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Book Review. - Literatur

W. Arndt

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

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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.

Lexical Aids for Students of New Testament Greek. By Bruce M. Metzger, Ph. D. Assistant Professor of New Testament, Princeton Theological Seminary. Published by the Author. Princeton, N. J., 1946. 110 pages, 5¼×8½. \$1.00.

This little book, we are sure, will prove a welcome aid to many a person who is eager to study the Greek New Testament in a sensible, proficient way. Professor Metzger, through his classroom experience, knows the needs of people who, while interested in the Greek New Testament, have had no, or only very meager, training in the Greek language. His book consists of two chief parts. The first one contains word lists in which vocables are submitted according to their frequency. Many of us undoubtedly recall that President Harper of the University of Chicago years ago issued such lists for the Hebrew and rendered a significant service through this method. The first list in this section has the caption "Words Occurring More Than 500 Times"; the second list has the heading "Words Occurring 201 to 500 Times." It is interesting to know that there are 35 words listed which occur oftener than 500 times. The last list of the section contains "Words Occurring 10 Times." When a Greek word has a striking English derivative, Prof. Metzger frequently adds the latter as a parenthetical remark; thus *koinoonos* is not only provided with the translation "a partner, sharer," but parentheses are added containing these words: "Cf. cenobite, one dwelling in a convent community." The section ends with the notation: "Total Number of Greek Words (other than proper names) Which Occur in the New Testament 10 Times or More . . . 1,052." Needless to say, if a person has mastered all these words, the reading of the New Testament will not be a difficult task for him.

In the second part of the book the words are "classified according to their root." It is an extremely interesting section, offering many helpful hints. Thus the formation of nouns is dwelt on, and the peculiar meaning given to words by the varying suffixes is pointed out. In the chief subdivision of this section the words derived from a given root, for instance, the root *ag*, are gathered in lists. Two helpful appendices are added, one having the heading "The Indo-European Family of Languages," which briefly points to the laws connected with the names of Grimm, Grassmann, and Verner, and the other having an equally fascinating subject: "Prepositions in Composition with Verbs." The treatment necessarily is very brief, but truly stimulating. The book reveals much thought and the ardent desire of the teacher to share his possessions with his students.

W. ARNDT

The Evangel. The Good News of Jesus Christ the Son of God as Told by the Four Evangelists. The Life of Christ in the Words of the Bible Translated and Arranged by Walther Eickmann. Stratford House, Inc., 52 Vanderbilt Ave., New York, N. Y. 269 pages. \$2.75.

Here is the most recent attempt at a unified Gospel in modern speech. It presents, so the inside flap says, "the complete un-

abridged life of Christ as recorded in the Gospels." By means of a simple system of numbers and asterisks the reader is able to locate any passage in the Gospels. The old chapter and verse divisions are absent. Instead the author introduced his own captions. The entire body of material in the four Gospels is presented in thirty chapters. The translation is made "for the most part from the Nestle text." Without a doubt, "the clear Benedictine type, the introduction of quotation marks, and a logical paragraphing combine to present a page as inviting, pleasing, and legible as can be found in any modern book."

We regret not having been able to examine carefully the entire translation. The author appears to be painstakingly faithful to the Greek text. Some renderings do not find our approval. They are Luke 2:14: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth [von Soden], peace among men who have his good will"; Luke 2:49: "Did you not know that I must be at my Father's?"; Luke 1:37: "No word from God will ever fail."

It is evident that the author was bent on producing a translation which would be characterized by simplicity and directness. In this, we believe, he was successful. His translation is the King's English in an exalted degree. Besides, the translation is always chaste and reverent. Out of a total of 88 words in his rendition of Luke 1:1-4, 68 are monosyllables! And yet, nothing of the original is lost in the translation.

The author's attitude to Scripture finds eloquent expression in the words: "To make Christ live in the mind, the heart, and life of the reader is beyond the sphere of both, writer and reader alike; it is the work of the Holy Spirit, who by inspiring the Evangelists is the real author of the Gospel as also its true interpreter."

PAUL M. BRETSCHER

Religion in America. By Willard L. Sperry. Published by Macmillan Company, New York. xi and 318 pages, 5×8. \$2.50.

This book was written in response to an invitation from the Cambridge University Press to interpret the religious scene in America for readers in England. No two men will present the same picture of the American churches. The author of this survey is an ordained Congregational minister, Dean of Harvard Divinity School, and a liberal theologian. Naturally, his interpretation of religion in America will reflect his theological position, and by his own admission his preferences or prejudices have determined the selection of those areas of the religious situation which seem important to him. From the viewpoint of the liberal theologian the survey is satisfactory. In thirteen chapters the author discusses such phases of American religious life as the Calvinistic influence on religion in the Thirteen Colonies; the causes and the consequences of the separation of Church and State in America; the various denominations; American theology; religious education; and church union. Dean Sperry's liberal theology is evident especially in the following points: 1) Too much emphasis is given to social, political, and economic factors in the rise of American denominations and the schisms within the denominations. While there is an interrelation between secular and church history, it will not do to accept the principles of the Historico-Religious School, which would explain the American political

phenomena from the viewpoint of religion, and vice versa. The reader obtains the impression that the American culture and democracy are synonymous with American religion. 2) Much space is given to the clash between the Calvinistic "pessimism" and the American "optimism." The author speaks of the paradox between "Sunday self-abasement" expressed in the congregation's confession of sins, and the "weekday self-assertion" which extols the dignity and worth of the individual. The author believes that the American Modernist has solved the paradox by placing religious liberalism (denial of spiritual depravity) and political liberalism (democratic equality) on a par. 3) Psychology of religion looms large in the author's interpretation of the religious scene, notably in the chapter devoted to the Negro churches. The author states that modern American theology owes more to Wm. James than to any other one person. James' psychological explanation of all religious experiences and his pragmatism seem so plausible to reason that his theories have become basic for liberal theology. True, many phenomena evident in some of the bizarre cults belong into the field of abnormal psychology, but the theological vagaries of the pseudometaphysical cults spring from a more depraved source than a demented soul. 4) As a Modernist the author shares the views of higher criticism, and as a Congregationalist he has little or no interest in credal statements. He virtually by-passes all theological controversies, even the recent modernistic fundamentalist controversy. He speaks very disparagingly of the Fundamentalists and their "unscientific method" in interpreting Scripture. 5) Surprisingly little is said of the social gospel, though the principles of sociology of religion are evident especially when he discusses the church universal and the union of the churches. The book will prove helpful to the American reader of conservative convictions, since it will help him to see the temper and spirit of liberal theology at work in the religious life of America.

F. E. MAYER

The World of Justus Falckner. By Delbert W. Clark. The Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia, Pa. 189 pages, indexed. \$2.50.

The author, at the time of his death in January, 1946, was Episcopalian minister of Christ Church, Coxsackie, N. Y. His interest in the early history of the Episcopal Church in New York brought to his attention the work of the Lutheran Justus Falckner. The character of this man so intrigued him that he made a comprehensive study of the church history, and so this work: *The World of Justus Falckner*.

What impresses the reader from the outset is the sympathetic approach to his subject on the part of the author. There is not the slightest evidence of an Episcopalian bias. In some respects the book gains by the fact that it was not written by a Lutheran. We usually take too much for granted, and as a result our perspective is somewhat out of focus. The Reverend Mr. Clark took nothing for granted and shows us step by step how Falckner developed from an early, somewhat emotional, even enthusiastic, type of pietism to a sober, sound, well-balanced, confessional preacher of the Gospel.

One is stirred by the author's sound estimate of values. He does not, for instance, brush aside the Pietistic movement with a shrug

of the shoulder or a derogatory gesture, but shows what every careful student of the movement knows, namely, that, while some of the more radical outgrowths of Pietism passed away, what was sound and salutary did not, but remained, and remains to this day, to the benefit of the Church. To quote the author: "Pietism is not just something which once stirred men's hearts in Germany over two centuries ago. It is much more than something in the past. It lives in the souls of millions of Americans today. The things which it advocated are a matter of habit and control of behavior for half the population of the United States today. It was no mere wind of emotion that blew itself out, but a spiritual revolution. . . . There is no religious upheaval [since the Reformation] which has had so profound an effect on the average Protestant in America as Pietism, and there is none of comparable importance about which the average Protestant knows less."

In presenting his story of the life and work of Justus Falckner the author brings sufficient detail to give us a very complete picture of the man. He devotes a full chapter to his ordination, and deservedly so, as he was the first Lutheran minister ordained on American soil. His account of Falckner's ministry among the Lutherans along the Hudson shows him to have been a deeply consecrated man, with a burning love for the souls in his care. Falckner's interest in the thorough indoctrination of his people resulted in the publication of his book *Fundamental Instruction* (1708). It was intended to give his parishioners the necessary spiritual knowledge and training in Lutheranism over against their Calvinistic neighbors. According to the author: "The book was divided into twenty-one chapters, whose titles followed the usual course of Christian instruction. It was intended not merely to give an answer to Calvinists, but also to give a brief but complete presentation of Christian doctrine, suitable for the preparation of a candidate for confirmation. It began with a chapter on Holy Scripture. This was followed by others on God, Creation, Angels, and God's Foreknowledge. A little further on came chapters on Man, Free Will, Sin, and God's Universal Mercy. There followed the discussion of Christ, Justification, Regeneration, and Good Works. After this were the Sacraments, the Church, Governments (Family, State, and Church). The closing chapter dealt briefly with the 'Last Things': Death, Resurrection, Judgment, the End of the World, Everlasting Damnation, and Everlasting Blessedness. At the back of the book was a rhymed version of the creed and two hymns (probably Falckner's own composition), entitled 'Voor de Predicatie' (before the sermon). The book was small enough to slip into the pocket. In the pastor's absence, people could carry it to church, and when the voorleser had finished reading the service, and before he got down to the printed sermon, which might be provided for him to read, the people could pull out the little book and sing one of these hymns."

This volume is sufficient testimony to the conscientious attitude of Falckner, who thus stands as the leading Lutheran pastor in the American colonies of his day and one whose example, if it had been followed generally by all Lutheran ministers of the 18th century, would have channeled Lutheranism into other waters than those in which it found itself by the end of that century and the beginning of the next.

W. G. POLACK

Is Masonry a Religion? An Analysis of Freemasonry. By Theodore Graebner. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo., 1946. 79 pages. 25 cents.

This is the most recent contribution by Dr. Graebner on Masonry. It is a worthy successor to *A Treatise on Freemasonry, Letters to a Masonic Friend*, and other materials on Freemasonry contributed by him in *The Secret Empire* and in innumerable articles in the *Lutheran Witness* and elsewhere. One is safe in saying that no one in the Lutheran Church of our country has provided more literature on the subject and has done more to expose the idolatrous religion of Freemasonry than the author of this new treatise.

The booklet of 79 pages, which includes a valuable bibliography, is packed with factual information. Nevertheless, it is eminently readable. In the first chapters the author discusses the origin of the Masonic Order, sources of information, the organization of Freemasonry, initiations, Masonic oaths, and symbols and allegories. In the last chapters of the book the author goes to the heart of the matter and conclusively demonstrates that Freemasonry is a religion and that it claims to be a religion, but that this religion is not Christianity, that it is a naturalistic religion, a religion of works, which does not lead to heaven but to hell.

Our pastors will welcome also this analysis of Freemasonry. They will become more fully persuaded that our Church must, on Scriptural grounds, continue to testify against the false teachings of Masonry.

PAUL M. BRETSCHER

Report on Veterans' Organizations. By the Bureau of Information on Secret Orders of the Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States. Published by Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis. 22-page pamphlet, 5×7½. 6 cents.

The Bureau of Information on Secret Orders offers valuable information on the United Spanish War Veterans, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion, the Disabled American Veterans of the World War, the American Veterans of World War II, and Auxiliary Organizations, such as American War Dads, and the Navy Mothers Club. Every pastor and church officer ought to have a copy, and it ought to be given to all men and women who have seen service.

TH. LAETSCH

Veterans' Organizations Examined in the Light of Scripture. By a Committee of the Ev. Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States. Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, Wis., 1947. 10 cents each, 96 cents per dozen.

In January of this year this column brought to the attention of our pastors the report on Veterans' organizations compiled by our Synod's Bureau of Information on Secret Orders. Here is a similar report by our brethren in the Wisconsin Synod. The report confines itself to the Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Veterans of World War II, and the American Legion. Our congratulations to the committee. May the Lord bless also this clear-cut testimony to the truth of Scripture.

The statement on p. 3 "Even the atheist enjoys all the rights of citizenship and is eligible for public office" is not accurate. Arkansas, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Pennsylvania,

South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas prescribe qualifications for public office which exclude atheists. It is correct to speak of "the American principle of the *complete* (italics ours) separation of Church and State" (p. 4). It must be remembered, however, that a complete (absolute) separation of Church and State in our country does not exist and never has existed.

PAUL M. BRETSCHER

To Thee We Sing. By Catherine and Frank Herzel. Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia, Pa. 254 pages. \$2.00.

This volume addresses itself especially to the younger readers. It discusses the hymnody of the Church more or less chronologically, covering Jewish, Greek, Latin, German, English, and American hymns, especially those of the great hymnists like Luther, Gerhardt, Tersteegen, Ken, Watts, Wesley, et al. The over-all picture shows the song of the children of God, through all ages of the Church's history, from all nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples. A very usable book.

W. G. POLACK

A Manual on Worship. By Paul Zeller Strodach. The Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia, Pa. 380 pages, 9½ x 6. \$4.00.

The fact that the original edition of Dr. Strodach's *Manual* has for some time been exhausted is evidence sufficient of its usefulness and helpfulness to many. There is a real interest today among the laity as well as the clergy in the question: What is proper in Lutheran worship?

Besides the chapter on Divine Worship the revised edition contains two chief parts. The first part presents twenty chapters devoted to "The Place of Worship." In this part the church building and such appointments as the chancel, the altar, the pulpit, the lectern, the font, the sacristy, the paraments, the sacramental vessels, the liturgical colors, and many other furnishings and related functions are treated. The second part contains a directory of the worship of the church. It presents the historic background to the authorized Common Service of the United Lutheran Church and an explanation of the rubrics and the reasons for, as well as purpose of, the same. The more than two hundred illustrations enhance the value of the volume.

This reviewer knows of no other book which can fulfill the purposes of a manual as well as this one does and recommends it to pastors, altar guilds, and especially to those who are responsible to congregations for church building. They will find it an authentic guide in their work.

L. J. SIECK

Lyric Religion. The Romance of Immortal Hymns. By H. Augustine Smith. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York 10, N. Y. 518 pages. Illustrated, indexed. \$2.95.

This is a new edition of a work originally published in 1931. The venerable author is professor of fine arts in religion at Boston University and is known the country over for his cultivation of better church music in America. In his book he discusses approximately 150 of the Church's great hymns, beginning with Martin Luther's "Ein' Feste Burg." His method is to give the salient facts of the author's life, the background of the hymn, and something about the time and the composer. He frequently also analyzes the contents of a hymn. Sometimes he suggests a song service in

connection with the theme of the hymn he writes about, drawing in other hymns. Sometimes he adds pertinent comments on topics suggested by a hymn or in reference to a hymn writer. He frequently gives the Scripture references in a hymn. There are also a number of fine illustrations.

The indexes include an index of dramatized hymns, classifications of hymns by centuries, sources of hymn tunes, hymns arranged by subjects, etc. In short, it is a very usable book, which pastor, teacher, and organist will find perennially handy. W. G. POLACK

Conscience on Stage. By Harold Ehrensperger. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York and Nashville. 238 pages, 5½ × 8. \$2.00.

The author is active in the Methodist Student Movement. He was trained in drama at Harvard, was executive secretary of the Drama League of America, and created a department of drama and literature in Garrett Biblical Institute at Northwestern. He has written a number of pageants and edited collections of plays. The author believes that drama is of value in the service of worship of the Church. In that point of view administrators of liturgical worship will probably not go with him, even though he points out that the Church originated the drama. Some of the materials of his book, therefore, will not be applicable to every pastor's needs. Dramatics, however, play a large part in the activities of most youth groups and also of some other organizations of our churches. This book provides splendid points of view also for recreational programs of dramatics. It will be a good antidote for the desire to "make money with plays" and for the choices of shabby farces which disfigure the program of many church groups. The book is specific in pointing out the possibilities and objectives of dramatics, in outlining standards, and in describing the attitudes and procedures of all concerned. Pastors will enjoy the reminders to co-operate with the rest of the Church in maintaining order in equipment. Ample appendices provide lists of plays and other materials useful for church groups.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

Compel Them to Come In. By D. C. Hennig. Published by Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis. Tract No. 149. 40 pages. 3½ × 5¾. 10 cents.

A useful pamphlet enabling the Christian to answer many of the questions asked and doubts expressed by unchurched friends as to the need and blessing of churchgoing. The various church societies ought to supply their members with copies of this pamphlet.

TH. LAETSCH

BOOKS RECEIVED

From Willett-Clark & Co., Chicago, Ill.:

God's Back Pasture. By Arthur Wentworth Hewitt. 144 pages, ¾ × 5½. \$1.50.

A book of the rural parish.

From Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich.:

Two-Hundred Thirty-Five Precious Poems. Compiled and written by Clifford Lewis. 263 pages, 5¼ × 7¾. \$2.00.