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## Book Review. - Literatur

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## Book Review

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**Scottish Theology in Relation to Church History since the Reformation.**  
By John Macleod, D.D., principal emeritus of the Free Church College, Edinburgh. The Publications Committee of the Free Church of Scotland, Edinburgh. 331 pages, 5¼×8¼. (American Agents: Westminster Theological Seminary, Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia 18.)

This handsome volume contains the ten lectures on "Scottish Theology since the Reformation in the light of Scottish church history," which were delivered in April, 1939, at Westminster Theological Seminary by John Macleod, an outstanding champion of orthodox Calvinism in Scotland. To the student of church history, and especially of the history of Christian doctrine, this volume, interestingly written, will prove a source of real delight. Dr. Macleod is thoroughly acquainted with his subject, and his is an approach—scholarly, yet simple and direct—that holds the reader's attention from beginning to end. Everywhere he shows his appreciation of purity of doctrine on which orthodox Calvinism insists. Beginning with the work of John Knox and his fundamental teachings in Scotland, the author pictures his immediate successors, then treats the second Reformation galaxy, the post-Revolution Church, the Neonomians (Arminians), the theologians of the early days of the Secession, the 18th-century contrast (evangelicals and moderates), the New Light movement and its effect on Scottish theological thought, the Evangelical School and Victorian Orthodoxy, and the later developments—the ebbtide. To the general student of theology this special field is perhaps so little known that the mere mentioning of names and movements may almost mean nothing; but unless he is altogether ignorant of church history, he certainly must know something of the seriousness, the profoundness, the sincerity, and, above all, the love of Scottish orthodox theologians for genuine scholarship (which has led them to translate many important works of German scholars into English), and their rare combination of genuine scholarship and Christian activism, the latter manifesting itself in extensive mission work in foreign lands. To them simplicity of life and loftiness of thought were necessities. The influence of Scottish theology of course has been tremendous. From Scotland, Presbyterian theological thought passed on to England and from there to America, and whatever there is in these circles of doctrinal interest and of integrity of church life is largely a blessing of the many theological "Johns" of Scotland, to whom love for the Word and piety in living were essentials. We warmly recommend this book to all who are interested in this special phase of *Dogmengeschichte*. Unfortunately the price was not given to the reviewer, but it is no doubt in the neighborhood of \$2.50. Throughout the book there occur discussions of doctrine that challenge replies.

On page 128 the author thus writes: "In Lutheran teaching, which says that regeneration is through faith, it is an easy thing to maintain the position that this regeneration is the attendant or consequent of Justification. In the Reformed theology faith is the effect and not the cause of regeneration." He then proceeds to explain the underlying differences, which causes him no little difficulties. Ultimately the discussion shows how much trouble the theologian has who rejects the Scriptural doctrine of the means of grace. To the orthodox Lutheran not only regeneration, but also justification is by faith, and the one is not the attendant or consequent of the other, but both divine acts coincide, for they occur simultaneously in an individual as soon as the Holy Spirit through the Gospel engenders faith in his soul. In that very moment that person is regenerated, that is, born again; and in that very moment he is justified, i. e., declared righteous on account of the Savior's righteousness, which by faith he appropriates unto himself. Theology, after all, is very simple when one closely adheres to the simple Scripture presentation; it gets to be complex only when it becomes a matter of rationalization, of grouping and of categorizing, so as to tabulate scholastically what the Holy Spirit was wise enough not to classify.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

**A Commentary on the Holy Bible.** By various writers. Edited by the Rev. J. R. Dummelow, M. A., Queen's College, Cambridge. The Macmillan Company, New York (1944). 1092 pages, 6½×9½. \$3.00.

In popular parlance this widely used (British Empire, United States, Continental Europe) commentary is known as "Dummelow's One-Volume Bible Commentary." It was published first in February, 1909, but so great were the sales of the book that 16 (large) editions (mostly reprints) became necessary in 35 years. Dummelow's has been declared to be the "best complete one-volume commentary on the Holy Bible for minister, student, and layman," a commendation to which conservative Bible students will hardly subscribe. But it has many points in its favor. The mechanical make-up is excellent, while its price is remarkably reasonable. The contributors are noted (many of them, liberal) scholars of Great Britain and America. The commentary gives the student all manner of historical and isagogical information in 29 introductory and other articles, some of which the conservative Bible student will read with pleasure. At the end of the volume there is a complete set of maps (8) on Bible lands, general and special. The tenor of the work is highly reverent, the book being introduced by the well-known collect asking God's blessings on the study of His holy Word. In general, however, the commentary is mediately liberal, the character of the contributions depending on the respective contributor's theological orientation. Despite its liberal tendencies the book is worth studying also by believing Bible students, who will find in it very often page after page with nothing to disturb their orthodox beliefs. But in many respects Dummelow's Commentary is not a safe guide. Modern religious liberalism and destructive higher criticism too frequently determine the decision in settling historical and exegetical questions. It is thus as-

serted that when Ezra read the Torah to the people (Neh.8), the Pentateuch was the only part of the Old Testament that was recognized as canonical (p. XIII), an assertion that is altogether unwarranted. The Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch (Hexateuch) can no longer be claimed, it is said, since it does not fit in with the facts (p. XXIV). The creation story cannot be maintained in its traditional orthodox sense in view of the facts of science (evolution; p. XXXf.); but it need not be incompatible with science, since it reveals a law of continued development (*ibid.*). Too much is made both in the introductory articles and the commentary proper of the Babylonian traditions, just as if the records of Genesis were no more than mere modifications of earlier (pagan) cosmogonical legends. Israel's Messianic hope is represented as embracing essentially earthly elements, the theology of a spiritual redemption being a later (Christian) development (p. XIV ff.). In many of the introductory articles there is an attempt at mediating between liberalism and traditional orthodoxy, generally to the detriment of the latter. In the commentary itself, especially in that on the Old Testament books, we find the same misleading tendency. In Gen. 1:1-3, for example, creation is said to be not "out of nothing but out of pre-existing chaos" (p. 3). The Hebrew "without form and void" is explained (by way of suggestion) by the Phoenician myth that the first men were offspring of the wind Kolpia and his wife Baau (p. 4). The "deep" has a parallel in the Babylonian Tiamat, the dragon goddess of darkness, whom Merodach must conquer before he can proceed to the higher states of creation (*ibid.*). The word "aprons" (Gen. 3:7) is supplemented by the remark, "There is a Jewish legend to the effect that at the moment of the Fall the leaves dropped off all the trees but the fig" (p. 9), certainly a comment not very profound and apposite. But in his note on Gen. 3:15 the commentator defends the Christian custom "to read in this promise the Protevangelium, or first proclamation of the Good Tidings of the final victory over sin. It is in Christ that the seed of the woman crushes the serpent" (p. 10). No Messianic hope is found in Eve's words in Gen. 4:1. Num. 24:17 is referred to David first and then to David's greater Son. "From early times the Jewish commentators have interpreted the prophecy as Messianic" (p. 116). In a note on Job 19:25 Driver is quoted as pointing out "that the word *goel* means here the opposite to the Christian idea, viz., a deliverer not from sin, but from affliction and wrong not due to sin." In Job 19:26 a note on the expression "in my flesh" says: "Rather, without or apart from my flesh, i. e., after death." In v. 27 "for myself" is to be taken in the sense of on my side. "Not another" means not as another, i. e., no longer estranged (p. 306). The words of the righteous sufferer in Ps. 22 have "a partial fulfillment in the experiences of the faithful remnant in Israel and a complete fulfillment in those of Jesus Christ, which are the supreme type of righteous suffering leading to the establishment of a universal kingdom of God" (p. 338). The "child" in Is. 7:14 is "the Messiah, whose advent Isaiah seems to have expected in the near future in connection with the Assyrian invasion" (p. 418). Is. 9:6, 7 is referred to the Messiah (p. 421). In John 3:5 "the new birth is applied by

Christ to Christian Baptism, this being no new thought to Nicodemus, since proselyte baptism was regarded by the Jews as a regeneration, or new birth, from heathenism, in which the proselytes had been under the dominion of Satan, into the family of God. Baptism is a 'sacrament,' i. e., a moral means of grace, the full efficacy and effect of which depend upon the response in the soul of the baptized person to the covenanted grace proffered in the ordinance. In the case of infants the conscious response of the soul to the proffered grace of the ordinance takes place when the age of reason is reached" (p. 779 ff.). Under Matt. 26:28 there is this note: "This [My blood of the new testament] is a clear proof that Jesus regarded His death as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world and, therefore, as altering the relation of the whole human race to God" (p. 710). The words of institution in Matt. 26:26 ff. are followed by a brief explanation of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, in which both views (a symbolical and a real presence) are stated, but in which the presentation is often inaccurate and inadequate (p. 710 f.). On 1 Cor. 10:4 we find this note: "We see St. Paul's recognition of Christ's pre-existence; the divine power which sustained the Israelites was the power of Christ working on earth before His incarnation" (p. 907). On 1 Cor. 11:27, "guilty of the body and blood," there is this note: "By insulting the sign, he insults the thing signified," a common Reformed comment (p. 912). In his note on Rev. 20, the commentator defends millennialism, a doctrine derived from the Jewish apocalyptic hope.

These selections may aid the reader in somewhat judging the character of Dummelow's Commentary; but let him remember that the work is not everywhere equal in merit or demerit. In general, the New Testament is better than the Old, and the comments in some books are much more helpful than are those in others. Of special value are many of the historical and isagogical notes. As a supplement to an orthodox commentary Dummelow's is valuable especially in pointing out to the student what liberal and mediating commentators have to say on a given text.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

**Talking Things Over with the Visitor.** Encouragement and Guidance for the Visitor. Prepared by H. G. Kleiner. 19 pages, 8½×11.

A few days ago a mimeographed pamphlet was placed on our desk with the request for a review in the next issue of our periodical. In duty bound, we began to study the paper and soon forgot that it was our duty, because it became a pleasure to read this paper. It is an effort to make the Visitor aware of the importance and high dignity of the office for which his brethren have chosen him and of the duties incumbent upon him. Its chief purpose, however, is to suggest ways and means of making the Visitor's visits fruitful and beneficial to the pastor, the congregation, the District, the Synod at large, and at the same time to make the Visitor a welcome friend and his visit one of the high spots in the life of a congregation. Pastor Kleiner has done a good job, and we recommend his essay to all our Visitors, pastors, and church councils.

THEO. LAETSCH