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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.

The Increasing Peril — Of Permitting the Dissemination of Atheistic Doctrines on the Part of Some Agencies of the United States Government. Wilbur M. Smith. Van Kampen Press, Chicago, 1947. 8½×11, 46 pages. \$1.00.

This pamphlet is directed against a rising tide of atheistic propaganda in the agencies of government. The author is a member of the faculty of Moody Bible Institute and widely known among Fundamentalist Christians as the editor of *Peloubet's Select Notes* and author of *Therefore Stand*. He is deeply serious in his intentions and sincerely moved by faith in the Bible as the Word of God.

The author's major premise is that America must remain godly if it should prosper. Other lands have forsaken God and come to ruin; we must avoid their precedent.

The purpose of the book is to describe means by which godlessness is supplanting Christian ideals in our government. The author quotes the ruling of the Federal Communications Commission allowing the broadcasting of atheistic doctrines and the "non-Christian program of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization" (UNESCO) in support of his warning.

The author's minor premise is that the American nation is Christian. In support of this contention, the author quotes the religious establishments in the original Colonies, religious expressions during the War for Independence, religious sentiments of the founders of Harvard, Yale, Columbia, and Dartmouth; and expressions of statesmen concerning the sovereignty of God in the nation, culminating with General MacArthur. Some of the author's materials, though the scope of his booklet is brief, are fresh and unusual.

The author's conclusion is one which he takes pains to specify. We might expect it to be legislation in favor of the Christian religion. The author protests such a conclusion but rather asserts:

Faith in God cannot be brought about by legislation. I am not one of those proposing some new amendment to the Constitution, nor a law to enforce church attendance by legal action. Never any of these things! Let us have freedom of worship and freedom of expression in all things that are true and good and right. But if we are not to legislate men into the kingdom of God — and surely we are not, for this comes from the heart and only by a change of heart — let us beware that we do not legislate in favor of atheism. Let us beware as a government, national and state, that we do not give encouragement to those who would blaspheme the Name of God (p.39).

Despite the author's earnestness and the pertinence of many of his materials, this reviewer would take issue with the author's syllogism in two respects. The minor premise asserts too much. It states that we are a successful nation because we are Christian. It does not distinguish, however, between success in terms of

the blessing of God and success in terms of the functions of government. It assumes that the ideal government, and, in fact, our early government, is a theocracy. The author seeks to register a most useful warning; but he does so by confusing the tools of Church and State.

The author's conclusion should, logically and psychologically, be the enlistment of his reader in a program influencing the government itself. Actually the author's suggestions are simply negative: that we should not support UNESCO, since it is planned without content of religion and is headed by an agnostic, Julian Huxley.

Militant atheism is not faring as well in America as the author would suppose, and not because of opposition of government, but because of opposition of people. Robert Harold Scott has ceased to broadcast atheism, not because the FCC withdrew permission, but because the hearers didn't want him. And is it true that UNESCO will bar all participation of Christian thought in the improvement of the world? Dr. Arthur Holley Compton, a leading American delegate, is not an atheist. Is it really impossible to influence UNESCO in a Christian direction? Some of the misgivings of UNESCO about Christian dogma, quoted by Mr. Smith, are due to the fact that organized Christianity in the past has spoiled "common ground for understanding and agreement." UNESCO will make a mistake if it judges the Christian religion by some Christian groups; but Christians will make a mistake if they permit UNESCO to keep its phobia by simply repudiating it. In this respect the Catholic Church provides a more sensible methodology than does Fundamentalism. Jesuit *America*, commenting on the Catholic efforts to counteract godlessness in the American school system, summarizes the methods to be used:

The first is to make the teaching of religion at every level of Catholic education so effective as to leave a lasting influence on the lives of our students—an incontestable proof of the value of our system. The second is the way of influence by *participation*—in the plans and operation of UNESCO, in the field of scholarly and scientific research and publication, in community efforts to solve community problems. (April 26, 1947, LXXVII, p. 92.)

At least one of the legislators whom Mr. Smith quotes with approval as an opponent of godless communism in government is also an unpleasant example of bigotry and prejudice in problems within American society. Christian citizens will help to make our nation what they would like to have it be, Christian, not simply by legislation, positive or negative; but they will do so by making themselves so essential and their faith so contributory to the happiness of their land and their world that also the godless will need them. If today, in the national and international sphere, men are seeking for philosophies of life other than the Christian one to restore happiness to the world, this is due to an unfortunate degree to the fact that Christians themselves have not lived by their own philosophy and thus have not recommended it as unique and essential. This fact is not merely theory. It is the judgment of the Word of God (Matt. 5; 1 Pet. 2 and 3; Rom. 12 and 13).

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

Infant Baptism and Adult Conversion. By O. Hallesby. Translated by C. J. Carlsen. The Messenger Press, Minneapolis, Minn. 96 pages, 8×5½. Cloth \$1.00; paper binding 50 cents.

The five lectures contained in this brochure were delivered in 1923 before pastors and students at Augsburg Seminary, Minneapolis, Minn., by Dr. O. Hallesby, professor at the Independent Theological Seminary, Oslo, Norway. Upon the request of many pastors and students they were translated into English and now (1947) appear in the third printing. They are to set forth in a rational way, as the subtitle of the brochure explains, the relation between regeneration in Infant Baptism and the subsequent adult awakening and conversion. This very phrasing already intimates that the author's exposition of regeneration and conversion is not oriented to that of orthodox Lutheran dogmatics. He rather discusses the subject against the background of the Pietistic conception of regeneration and conversion. True, Dr. Hallesby admits the Lutheran fundamentals of Holy Baptism. Baptism is a means of grace through which the baptized receives the Holy Spirit, forgiveness of sins, communion with Christ, in short, all the blessings of salvation. He also correctly and forcibly shows that children should be baptized and that they are truly regenerated in Baptism. But he nowhere states that baptismal grace is received by infants through an actual, personal faith as this is taught in orthodox Lutheran theology, with great clarity especially in Dr. Pieper's *Christliche Dogmatik*. Instead, he endeavors to show, by applying certain laws of psychology, that in Baptism the necessary contacts are placed in the child's subconscious mind and that by these contacts it receives the baptismal benedictions. Then when the child grows up (especially when he maliciously backslides from grace), all that is necessary is to repair the bad contacts so that the power of God which comes through the Word of the Gospel may again "be on." This occurs in the awakening and repentance of a baptized person who has fallen away from God. When such a child is awakened, then the life-power, implanted by Baptism in the subconscious, is invigorated by the Word, and is sent up into the conscious life "in the form of a thought of God which will have such peculiar power that it will concentrate the whole soul-life about itself" (p. 43). Such awakening necessitates a choice. If the awakened child submits to the conviction which it has gained through the awakening (the conviction of sinfulness), it experiences repentance (p. 74). It has now received new light (p. 78). So it must make its own conscious and deliberate decision of surrender to God, and that is (in the author's opinion) conversion. Here, then, is the process involved in the relation of regeneration to conversion: Baptismal regeneration in the subconscious, conscious awakening, new light, decision or conversion. It is not easy always to follow the writer's exposition, since often he does not speak clearly, while in other places he introduces material which seems irrelevant, if not actually confusing. Nor are the erroneous views regarding regeneration and conversion righted by such correct statements as the following: "To be begotten by the Word and to be regenerated through Baptism are to the Apostles one and the same thing, only viewed from different sides, expressed in different ways." Again: "To the Apostles it is self-evident that the Word and

Baptism work together. The Word brings forth faith. . . . But faith is not built on the air. Faith is faith in the Gospel. . . . But the Gospel is not something different from Baptism" (p. 89). Despite these statements, he limits regeneration to Baptism, while to the Word he ascribes the awakening, repentance, and conversion. It is the author's fundamental error that he does not identify regeneration with awakening or conversion, but that he regards them as totally different processes. A child may be regenerated, but it is for that reason not yet converted. Again, regeneration to him is a state of grace produced without faith. Later, when the child grows up to understand the Word of God, it becomes awakened by that very Word, is led to repent, and is finally converted, that is, it makes its own personal choice for Christ. According to the author, the baptized child thus is regenerated and yet at the same time unconverted, which is both a contradiction and an impossibility. As seen against the writer's devious and perplexing and also wrong exposition of the relation of regeneration to conversion, the obvious and direct exposition of Scripture regarding that relation is extremely simple, though here there are processes which God's Word does not clarify, which reason cannot explore, and which therefore remain mysteries to us in this life. Actually, regeneration occurs only by faith, which the Holy Ghost implants in the heart of the child through the Gospel, connected with Baptism. That faith is actual and personal, for Scripture knows of no other kind of saving faith. Through that direct faith, which adults, of course, cannot perceive in the infant, the child is not only regenerated, but also awakened or converted (these two terms being synonymous). It is a true child of God through faith in Christ Jesus, whom it has put on in Baptism (Gal. 3:26, 27). Later, when the child grows up to understand the Word of God, no new process takes place in its heart; but with its conscious, reflex faith also comes conscious awakening or conversion (*conversio secunda*, continued conversion; cf. *Christian Dogmatics*, p. 353 f.). In other words, the child then knows and declares itself to be a child of God. If in the meanwhile it has fallen from baptismal grace by a malicious sin, it does no more than merely return to the abiding divine baptismal covenant through repentance (contrition and faith). This exposition leaves much unexplained which reason would like to have explained. But it adds no human speculations to God's Word, avoids confusion and error, and furnishes a simple, workable approach to the baptized child when it becomes a conscious, thinking being, and, besides, this simple Catechism explanation is much clearer than any exposition that is built on the so-called "laws of psychology." Dr. A. Hoenecke rightly remarks: "We must decide the question whether infants can receive the grace [of Baptism], or whether they can believe, not according to the laws of psychology, but according to Scripture" (*Ev.-Luth. Dogmatik*, Bd. IV, S. 96). Dr. Hallesby errs also with regard to numerous incidental points, as, for example, when he says that Christ by His Baptism actually gives what the Baptism of John [the Baptist] only symbolized (p. 10). JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

Luther's Ninety-Five Theses. With an Introduction by Prof. E. G. Schwiebert. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. Brochure, 35 pages, 6×4. Tract No. 151. 25 cents.

It was indeed a praiseworthy undertaking on the part of Concordia Publishing House to publish the *Ninety-Five Theses of Luther*, of which so much is said in general and of which so little is known. These theses are worth studying both to show how far Luther already in 1517 had departed from the theology of the Papacy and how much he yet had to learn before he could proclaim the Gospel in its full purity. We recommend the brochure for study by pastors, teachers, and interested laymen, for a careful perusal of Luther's bold propositions explains why the Wittenberg professor was moved by the offensive sale of indulgences to testify against this nefarious traffic. Professor Schwiebert's Introduction helps the reader more fully to understand Luther's problem as he perceived the effects of the indulgence provisions on his parishioners. The brochure is a fine specimen of color effect in printing. Its appearance is neat and attractive. May Luther's *Theses* be read again by pastors and laymen as they were read by pastors and laymen four hundred years ago.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

Toward Certainty. By Robert H. Gearhart, Jr. Association Press, New York, 1947. 92 pages, 5×7¾. \$1.50.

Lot's Wife and the Science of Physics. By Harry Rimmer. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, 1947. 160 pages, 5¼×7¾. \$2.50.

These two volumes provide an interesting contrast in apologetic method.

Dr. Gearhart is campus pastor of the Lutheran Student Work Committee of Philadelphia. He was cited as chaplain in the first World War and has held his present post for twenty-five years. The method of his booklet is to clear away unclearness or pre-occupations concerning the concepts of the Christian faith, to point out the inadequacy of non-Christian answers, and to emphasize the central importance of the redemption of Jesus Christ in the Christian religion. From the theologian's point of view, the author seems to take his time in getting to the point; but his statement of the Atonement and the means of grace is helpful and clear, so that we conclude that the author is employing a method which he has found necessary. Not only student workers, but parish pastors will find this booklet useful for regrooving the mind of the young intellectual toward Christ.

Dr. Rimmer's volume is one in a long series. The bizarre title is taken from the last chapter, which seeks to point out the rational possibility of miracles, such as that of the pillar of salt. Dr. Rimmer's style is characterized by exuberant self-confidence and a pugnacious readiness to enter into dispute with every scientific doubt concerning the Bible. This reviewer is not in a position to pass upon the accuracy of the scientific data. From the religious point of view it seems an oversimplification to say: "I believe in miracles because I have studied science" (page 132). While much of this material appears useful and interesting, the book as a whole seems to come short in St. Paul's counsel 2 Tim. 2:25: "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves."

R. R. CAEMMERER

My Church. A History of the Missouri Synod for Young People.
By H. O. A. Keinath. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis,
1947. 138 pages, 6½ × 9¼. \$1.50.

Dr. Keinath prepared this volume at the direction of the Centennial Committee as a description of the history of the Missouri Synod for young people of junior high school age. To each chapter are appended Study Helps, including review questions, study projects, and suggestions for additional reading. The book is beautifully bound in linen and illustrated in two colors by Frank C. Foster.

Half of the volume concerns the origins and organization of the Missouri Synod. Thereupon chapters take up the story, during the hundred years, of the training of pastors and teachers, of missions in America and beyond, of elementary education, publishing and radio activities, youth work, and relation to other Lutheran groups. The concluding chapter describes the administration of the Missouri Synod in detail. The book is clearly written and ably organized.

R. R. CAEMMERER

The Story of C. F. W. Walther. By W. G. Polack. Revised Edition.
Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1947. 167 pages,
5 × 7¼. \$1.00.

This revised and enlarged edition of Dr. Polack's earlier volume appears in a highly illustrated form. The book jacket alone is a historical treasure. The chapters are headed by appropriate verse and Scripture. Condensed but detailed materials on the early years of Synod make the volume timely at the synodical Centennial. The section on "Tributes and Reminiscences" has some especially stimulating extracts.

R. R. CAEMMERER

The Modern Parent and the Teaching Church. By Wesner Fallaw.
The Macmillan Co., New York, 1946. 228 pages, 5½ × 8¼.
\$2.50.

According to the author, "This book attempts to show *why* and *how* religious education in the local Protestant church should start with the family and embrace the larger family, the Church." In setting forth a perspective of his plan, Dr. Fallaw includes the following points: Biblical knowledge is essential to, but by no means all of, a program of religious education. Basic to religious faith and right living on the part of the growing child is, more times than not, parental example which is clearly Christian. The child is not apt to become genuinely religious unless he enjoys consistent Christian nurture in the home. Most homes of the modern community, and many homes of professing Christians, fail to live up to the standard of Christian faith. Hence these homes can better actualize the ideal if they will confer regularly at the church and rely on the church for guidance. Actually, the home is more important as a religious teacher than the church. And yet, in spite of this, modern society has left almost the whole of the religious task to the church. But weekday religious education alone is not adequate; extended Sunday morning teaching periods alone are not adequate. Christian nurture is safely achieved only as homes, parents, and children together examine and share by repeated testing the terms of Christian thought and act. Parents,

as religious teachers in the home, and other adults, as teachers of religion in the church, can unite for common and clear effort to teach children — if a church provides leadership and incentive. The home has the right to expect of its church helpful and devoted teaching; the church has the right to expect of the home teaching which is done systematically as well as indirectly by mothers and fathers who refuse to make their child religiously underprivileged because of parental inertia, indecision or preoccupation with things of lesser value. The local church should purpose, therefore, to guide the religious living of the family as a whole. This guidance is best effected by an educational procedure. This procedure necessitates a program. This book outlines a program. (P. 206 f.)

Dr. Fallaw offers a plan evolved after six years of experience in Winnetka, Ill. Pastors will find it stimulating and rich with many practical suggestions which can be put to use in any congregation. It will help solve the dilemma in which the Church is finding itself as it is gradually losing its hold on the home. While the book is permeated with the views of liberal theology, the basic thesis of the author is sound.

Dr. Fallaw is now Associate Professor of Religious Education at Andover Newton Theological School and was formerly a Director of Religious Education at Winnetka Congregational (Community) Church.

ARTHUR C. REPP

The Lodge. By Karl Kurth. Concordia Publishing House, Saint Louis, Mo. 1947. Price: Ten cents.

This tract on lodgery is designed for use especially "in the upper grades of our Christian day schools and catechumen classes." Rev. Kurth presents our case against the lodge under the heads: God, God's Plan of Salvation, Prayer, Oaths, Secrecy. The tract is replete with Scripture passages selected with great care. The author correctly observes: "Our first duty, therefore, when we are presenting the lodge to our children, must be to give them a solid standing on the Bible and then show them to what extent the teachings of the lodge are contrary to the teachings of the Bible." Our pastors will find this tract eminently useful. May God bless its testimony.

PAUL M. BRETSCHER

Lenten Name Pictures of Jesus. By R. R. Belter. Lutheran Literary Board, Burlington, Iowa. Brochure, 32 pages, 3½×5. 20 cents.

This is an excellent Lenten booklet of devotions, explaining the various names which Scripture ascribes to Jesus and which show what He is to those who believe in Him. The meditations are brief but to the point, and the brochure has been so arranged that it can be used as a gift book for confirmands. The meditation on "Names for Him on Easter Morn" points out the meaning of the risen Savior for all true Christians.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

Story Picture Lessons for the Cradle Roll, edited by the Rev. A. C. Mueller under the auspices of the Board for Parish Education, 26 leaflets, Concordia Publishing House, 1947. 5½×7. 45 cents per set.

Story Picture Lessons for Little Children, edited by the Rev. A. C. Mueller under the auspices of the Board for Parish Education, 52 leaflets, Concordia Publishing House, 1947. 5½×7. 60 cents per set.

Many pastors have found the Cradle Roll Department conducted as a home department to the Sunday school a valuable adjunct to the educational and mission program of the Church. The *Story Picture Lessons for the Cradle Roll* are the answer toward an effective program to help link the home and the church together. Christian parents will welcome these suggestions and attractive leaflets. They contain beautiful pictures in color never used in any of the Concordia series before, chosen to illustrate the lesson at the small child's level. The stories were chosen with care and are told in simple language for children below the age of three. Each leaflet contains an open letter to the parent making general suggestions for Christian home training. Every lesson suggests a child's song for the parents to repeat or sing.

When these leaflets are used together with the Concordia Personalized Cradle Roll system, pastors have taken a forward step in undergirding the homes of their congregations.

The *Story Picture Lessons for Little Children* are similar to the series described above. However, there are fifty-two leaflets in this set and they are designed for children between the ages of three and four years, either for the Nursery Department of the Sunday school or for the home. An additional feature are the black and white pictures to supplement the colored frontispiece. The suggestions to the parents or teachers are particularly valuable. A manual is planned for this series. These leaflets are to be used before the Concordia Lessons for the Beginners' Department.

ARTHUR C. REPP

The Church and Christian Education. Paul H. Vieth, Editor. The Bethany Press, St. Louis, 1947. 314 pages, 5¼×7¾. \$2.50.

In 1944 the International Council of Religious Education authorized an inquiry into the present status of Christian education. The 1946 and 1947 annual meetings of the Council received the reports of the committee which had been appointed to undertake the task. This book, according to the author, presents a more popular statement of the implication and the findings of the study of this committee, of which he was chairman, and as such it is a worth-while contribution to the literature on religious education.

Beginning with a survey of education in the Church of America, Vieth shows how the Protestant Church arrived at its present status. He delineates the position of the Sunday school, the youth movement, vacation church school, weekday church school, and other educational activities. Out of this historic survey seven problems arise, which the book then considers individually: The Foundations of Christian Education in Theology and Educational Theory; Christian Education in the Local Church; The Curriculum; The Place of the Home in Education; Leadership; The Community and Christian Education; and Overhead Organization of Religious Education. In a concluding chapter the author offers his evaluation of the movement of Christian education in terms of education in, for, and by the church; lay workers; the home; Christian theology; methods; supervision; and religion in general education.

While this book reflects the modernistic theology of the International Council, it is refreshingly conservative in the light of much literature in this field. Being a report chiefly of the activities of that part of the Protestant Church affiliated with the Council, it omits the important part the parochial school can play and does not reflect the work of the Walther League in the youth movement nor some of the other contributions of the conservative wing in Protestantism. We highly recommend the book to anyone interested in an analysis of Christian education, especially the Sunday school. It has implications and offers suggestions which can be applied also to our Church. Stimulating throughout, it opens new vistas of potentialities too often neglected also by the Lutheran Church today.

ARTHUR C. REPP

BOOKS RECEIVED

From Association Press, New York:

Stories for Talks to Boys. By F. H. Cheley. 356 pages, 5½×7½. \$2.50.

From Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich.:

Heaven's Jewelry. By James McGinlay. 164 pages, 5½×7½. \$1.50.

Sermon Outlines. Exegetical and Expository. By W. H. Griffith Thomas, D. D. 135 pages, 5½×7½. \$1.50.

In Praise of Mothers. Compiled by J. Harold Gwynne. 137 pages, 5½×8. \$2.00.

From Hathaway & Brothers, Philadelphia, Pa.:

From Scenes Like These. By Ethel Wallace. 223 pages, 8×5. \$2.00. Life in a Christian family.

From William H. Dietz, Inc., Chicago, Ill.:

Fetters Fall. By John Bechtel. 223 pages, 5½×7½. \$1.50.

From Harper & Brothers, New York, N. Y.:

Everyman's Adventure. By Merle William Boyer. 172 pages, 5½×8¼. \$2.50.

From the Judson Press, Chicago, Ill.:

The Rebirth of Venkata Reddi. A Story of India. By Pearl Dorr Longley. 349 pages, 5½×8. \$1.50.

From the Methodist Publishing House, New York 11, N. Y.:

One Gospel for One World. By Harold Paul Sloan. 312 pages, 5½×7¾. \$2.00

From the Moody Press, Chicago 10, Ill.:

Techniques of a Working Church. By Clarence H. Benson. 266 pages, 5½×8. \$2.75

From Fleming H. Revell Co., New York, N. Y.:

A Devotional Interpretation of Familiar Hymns. By Earl E. Brock. 88 pages, 5¼×7½. \$1.25.