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## Book Review. - Literatur

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## Book Review

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All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis 18, Mo.

**The New Testament, Its Making and Meaning.** By Albert E. Barnett. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York and Nashville. 304 pages, 8¼×5¼. \$2.50.

This book will prove of value to Lutherans chiefly as a brief, readable summary of recent Liberal critical opinion on the New Testament; it is all the more valuable in this respect inasmuch as the author claims "no considerable degree of originality" for his conclusions, which he designates as "sufficiently representative of competent scholarship in the field to deserve the attention of students." The "competent scholarship" is, as a glance at the bibliography will show, predominantly that of the Liberal school.

In other respects, the reader of orthodox convictions should promise himself little edification from this volume. Most of us have learned to take statements made on dust covers with considerable reserve; the promises made on this dust cover are more than usually misleading: "Here is objective literary analysis at its best—the solid foundation on which theologian, preacher, or individual Christian can build his modern application of these ancient writings. . . . Each of these ancient writings glows with new life as the modern reader, shown the human situation out of which it arose, senses the great thought and personal emotion that thrilled those who unrolled the original papyrus."

One question the objectivity of a literary analysis that, in the case of *Ephesians*, throws over all the ancient evidence and the strong internal evidence for Pauline authorship and on the basis of "other data in the letter which argue convincingly for pseudonymity" makes of the Epistle a pseudepigraph designed to serve as introduction to the first publication of the Pauline corpus in 95 A. D. and fathers it on Onesimus. (Professor Barnett is here indebted to Goodspeed.) There is no space to examine in detail the "data . . . which argue convincingly for pseudonymity"; suffice it to say that they provide a very weak substructure for so elaborate and inherently improbable a hypothesis. It is argued, for instance, on the basis of *Ephesians* 2:3 that the author is as definitely non-Jewish as his readers; this is bad exegesis, as a comparison with *Romans* 3:9 shows; it makes *Ephesians* 2:18 meaningless and involves the monstrous assumption that the canny Onesimus, who elsewhere so completely submerged himself in Paulinity, tripped on so obvious a detail as the Apostle's nationality. Moreover, the ethical problem involved in the assumption of pseudonymity is not solved by such prettiness as: "Nor was there another associate of Paul who would more appropriately acknowledge his profound personal indebtedness by writing in the apostle's name."

Questionable, too, is the solidity of the foundation provided by a study of the New Testament which, in an exposition of *Formgeschichte*, leaves open the crucial question: Are the Gospels in any sense a reliable account of the life, words, works, and death of Jesus; or are they merely an edifying web spun from the church's bowels? The author contents himself with the insouciant



remark: "A brief statement of the two positions will contribute to the formation of a sound judgment of the matter."

That such a procedure and such an approach should fail to make these ancient writings glow with a new life was to be expected. Still, one is disappointed to find, in an exposition of the "Message" of *Galatians*, no indication of the tone and color of that white-hot Epistle; neither is one quite prepared to find the curse of the Law watered down to "the curse of spiritual impotence" or St. Paul's experience under the Law reduced to the flatness of: "He felt as though the last vestige of spontaneity had been excluded from life."

The books of the New Testament are treated in chronological order. There is a bibliography. The Index of Subjects and Persons is inadequate; "Muratorian fragment," for instance, is listed with twenty-nine references, but there is no listing of "Canon." For "Form Criticism" and its characteristic terminology one is forced to search under the general entry "Synoptic Problem." One wonders on what principle "James, the Lord's brother" is listed and "Jude" omitted. Typographical errors noted were few and of no importance.

M. H. FRANZMANN

**The Wonders of Prophecy, or What Are We to Believe?** By John Urquhart. Christian Publications, Inc., Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. 241 pages, 7½×5. \$1.50.

Everyone who rests his all upon the Bible as the Word of God will be happy to hear of a new printing of this staunch defense of the inspiration of Scripture. This eighth printing is tangible evidence that it is a book which has served its purpose well and still is in demand.

The origin of the Bible is indeed a miracle that can be accepted only by faith. Verbal inspiration is an act of God which human minds and words cannot explain. It is only natural, then, that in this book of supernatural origin we should also find messages that transcend the grasp of human reasoning. The author of *The Wonders of Prophecy* devotes his attention to its miracles of prophecy.

Writing a foreword to a previous edition of this book (1925), Philip Mauro says among other things: "Let it be remembered that one of the most striking characteristics of the Bible, distinguishing it radically from all other books either ancient or modern, is that it contains in every part, from the third chapter of Genesis to the last of Revelation, predictions in plain language of events that were to take place in the history of mankind on earth. Those prophecies were soberly uttered, and *in the name of God Almighty*. Moreover, they were often accompanied by, and made the basis of, exhortations to righteousness, godliness, and holiness of life. So that, if those by whom these prophecies came were not, as they one and all claimed to be, men sent from God, they were liars and hypocrites not to be matched in all the world, and that with nothing to gain for their venality but persecution and death at the hands of those to whom they prophesied."

*The Wonders of Prophecy* is a contribution to Christian evidences. In presenting his materials, Urquhart, therefore, has deliberately limited himself to such predictions as the unbelievers cannot brush aside with rationalistic "explanations." He selects



such prophecies as were fulfilled after the time when everyone, even the higher critic, acknowledges that the Old Testament text existed as we have it today. Thus Urquhart eliminates the possibility of the claim that the prophecies were *vaticinia post eventum*, that is, that these utterances were not predictions at all, but were statements uttered after the event transpired and then ascribed by the sacred writer to some person who lived prior to that time. Thus, for example, the prophecy found in the blessing pronounced by Jacob upon his twelve sons is explained away by those to whom the Bible is only a human book by the assertion that it was actually written after the tribes of Israel had taken their place in history and then projected backwards to Jacob as the speaker. Urquhart forestalls these explanations by citing such prophecies as were fulfilled after the translation of the Old Testament into the Greek (about 250 B. C.).

In his choice of prophecies the author forestalls another common claim of those who deny the miraculous origin of the Bible. Many of the predictions of the Prophets, they say, were merely the result of shrewd observations of the trends of the time. These Prophets had the sagacity to foretell the conquests of Babylonia and other great powers. The prophecies which Urquhart treats do not admit of such an explanation. Each of them was fulfilled centuries after the Prophet had lived. Not only does the long lapse of time preclude any human foresight, but the manner of their fulfillment also rules out such a possibility. He points to details of fulfillment which no mortal could have foreseen.

Much of the material is drawn from the prophetic books of Ezekiel and Daniel. Many expositions of these and similar books are marred by unscriptural dispensationalism and millennialism. It is, therefore, especially gratifying to be able to state that this book is free of this blemish. The reader will find only indirect references to such false interpretation. Thus sentences like the following do creep in: "That the Jews will eventually return to Palestine, we know" (p. 116), "Israel will not return till the time of God's forbearance with the Gentiles has expired" (p. 219). But the material itself is not in any way based on the universal conversion of the Jews nor on other chiliastic aberrations.

Differences of opinion may also exist with respect to the interpretation of some prophecies as, for example, the difficult passage of the Seventy Weeks in Daniel, chapter nine. Urquhart regards the Seventy Weeks as  $70 \times 7$  years (Luther) and not as "idealized time" (Stoeckhardt). Compare the review on the "Seventy Weeks and the Great Tribulation," Philip Mauro, in C. T. M., Vol. XVI, p. 355.

In general the reviewer can agree: "It is so well stored with historical and other facts, that the reader will be not only strengthened in faith, but also enriched in useful knowledge. It is especially needed in this day when the conflict between truth and error, light and darkness, is raging more fiercely than ever."

WALTER R. ROEHRS

**The Eyes of Faith.** A Study in the Biblical Point of View. By Paul Sevier Minear, Norris Professor of New Testament Interpretation, Andover Newton Theological School. Westminster Press, Philadelphia. 307 pages, 6×9. \$3.00.

Here is another valuable book issued by the Westminster Press, which recently has given us a number of substantial pub-



lications. The author, 42 years old, is Iowa-born and, chiefly, Iowa-bred. From 1934 to 1944 he taught New Testament subjects at Garrett Biblical Institute, Evanston, Ill.; his connection with the Andover Newton Theological School at Cambridge, Mass., dates back to 1944.

The book before us is not easy reading. Whoever refuses to strike up a companionship with a publication unless it is at once intelligible to the average adolescent is warned that this book is not for him. We have here a demonstration that philosophers are not the only people who can express a simple thought in difficult language. The book would have gained if the author had subjected the manuscript to a process of simplification and abridgment. But one must remember that he is somewhat of a Barthian or Kirkegardian (witness his fondness for paradoxes and striking negations, his emphasis on the need of immediate decision, and his stress on the otherness, the majesty and sovereignty of God), and Karl Barth, as we know, has two stylistic principles: Don't be all too clear, don't be too brief.

The author, as the subtitle says, is concerned with the Biblical point of view. He is not endeavoring to write a dogmatics or a philosophy of religion. His aim is to tell us about the relations between God and man as the Bible depicts them. To see these relations as the Prophets and Apostles saw them, you have to have eyes of faith. This explains the subtitle. The author desires to be an honest exegete whose function simply is to set forth or exhibit what he finds in a text. He, as is natural, has recourse to scholarship, past and present, to achieve his aim.

The subjects discussed are indeed of prime importance. Here are some of the chief thoughts: God visits man (think of how He came to Adam!); man tries to escape; he finds this cannot be done; God speaks to him and convicts him of undertaking to serve other gods; then God manifests Himself as the God of love and in pure grace selects men to be His own. The many questions which our intellect raises in this connection the Bible does not answer; it is a practical book. (There is an interesting chapter on election and freedom, p. 57 ff., which, while it does not entirely satisfy the reviewer, nevertheless states a thought which is of deepest significance, viz., that the Biblical writers, while frequently speaking of God's election and man's responsibility, never view the juxtaposition of these two truths as a problem, that is, as involving a contradiction.) In this way the history of Israel is looked at, and by and by we come to the period of the Messiah and the New Testament Church. It is impossible here to give a detailed criticism of the book. Its striking merit is that it consistently seeks to ascertain the point of view of the Biblical writers on God's attitude to man and man's attitude to God. One positive defect is that it assumes the existence of myths in the Old Testament and in other respects, too, makes concessions to negative higher criticism.

W. ARNDT

**The Reformed Doctrine of Justification.** By Dr. Edward (Eduard) Boehl. An Authorized Translation from the German by Rev. C. H. Riedesel. Wm. E. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich. 308 pages, 5½×8. \$3.00.

The reviewer hopes that theologians in our country will prove themselves grateful to Wm. E. Eerdmans for the publication of,



and to Pastor Riedesel for his excellent translation of, Eduard Boehl's erudite monograph *Von der Rechtfertigung durch den Glauben*, which appeared in Leipzig (1890). Dr. Boehl, who from 1864 to 1899 was a member of the Evangelical-Theological (Reformed) Faculty at Vienna, where he taught Dogmatics, Biblical Theology, Apologetics, and Philosophy of Religion, and who died at Vienna in 1903 as a leading member of the Synod of the Reformed Church of Austria, was no doubt one of the most influential Calvinistic theologians during the modern dark ages when Ritschlian rationalism and destructive higher criticism had all but destroyed the Christian faith in Central Europe. His *Christliche Glaubenslehre* (1886) and *Dogmatik* (1887) are still being studied by many within and without the Reformed denomination, and his many other works in Biblical and Systematic Theology rank high even today on account of their intrinsic scholarship value. That Boehl's *Justification Through Faith* should be published in an English translation at a time when theologians even in conservative circles are inclined to be indifferent to scholarly research, and that by a publishing concern which is relatively small and limited in its resources, seems almost incredible; but so much greater is the credit which those deserve who have made accessible to American theologians this classic in Systematics, which no doubt will never lose its value and charm. (The new title evidently was chosen to render the book more attractive to modern students of theology.) What makes Boehl's monograph *Justification Through Faith* so eminently valuable is the fact that, as Benjamin Warfield has put it years ago, in it "the Scriptural doctrine of justification as a purely forensic act of God, proceeding on a gracious imputation of Christ's active and passive obedience to the sinner, is clearly expounded." The Lutheran reader, of course, cannot accept every statement or presentation of doctrine in this monograph, which Professor Boehl wrote against the background of his Calvinistic faith with constant special reference to and refutation of Osiander's mystico-pantheistic view of the doctrine and Rome's and rationalism's (Schleiermacher, Ritschl, etc.) Pelagianistic teachings. For this reason, the field in which the learned author moves, vast though it is in general, keeps his work within a narrow scope, and in his defense of the *sola fide* and his extreme predestinationism he at times fails to see the clear light of Scriptural truth. In his criticism of the Lutheran doctrine of the Church (p. 244 f.), of the *unio mystica* (279 f.), of predestination (231 f., elsewhere), just to mention a few chief points, Lutheran theologians certainly cannot follow his argumentation. To them also it seems as if he had definitely misunderstood not only Melancthon and other Lutheran theologians (231, elsewhere), but also the Lutheran Confessions (225, 200, elsewhere), otherwise he would not have written as he did. But also Reformed scholars disavow in part what Dr. Boehl propounds, as Dr. Louis Berkhof, former president of Calvin Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, points out in his excellent "Preface" (cf. "the image of God in man," "the original state of man," "the indwelling of God in man in Old Testament times," "the character of justification and sanctification," and others; p. 9). Nevertheless, the book deserves careful study not only because of its vast amount of theological



lore, but also because of its able defense of the *sola fide* against mysticism and Pelagianism. Very truly the author says in conclusion that "such a doctrine well deserves to be called 'the article of a standing or falling church.' But because it is neglected or mutilated, the Church lies prostrate" (308). The organization of the subject matter in the book is simple, but logical and effective. Dr. Boehl, after offering by way of introduction the necessary historical background for his thesis, reviews the lives of the saints in the Old Testament, showing that they were justified by faith and not by works. He then traces the *sola fide* in the Gospels and the Epistles of the New Testament, and lastly discusses the relation of the doctrine to others (man's original state, original sin, the Holy Spirit, incarnation, regeneration, sanctification, predestination, and so forth). It is to be hoped that a second edition will be supplied with an adequate index, which is absolutely necessary, and that the numerous errata will be corrected. Dr. Boehl's name should appear beneath the "Introduction" to show that it was written by the author more than half a century ago, when he had to furnish the readers with the necessary guidelines to understand his thesis. JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

**Greater Love Hath No Man.** A Series of Lenten Sermons. By Martin Walker and Theophil H. Schroedel. Published by Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis. 106 pages, 5¼×7¾. \$1.25.

This book of Lenten sermons offers two series: a series of New Testament texts by Pastor Walker on "Christ for Us and in Us," and a series on Old Testament texts by Pastor Schroedel on "Old Testament Types of Christ." On the book flap it is said: "It is hoped that these deeply devotional messages will prove to be a rich source of stimulation to the Lenten preacher."

J. H. C. FRITZ

**Rebuilding with Christ.** By Dr. Walter A. Maier. Published by Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis. XLVI and 310 pages, 5¼×7¾. \$1.75.

This book presents in print the radio messages of the second part of the twelfth Lutheran Hour by Dr. Walter A. Maier. In the Foreword, covering about forty pages, testimonies are given of many who have been spiritually benefited by Dr. Maier's radio addresses. The contents of the messages which Dr. Maier has delivered over the radio for a period of twelve years are well known to our readers; Dr. Maier preaches Christ to a sin-cursed world. Some who have heard these addresses will probably like to read what they have heard; others by the reading of these addresses can also derive spiritual benefit.

J. H. C. FRITZ

**We Beheld His Glory.** By pastors of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, 1946. 242 pages, 8×5. \$2.00.

This book is a beautifully printed collection of sermons for the Advent season, Christmas, and New Year's Day, written by nineteen members of the (Norwegian) Evangelical Lutheran Church. Seven of the contributors are professors in seminary or



colleges; the remainder include the president of the church body, youth workers, and parish pastors.

This book provides sermons for a period of the church year which in recent years has not received the bulk of attention which it deserves. The contributions reveal a refreshing diversity of style. Some are traditional in their form, some literary, some more crowded with current allusions and clipped.

These sermons uniformly succeed in drawing the attention of their hearers and readers to Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Savior and carry out the thought of the frontispiece, entitled "We Beheld His Glory" and showing three fishermen of Galilee gazing upon Jesus Christ Himself.

The Advent themes and lessons are crowded with teaching difficulties. Several of the great concepts, such as repentance, the Kingdom of God, and the coming of Christ, tend to become vague in preaching. Many a pastor senses that he has failed in adequately defining them for his hearers. This reviewer feels that these sermons did not always wholly succeed in drawing consistent concepts. But they will prove remarkably stimulating to our pastors as they review gains and losses of another season's preaching, and will suggest devices both of insight and expression which will help to bring Christ to the man in the pew. RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

**Proceedings of the Sixty-Sixth Convention of the Eastern District.** 81 pages. 24 cents.

**Proceedings of the Fifth Convention of the Southeastern District.** 52 pages. 21 cents.

Published by Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

The Report of the Eastern District publishes an essay by Pastor H. E. Plehn on "Christian Training of Youth," which will prove interesting and profitable reading for all members of Synod. The Report of the Southeastern District contains only the business proceedings. The essay read by Pastor E. Pieplow on "The Means of Grace" was not incorporated in the Proceedings since it will appear in the centennial book, "The Abiding Word," being published by Synod. TH. LAETSCH

**The Lutheran Annual 1947**, published by Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo., 256 pages, 5½ × 8½. 25 cents.

**Amerikanischer Kalender fuer deutsche Lutheraner, 1947.** 256 pages, 5½ × 8½. 25 cents.

Both *Annual* and *Kalender* feature the Centennial of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States. The literary editors are Mr. O. A. Dorn and Dr. J. T. Mueller, respectively, with the Rev. Armin Schroeder as statistical editor for both. Dr. W. G. Polack contributed the articles on the history of the Synod appearing in the *Annual*. Some of these items have not appeared in print previously. The statistical contents, which are the same in both, are of inestimable value, not only to every pastor of the Synodical Conference, but to the laity as well.

LOUIS J. SIECK