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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.

Concordia Bible Teacher. Volume VII, Number 1, January, 1946.

Concordia Bible Student. Volume XXXV, Number 1, January, 1946.

Edited by Rev. A. C. Mueller under the auspices of the Board for Parish Education, Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States. Prepared by the Rev. J. M. Weidenschilling, S. T. D. Topic of the Quarter: "The Christian and His Prayer Life."

These quarterly publications should be familiar to all of our clergy. Their cost is nominal—Concordia Bible Teacher 75 cents per annum, Concordia Bible Student 50 cents per annum. The quarterly books for 1946 are:

- I. The Christian and His Prayer Life
- II. The Story of Christian Missions
- III. The Life of Samuel
- IV. Great Passages of the Bible

The pamphlet for the first quarter contains twelve lessons on prayer. The pamphlet for the teacher naturally presents material of a more advanced nature than that for the student. Introductory pages are devoted to reporting the result of Research Studies for the Improvement of Bible Classes; the preparation for the teaching of a course on missions; and the Christian and his prayer life. Each lesson is introduced by a brief devotional service with a suggested hymn, Scripture reading, and a brief prayer. Both pamphlets are recommended to all Bible students and teachers.

May the Lord richly bless their mission. **LOUIS J. SIECK**

Is There a Hell? By E. A. Kettner. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 18 pages, 3½×5¾. 15 cents.

In this little tract Pastor Kettner proves from Scripture that there is a hell. He also tells the way which God has provided that the sinner may escape the torments of hell, to wit, by faith in Jesus, the Savior.—In a house-to-house canvass this tract might well be left at the homes of the unchurched. A rubber stamp of the imprint of the church and the name of the pastor on the back of the tract will be a reminder that an invitation has been extended to attend the services of that particular church.

JOHN H. C. FRITZ

Marching Side by Side. Stories from Lutheran Chaplains on the Far-Flung Battle Fronts. Compiled by Frederick C. Proehl. Concordia Publishing House. 1945. 191 pages, 5½×8. \$2.00.

This volume has received a uniformly warm reception in the denominational press and was a welcome newcomer to many a household as a Christmas gift. Pastor Schleede, himself a chaplain of the recent war, does not make an overstatement in the preface when he writes: "I am satisfied that this volume holds tremendous appeal for Lutheran people everywhere, since it tells the story of a consecrated group of clergymen who preached the Word

in season and out of season, in every clime, and under every conceivable condition."

Under Pastor Proehl's general editorship the volume presents gleanings from the reports of Missouri Synod chaplains throughout the fronts of the global war. Every ingredient of interest — heroism, drama, emotional color, service, and self-sacrifice — crowds these pages. The chapter "In Memoriam" provides sketches of the life and service of the four chaplains who gave their lives during the war.

This volume has outstanding significance not merely for the lay reader, however, but particularly for the pastors of Synod.

It answers the question: "How did it happen, under the grace of God, that World War II found the Missouri Synod ministry in a position to supply 250 chaplains to the armed forces?" Pastor Proehl's opening chapter describes the sequence of events, beginning with overtures to the Cleveland Delegate Synod in 1935 by the Southern San Joaquin Valley Pastoral Conference and by the Atlantic District, through the recognition by our Synod of the importance and validity of the chaplain's office, on to the recruitment by our Army and Navy Commission of chaplains for the Reserve Corps, climaxing in the war years when our Commission was able to keep up with our synodical quota. Through God's guidance this became the means of providing for spiritual needs of millions of men under arms at a time of their greatest need.

For our ministry this volume has the further significance of revealing the attitudes and techniques of our pastors at work for the men and women of the armed services. War and postwar world have been bogeys in the minds of many observers of the Church. Can the ministry of the Church measure up to the problems of the fears, derangements, and tensions of the new and evil day? This volume shows men of Synod's ministry at work on the problem. It is heartening to see how this group went about the task. Manifestly God and His Spirit were with them. Their brethren on the home front can learn from their account to dip into the same supply of courage and guidance, because they are at work on the same problems. Chaplain Ramming's words may serve as a sample of the many transfers to current and peacetime ministry which this volume suggests:

Somehow I do not find my work as a chaplain vastly different from my civilian mission work. Consequently you might just as well assign a publicity agent to cover Candidate John Peter Luther and his lodge-hall preaching station. It is the same beautiful story, some might even call it long-suffering and patient. . . . Take away the uniforms, and I would have a hard time proving that I was not "plowing" along in some spot in Texas. It just happens to be my work, and I love it, and I am happy doing it. After a few years of pulpless preaching in mortuaries, a bookie office, and a hall two flights up, it isn't much of a trick to follow the Infantry and hold forth in bombed churches, a shattered room, a barn, sometimes in the comfort of a hayloft, or out in the open. In fact, it seemed very proper to begin Advent with a service in a carpenter's shop, and there was something wonderful about celebrating Holy Communion in a barn filled with hay on Christmas Eve while a huge black and white cow stood solemnly by chewing her cud. . . . Of this I am convinced, although I do not understand it, that somehow God walks amid the death, the misery, and the sin, and He wins hearts. It matters not whether it is in peace or in war (pp. 83, 85).

The professional reader will be stirred by the training which our chaplains received in the field for their work with people. One of the salutary contributions of the war to the Church will be the inserting of former chaplains, with their quickened sensitiveness to human need and their adaptability to circumstance, into the pattern of our ministry. We who stayed at home shall want to imitate their courage, their techniques of being available to men, their insight into fundamental human nature.

Valuable historically is the record of the operation of our Army and Navy Commission, and its collaboration with the Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and the National Lutheran Council Service Commission.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

The Lutheran Annual. 1946. Editor: O. A. Dorn. Statistical Editor: Armin Schroeder. Concordia Publishing House, Saint Louis, Mo. 225 pages. 25 cents.

Amerikanischer Kalender fuer deutsche Lutheraner auf das Jahr 1946. Editor: J. T. Mueller. Statistical Editor: Armin Schroeder. 225 pages. 25 cents.

These two friends require no introduction. In addition to the information offered by any calendar, they contain a treasury of information for both the clergy and laity. The reading matter in the *Annual* presents articles on the work of our chaplains, our missions in all foreign fields, the Concordia Historical Institute, Station KFUEO, and Valparaiso University. The *Kalender* brings articles from the life of Martin Luther and interesting Christian stories.

LOUIS J. SIECK

We Move into Africa. By Henry Nau, Ph. D. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 1945. 414 pages, 5×7½. \$2.00.

Dr. Nau kept a day-by-day account of his experiences in Nigeria while he was laying the foundations for the first Lutheran Mission in Nigeria. Since only a very small number of people was privileged to read these original accounts, Dr. Nau has been kind enough to rewrite them for wider dissemination. This book is the result.

Others have stated that this book reads like fiction, even though every statement is based on actual experiences. This is certainly true. The author has, however, gathered the various experiences under topic headings, such as the "School Situation," the "Conditions of the Congregations," "Spiritism," "Polygamy," "Twin Killing," the "Prophets," "Ministrations to the Sick," and so on. Thus the author was careful not to repeat himself.

Dr. Nau speaks from wide experience, having labored in India, in Europe, in America, and latterly in Africa. Likewise he has labored among white peoples, among the races of Southern India, and among the Negroes in America and in Africa. He took his doctor's degree in Oriental languages, and in Africa after only a short time he was able to work in the languages of our African brethren and to prepare literature for them.

Congregations, societies, schools, and Sunday schools of the Synodical Conference should place this book in their libraries for reference purposes. It will be handy for leaders in youth groups, ladies' auxiliaries, and topic chairmen in men's clubs.

Detailed and interesting answers will be found to such questions as: How did it come about that we began mission work in Africa? How did God lead these African people to call the Synodical Conference Lutherans to "come over and help them?" Did we begin from "scratch," or did we take over an established organization? Does the missionary use English, or must he learn a native tongue? How do we provide literature for this mission? Do we pay only the expenses of the missionaries we send, or do we pay for all the expenses of church work in Nigeria, including the salaries of native teachers and other workers? Do the Nigerians erect their own buildings, or do we erect them, or do we do so jointly?

This book will be regarded as the source book on the beginnings of our work in Nigeria. Subsequent books will be written on the development and the growth and the expansion of our African mission work.

We feel it would have been better to have made the book at least one third shorter, and to have added an index and a map of Africa, of Nigeria, and charts showing the location of the cities in which our churches are located.

E. C. ZIMMERMANN

Devotional Studies in St. John's Gospel. By J. C. Macaulay. Pastor of the Wheaton Bible Church, Wheaton, Ill. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. 1945. 285 pages, 5½×8. \$2.50.

The W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company has given us a number of good books, among which works on the Bible hold a high place. The work before us here is a devotional commentary, which formerly was published in two volumes (*The Word Made Flesh and Obedient unto Death*). The work makes a favorable impression as one pages through it. The comments of the author show deep reverence for the divinely inspired Scriptures and the evident desire to remain true to the teachings that God has revealed to us. The style is direct and simple. We were especially pleased to see that the right view is taught concerning the much debated words of Jesus, John 6:53 ff. The author writes (p. 99): "The question pressingly arises, What does it mean to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of Man? One will suggest that we do these at the Holy Communion, the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, in instituting which our Lord said of the bread and the wine, 'This is My body' and 'This is My blood.' While indeed these phrases suggest the ordinance, I am persuaded that they do not refer to it, but that both refer to a common third, which is the fulfillment of both. The Communion service is not an end in itself, but is a finger post pointing to the same spiritual reality spoken of by our Lord in the words now before us. We do not have to go far afield for an explanation of this mystical language. Eating is to satisfy hunger, and drinking is to quench thirst. The meat which Jesus offers is His flesh, the drink He provides is His blood. How do we eat of His flesh and drink of His blood? He has Himself told us in v. 35 of this very chapter, 'He that cometh to Me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.' If the coming to Him is the end of our hunger and the believing on Him the end of our thirst, then the coming and the believing are the eating and the drinking. But it is a coming to Him and a believing on Him as *the sacrificial One*, the crucified One,

the One who in *His death* fulfilled all that the ancient altar taught of substitution, atonement, reconciliation. That same sacrifice we recall at every partaking of the simple Communion feast, and there we renew our faith and love." While these words fail to teach the Real Presence concerning the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, they do state that in John 6:53 the Savior is not discussing the Lord's Supper, but a spiritual eating and drinking, which takes place by faith.

Another passage which we read with much approval is the one containing comments on John 17:21. The author writes: "So, then, the unity of the saints is an accomplished fact, a present truth, fulfilled by divine operation apart from human endeavor; a rare gem waiting discovery, not a product to be manufactured. This does not mean that there is nothing for us to do about it. Like many other evangelical truths, this becomes effective and operative with discovery. Along with the discovery comes the exhortation, 'endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.' The knowledge of a unity divinely wrought, purchased at so great a cost, so deeply cherished by the Lord, will set us to a jealous guarding of its experience in all our relationships with our brethren, until the world looks on in wonderment, exclaiming, as they did in the days of old, 'Behold, how these Christians love one another!'" Since the book was intended to be a devotional commentary, technical points of scholarship are seldom touched on. Thus the question pertaining to the date of our Lord's death, whether this occurred on the 14th or the 15th of Nisan, is not entered upon. The book was written from the point of view of a pastor who would like to discuss the fundamental ideas contained in John's Gospel with his congregation. It can furnish excellent guidance for all who are engaged in, or contemplating, such an endeavor.

W. ARNDT

My Church and Others. A Summary of the Teachings of the Ev. Luth. Church as Distinguished from Those of Other Denominations. Third Edition. By John Theodore Mueller, Professor of Systematic Theology, Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Mo. Rudolph Volkening, St. Louis, Mo. 92 pp. 5½×7½. 85 cents, \$9.00 per dozen; postage, extra.

This book has rendered useful service, and many pastors will be glad to see that a new edition is available. While Part I, which presents the doctrines of the Lutheran and other churches, has not been changed, Part II, containing a description of the various denominations, has been entirely rewritten and brought up to date. *Bon voyage!* we say to the little work as it sets out on another cruise.

W. ARNDT

God's Answer. Second Volume. Sermons for the Sundays of the Trinity Season. By O. A. Geiseman, S. T. D. Ernst Kaufmann, Inc. New York. 1945. 8½×5, 192 pages. \$2.00.

This is another book of sermons by the well-known Dr. Geiseman, pastor of Grace Church, River Forest, Ill. This volume contains nineteen selected sermons for the Trinity season based on the pericopes of the ancient Church and several special sermons for Mother's Day, Labor Day, the Reformation Festival, and Thanksgiving Day. All of these sermons present the heart of the Gospel, Jesus the Redeemer and His love for sin-lost souls.

Although Dr. Geiseman is the pastor of a large metropolitan congregation containing a number of well-educated parishioners, he still preaches the Gospel in very simple language. His sentence structure is never involved, always clear, always to the point, so that the simplest member in the pew cannot fail to understand and grasp what the message of God is to the soul. We know that the blessing of God rested upon all the hearts who heard these sermons preached. We believe that everyone who reads these sermons will derive great benefit from such study.

ALEX WM. C. GUEBERT

The Quest. By Ludwig Bauer. Concordia Publishing House, Saint Louis, 1945. 240 pages, 8¼×5½. \$2.50.

Here is an interesting historical novel written around the lives of the shepherds of Bethlehem. Beginning with the events connected with the crowds in Bethlehem for the "taxing," the story quickly plunges into a series of dramatic episodes of adventure, hatred, oppression, love, cruelty, and mystery. The Biblical facts serve as a fitting background. The reader is led to some of the events of the healing ministry of Jesus, His death, and the founding of the Christian church. The author is able to sustain the reader's interest even through the last short chapters, which are somewhat of an anticlimax. Mr. Bauer seems to have a vivid picture of the Bible times, and even though the reviewer thought he had discovered an occasional anachronism, a hurried search in a standard reference book always vindicated the author.

The book will receive wide distribution, and the excellent cover and jacket illustration help make it an ideal gift item for any Christian adult or young person. It is the hope that Concordia Publishing House will be able to produce more books of this type.

A. C. REPP

Soldiers of God, True Story of the U. S. Chaplains. By Christopher Cross in Collaboration with Major General Wm. R. Arnold, Former Chief, U. S. Army Chaplains. E. P. Dutton and Co., New York. \$2.75.

The author presents a composite picture of the experience, not of one, but of all chaplains, with incidents supplied by many, beginning with Pearl Harbor Day to the close of hostilities. Such a book brings a variety of religious viewpoints and philosophies as the reader expects of it.

Appended, and of value indeed, is the list of Chaplain Casualties and Decorations as of September 15, 1945, and 34 official Signal Corps Photographs picturing chaplains in the performance of their varied tasks.

LOUIS J. SIECK

Christmas Messages. By George W. Truett. The Moody Bible Institute, 1945. 79 pages, 4½×7. \$1.00.

These messages are the late Dr. Truett's annual Christmas greetings to his congregation and friends from 1929 to 1943. They reveal an awareness of the tremendous changes and trials through which the world was moving. They are also charged with the Christian's hope of everlasting life and applications to the problems of this world. Their language is a useful cross section of Dr. Truett's style through these years. It is dignified and distinctly literary in quality.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER