihilating. Careful documentation is one of the strong points of the work. The book is written with genuine warmth. *Pectus facit theologum*, we say, and that the heart of the author is speaking here and not merely his head one will soon perceive. It is not an amiable afternoon-tea discussion which is here conducted, in which no excitement is noticeable because the subject is inconsequential. What is defended is a divine truth of high significance to the children of God, and the author will not stand by while it is crushed.

The book has the charm which is characteristic of all of Dr. Engelder's writing. With absolute clarity of presentation, which betokens that the subject has really been mastered, there is coupled a special flavor, a felicity of expression, an occasional refreshing humorous sally, which fascinate and show that the writer, while intensely serious, still is really human.