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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 Concordia Bible with Notes. Concordia Publishing House. 1,511 pages, 10×6¾. No. 470, black buckram cloth, red edges, \$8.00. No. 471, black fabrikoid, gilt edges, \$12.00. No. 472, leather, divinity circuit, \$16.00.

The Publishers state in the Preface: "The Concordia Bible with Notes is a modern revision of the popular Self-Explaining Bible edited by Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman and published by the American Tract Society, New York. The present edition embodies the results of thorough Biblical scholarship and reflects the conservative, fundamental viewpoint. All notes have been edited and revised by John Theodore Mueller, Th. D., Professor of Doctrinal and Exegetical Theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo."

The brief *Introductions* to the various books of the Bible give information on the questions of authorship, date, purpose, historical material, and the salient features of each book.

The Notes given on each page below the text of the Bible explain words and phrases and expound passages which call for further exposition. They make this edition of the Holy Scriptures a rich mine of helpful information.

The Instructions given after the notes at the close of each chapter aid the reader in applying the Word of God to his personal life by bringing home the lessons to him.

The appendix contains, first, a synopsis of Kerr's Harmony of the Gospels, presenting a simple outline of the life of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; secondly, a chronological index to the Bible with tabular views of the Prophets and the Patriarchs and tables of Hebrew times and festivals, weights, measures, and money; thirdly, a Biblical atlas with index.

Within the covers of this book are a complete Bible, a commentary, devotional helps, and a book on practical Christian life. *The* book for the individual Bible reader, student, teacher, and the Christian family. Such a thesaurus is worth more than the price at which it is offered. It is an investment covering the cost of many books combined. May our ministers everywhere encourage their members to purchase and daily use this *Bible with Notes*.

LOUIS J. SIECK

1

See His Banner Forward Go. Published by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States in commemoration of its Centennial. Concordia Publishing House, 1947. 6×9 . Single copy, 40 cents.

This richly illustrated booklet has been prepared by the Department of Publicity of the Missouri Synod for the purposes of group study as well as individual appreciation of the synodical Centennial. It begins with a historical sketch of eleven pages, continues with facts on the family, the church, and current mission activities, and concludes with art pages connoting future goals.

Significant is the situation that little can be said about the activity of the layman in personal witness. Home missions are presented as a function of the Church as a whole. "In the past cen-

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tury our members have been cognizant of their duty and have brought thousands into the Church." The methods by which this "duty" has been carried out, or in which the pastor has trained the people, are not described. Four pages are devoted to benevolences. The only one which can strictly be called synodical is the Mission to the Deaf and Blind, which is certainly only indirectly "benevolence," or actual welfare work. The booklet states that welfare is "closely connected with the mission work of our Church." This treatment reveals some of the significant problems to which the Church in its second century, as a synod, will have to direct itself.

In the hands of a skillful leader and with the proper application to the individual's life, this beautiful booklet should prove most helpful to our people, young and old. R. R. CAEMMERER

Letter to Corinth. By John Schmidt. The Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia, Pa. 8×5½. \$1.50.

Dr. John Schmidt is now pastor of the First English Lutheran Church, Toledo, Ohio, and one of the U.L.C.A.'s most busy writers. In this book he analyzes for the reader the problems of St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians and offers in plain but dignified language a cursory exposition of this great, practical letter. Behind the simple comment, however, there is thorough scholarly research and close study of the original. Dr. Schmidt uses the Revised Standard Version, which, for the greater part, is excellent, but which, in places, is rather faulty. The problems of the Co-rinthian church are well presented and, on the whole, satisfactorily treated. The book has many excellent features, and the reviewer recommends it to pastors for careful but discriminate study; for often it is not reliable, as a few examples will show. On p. 95, for instance, the author writes: "Verse 26 [of chapter 11] is the words of the Apostle, not of his Lord, but they express the common faith of the Church. It is this faith that transforms the Last Supper into the Lord's Supper, which belongs afresh to each generation of believers." The writer evidently distinguishes between divine and human statements in St. Paul's letters. Then, too, it is not the faith of the Church that transforms the Last Supper into the Lord's Supper, as it is wrongly stated here, but what makes the Last Supper the Lord's Supper is Christ's institution of this Sacrament. On p. 49, in connection with 1 Cor. 7:11, he writes as if St. Paul knew only Mark 10:11-12 and not also Matt. 5:31-32 and 19:9. This denies the divine inspiration of the entire Epistle and charges St. Paul, at least indirectly, with ignorance and error. On p. 96 the writer rightly rejects the Authorized Version's translation of "damnation" for krima, but he does not go far enough when he says: "This 'judgment' is temporal and is intended to be educational and corrective." While the meaning of krima must not be exaggerated, its force must also not be weakened. The author's treatment of 1 Cor. 14:33 ff. is contrary to the clear reading of the text. St. Paul here does not forbid merely "the gossiping" or "backbiting" of women, but the lalein, the speaking or prophesying by women in church assemblies. The entire problem here dis-cussed is evaded by the writer. These are only a few of the faults in the book; there are many others as the reader will find.

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But there is so much that is excellent in the exposition that the book should find a ready sale. We certainly need Bible study also in the form offered by the author. JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

Hellenistic Greek. By Allen Wikgren with the collaboration of Ernest Cadman Colwell and Ralph Marcus. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Ill., 1947. 275 pages. \$3.50.

Students who have used A Hellenistic Greek Reader published a few years ago by the University of Chicago Press, will hail with delight the appearance of the present volume. It increases by two thirds the material contained in the earlier work and maintains the same high standards of interest and usability.

The selections representative of the Koine literature are taken from the Septuagint, the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, the New Testament, Philo, Josephus, early Christian literature, Greek papyri and inscriptions, and pagan Hellenistic Greek. The expert in classical Greek may not discover certain favorite readings, but he will find all selections eminently purposeful. The careful student of the New Testament will gain from this book a broader and richer conception of the character of Koine Greek.

The vocabulary, embracing 64 pages, appears to be adequate even for the student who has had only two or three semesters of Greek. Bibliography and introduction are invaluable.

The editors and publishers are to be complimented on this venture, in particular Professor Colwell, who in spite of his diversified duties as president of the University of Chicago nevertheless found time to collaborate in this worthy undertaking.

PAUL M. BRETSCHER

3

John Calvin's "Instruction in Christianity." Edited by David Otis Fuller. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1947. 246 pages, 5×7½. \$2.50.

This is an abbreviated edition of Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion, translated from the Latin by Joseph Pitt Wiles and edited and abridged once more by David Otis Fuller. Over a thousand pages of the first three books of the Institutes have been compressed into less than one fourth of their former volume. Book Four is not included. In the process of abbreviation the original author has not only become a smaller, but also a milder Calvin. But Calvin he has remained. There is still the emphasis on the sovereignty of God, though some other characteristics of his theological system have been toned down in accord with modern Calvinism. A few examples may serve to illustrate this. Ex. 20:4-5 a remains the Second Commandment and the explanation: "It forbids us to represent the incomprehensible God by any material shapes," is reminiscent of past iconoclasm (pp. 142 f.). The ex-planation of the commandment "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," still invites unevangelical sabbatarianism and reminds one of Calvin's legalism (pp. 144 f.). Luke 8:13 Jesus speaks of those who believe for a while. Of these Calvin says: "By a fallacious imitation of faith they not only deceive others, but deceive themselves" (p. 186). The inadmissibility of saving faith must be upheld! Repentance is still identified with sanctification and placed after faith (pp. 193 ff.). On the other hand, the low estimate which Calvin places on man's physical body (Inst. I, 15) largely disappears in the abridged translation (p. 76 ff.). Chap-

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ters XXI, XXII, XXIII of Book III have been condensed under the heading: "Statement of the Testimony of Scripture to the Truth of the Doctrine of Election" (p. 241). No mention is made in the heading of a predestination to reprobation. That is better than the original heading of chapter 21: "De electione aeterna, qua Deus alios ad salutem, alios ad interitum praedestinavit." But Calvin's teaching of a double predestination is still implied in the abridged chapter (p. 343).

On the jacket the publishers quote: "No system has had a more potent practical influence than Calvinism. It entered like iron into the blood of a nascent Protestantism and braced it to the most heroic endurance and endeavors." Unfortunately the iron was rusty. Calvin's system was vitiated by strains of rationalism with dire consequences to his followers. Nevertheless, "Calvin's *Institutes* is a classic that has molded centuries of Christian thinking and endeavor." This abridged *Instruction in Christianity* may serve to continue that molding process. May it do so in the direction of the Biblical truths taught by Calvin and not in that of his erring human reason! L. W. Sprz

Common Grace. By Cornelius Van Til. The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Philadelphia, Pa. 95 pages, 9×6. \$1.25.

The title of this book is somewhat misleading, for in it the author does not discuss the Reformed doctrine of common grace in its entirety, or in its total relation, but only with reference to "the ordinances of nature and the course of history." The question, therefore, is not one of the salvation of the elect, but merely one of the endowment of the non-elect with grace for living this present life, receiving divine benefactions for their sustenance, divine favors for the performance of the iustitia civilis, and the like. In other words, Dr. Van Til's investigation is made, not from the viewpoint of Christian Dogmatics, but from that of Apologetics. He defends the thesis that the Reformed Faith, with its distinction of common and special, and its emphasis on free grace, "provides the only solid foundation for the general ordinances of creation." In defending his thesis, the author goes back to the Kuyper-Bavinck conception of common grace, which, he holds, is essentially that of Calvin. Kuyper defined common grace negatively, as a "certain restraint of God upon the process of the sinful development of history," and positively, as "a certain accomplishment in history which the sinner is enabled to make by God's gifts to him" (p. 15). For Kuyper "common grace is primarily a restraining power of God, working either with or without man as an instrument, by which the original creation powers of the universe are given an opportunity for a certain development to the glory of God" (p. 18). This statement of Kuyper was challenged by two pastors of the Christian Reformed Church, H. Hoeksema and H. Danhof, who contended that "it is inconceivable that God should be in any sense and at any point graciously inclined to those who are not His elect. The wicked do, to be sure, receive gifts from God. But rain and sunshine are not, as such, evidences of God's favor" (p. 18). Besides, the "idea of common grace, as they asserted, virtually denies the doctrine of total depravity and makes man inherently a spiritual-moral being." Their views were condemned by a synod

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of their Church in 1924, which affirmed that there is a favorable attitude of God toward mankind in general, and not alone toward the elect; that God does restrain sin in the life of the individual and society; and that, as regards the so-called civic righteousness done by the unregenerate, the unregenerate (non-elect), though incapable of doing good, can perform such civic good" (p. 19 ff.), all of which points also Lutherans admit to be true. Later, the controversy was extended also outside this country to Europe, some maintaining the Kuyper-Bavinck point of view, others denying common grace, and again others rejecting it in its traditional form, but reconstructing it (p. 23). It is with this latest debate about common grace that Dr. Van Til chiefly concerns himself, supporting in his able monograph the views defended by traditional Reformed orthodoxy and adding some suggestions for the future. The reader will not find the book easy to read, especially not the non-Calvinist who is unacquainted with the details of Reformed theology. But the study is well written and well presented, and from the Calvinistic point of view very ably defended. The reviewer was delighted at the sheer interest in theological discussion which the book evinces, though as a Lutheran (and he is no Arminian by any means), he does not share the distinction between common and special grace. Certainly there is a distinction to be made between God's regnum potentiae and His regnum gratiae. In His Kingdom of Power God rules by His Law, implanted in the heart of man at creation, those who do not savingly believe in Christ, yes, and even the devils in hell. In it, too, He, by His sustaining providence, supports with kindness and mercy even those who persecute Him, rain and sunshine, and other earthly benefactions being true blessings of His grace or undeserved goodness. In His Kingdom of Grace God rules through the Gospel all who believe in Christ as their Savior and whom as His elect He will finally transplant into His eternal regnum gloriae, where they will enjoy endless communion with Him face to face. We believe that this simple distinction of Luther fully solves the problem which is being discussed in the book, while we regard the distinction between common grace and special grace as unscriptural. JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

Calvinism in Times of Crisis. Edited by the Calvinistic Action Committee. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 134 pages, 8×5½. \$1.50.

This challenging book contains the addresses, greetings, and other agenda of the Third American Calvinistic Conference, held in August, 1946, at Grand Rapids, Mich. To the Calvinistic Action Committee belong such prominent Calvinistic leaders as J. T. Hoogstra, Clarence Bouma, S. G. Craig, H. Meeter, and others in our country. They honestly believe and undauntedly declare that Calvinism, in its traditional form, holds the key to the solution of our many problems in Church and State, and the Calvinistic Conferences are both to impress and vindicate this conviction. Though the Conference was relatively small (a fine picture shows the participants), yet there were representatives from Holland, South Africa, Ceylon, and Hungary as well as from our own country. Five conference addresses were delivered: "Calvinism and Spiritual Freedom" (Dr. Aalders, Amsterdam), "Calvinism and Commu-

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nism" (Dr. du Toit, South Africa), "Calvinism and the Current Scientific Outlook" (Dr. Stoker, South Africa), "Calvinism and Humanism" (Dr. Berkouwer, Amsterdam), and "Calvinism in American Theology Today" (Dr. Bouma, Grand Rapids). All addresses deserve careful study, though, perhaps, to the outsider those by Dr. Berkouwer and Dr. Bouma might prove most helpful. The "greetings" of the representatives from foreign countries, while less formal and lengthy than the addresses, are, nevertheless, valuable analyses and reflect Calvinistic sentiment in foreign lands. We recommend this attractive book to all who are interested in what conservative Calvinism regards as the cure of the world's present-day ills. These theologians are sincere in their belief and deeply appreciative of the doctrine and the world view of John Calvin, while they abhor Modernism and religious liberalism in every manifestation. The reviewer wonders why Lutherans today appear less appreciative of Luther's doctrine and world view, since the great Wittenberg Reformer has so much to offer in solution of our modern problems. Are we missing an opportunity? JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

From Day to Day. By Dr. J. Henry Harms. Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia, Pa. 383 pages. \$1.75.

A pocket-size, year-round book of daily devotions, attractively bound, suitable for use in any year. A Scripture reading is assigned for each devotion, followed by a text and brief meditation, and by a closing prayer in keeping with the message.

Dr. Harms, former president of Newberry College, member and for a number of years chairman of the Board of Publications of the U. L. C., and pastor of Holy Communion Church in Philadelphia until shortly before his death in August, 1946, is well known for his devotional writings. In the admirable volume under discussion he has not only dwelt on the timeless sublimities of the Gospel of sin and grace, but has related them as well to the days of our difficult years in language which is unpretentiously beautiful.

RICHARD A. JESSE

Blue Prints for Great Living. By Dallas C. Baer. The Lutheran Literary Board, Burlington, Iowa. 237 pages, 9×6. \$2.50.

This is the second volume of Pastor Baer's "Expository Sermons on the Epistles of the Ancient Church." Upon reading it, one can understand why the author's sermons have turned out to be good sellers. He has a happy way of expounding to his hearers the text verse by verse, applying tellingly the resultant lessons to present-day needs. Then, too, his sermons are doctrinal, and doctrinal sermons have become rather scarce today. Nevertheless, they are very practical. There is here no academic lecturing, but timely, wholesome speaking to the hearts of the people. We recommend these sermons all the more since they cannot be copied or simply memorized. They are so altogether original that they would be failures in the mouth of other preachers. But they offer much food for thought, fine themes, valuable application, profitable exposition, inestimable suggestions, and, above all, a helpful method of treating the rather difficult Epistles of the ancient church calendar. Their very simplicity carries with it a striking appeal and winsome fascination. The reader may not agree with every statement or application in the book, but it proffers a

pattern for good preaching at a time when pastors worry both about what and how to preach. The reviewer expresses the hope that this volume will be widely read in the Lutheran circles of our country. JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

These Words upon Thy Heart. By Howard Tillman Kuist. John Knox Press, Richmond, Va., 1947. 189 pages, 6×9 . \$2.50.

This volume contains the six Sprunt Lectures for the year 1946, delivered at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia. They grew out of an experimental course in *The Humanities* conducted at Stephens College, in Columbia, Mo., emphasizing a threefold approach: "The arts are considered in the light of their common principles. The vocabulary and equipment are supplied by which any individual can make his own criticism and analysis and realize his own appreciation. And the specific work of art is used directly without recourse to any other medium." The author concludes: "The relation between these procedures and firsthand appreciation of Scripture is obvious" (p. 39). The lectures are a plea to read the Scripture with insight. The title of the book has been chosen "to emphasize and to illustrate the instrumental worth of Holy Scripture in forming responsible Christian character" (p. 19). Unfortunately the author did not get beyond the Law. He explains: "How the Scriptures make wise unto salvation is not our immediate quest" (p. 51). The forming of *Christian* character, however, calls for a presentation of the Gospel as well as of the Law.

L. W. SPITZ

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Vitalizing the Sunday School. By A. C. Mueller. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo., 1947. 46 pages, 5×7½. Single copy, 25 cents.

A glance in the more than four thousand Sunday schools of Synod will give ample reason for the title of Rev. A. C. Mueller's booklet on the Sunday school. If we believe that the Sunday schools are more than "counting nickels and noses," this pamphlet will be more than welcome. Growing out of an essay delivered at a pastoral conference, Vitalizing the Sunday School touches problems of administration, supervision, and teacher recruitment. Emphasis is also placed on the objectives of a Lutheran Sunday school. We sincerely recommend this book to all those associated with the work of the Sunday school as a booklet which will point the way in strengthening our Sunday schools. ARTHUR C. REPP

Successful Letters for Churches. By Stewart Harral. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press. 247 pages, 5½×8. \$2.00.

"Is it important to think about letters?" The author believes that it is and that "effective church letters are extremely hard to find." "This book is aimed at one of the weak spots in church administration" by a man who has been a newspaperman and became a pastor in several pastorates and who is now director of press relations and associate professor of journalism at the University of Oklahoma. He has recently published two successful books, *Public Relations for Churches* and *Public Relations* for Higher Education.

The many busses pastors and church committees miss by failing to write letters, the mistakes made and the wrong approaches used, the church purposes letters can expedite, the technique of

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letter writing for church purposes, and hundreds of letters, classified as to purpose, that have been used successfully constitute the contents of the book.

In so far as the art of projecting one's self and his church organization by letter can be taught, this book is excellent. At least it suggests opportunities often overlooked and blunders to which many are blind. RICHARD A, JESSE

Squaring Up. Fifty Talks to Juniors. By Julius Fischbach. The Judson Press, Philadelphia. 160 pages, 5×7½. \$1.25.

A series of sermonets for the children's service, by the chairman of the Committee on Children and the Church of the Northern Baptist Convention.

The inside flap correctly says: "Every teacher of juniors will find the book a mine of fresh, usable material." So will pastors who must preach sermons to children.

Outstanding features are that the author "has developed a rare talent for using objects helpfully as a vital part of each talk" and that he "introduces children into the activity wherever possible." There is no doubt that the author seized and kept the attention of the children he addressed and that both learning and stimulation therefore resulted. His methods are very much worth study and use.

The sermonets themselves too often merely moralize, however interestingly, and there is altogether too little tie-in with the way of salvation. Yet the author accepts the Atonement, as a few excellent addresses show. RICHARD A. JESSE

BOOKS RECEIVED

From Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.:

Serving the Lord. Daily Devotions No. 76, May 27 to July 17, 1947, by T. A. Weinhold. 5 cents each, postage extra; subscription for 8 numbers 55 cents, 16 numbers \$1.00. Bulk price: 48 cents per dozen, postage extra; \$3.50 per hundred, postage extra.

Ein Prophet fuer unsere Zeit. Erbauliche Betrachtungen aus dem Propheten Jeremia, fuer die Zeit vom 28. Mai bis zum 17. Juli 1947, by Rev. Karl A. Gieseler. Price same as above.

Concordia Bible Teacher, "Christian Stewardship," Vol. VIII, July, 1947. 77 pages, $5 \times 7\%$. 75 cents per annum.

Concordia Bible Student, "Christian Stewardship," Vol. XXXVI, July, 1947. 62 pages, $5 \times 7\%$. 50 cents per annum.

Both by Rev. J M. Weidenschilling, under the auspices of the Board for Parish Education, Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States.

"Walk in Newness of Life." Daily Devotions, No. 77, July 18 to September 6, 1947. By Rev. Paul H. D. Lang, Palo Alto, Calif. Single copy, 5 cents, postage extra; subscription for eight consecutive numbers, 55 cents; 16 numbers, \$1.00. Bulk price: 48 cents per dozen, postage extra; \$3.50 per hundred, postage extra.

Mit Jesu in deinem Stand. Eine erweiterte Haustafel. Kurze Andachten fuer die Zeit vom 18. Juli bis zum 6. September, 1947. By Rev. John Hartmeister, em., Altamont, III. Price same as above.

From Augustana Book Concern, Rock Island, Ill.:

Beneath the Cross of Jesus, By George F. Hall, 164 pages, 71/4×5. \$1.75.

Seven Lenten devotions, each with a prayer before reading, a Scripture passage, a message, and a praver after reading.

From Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia, Pa.:

Set Apart for the Gospel. By Clarence C. Stoughton, 89 pages, 5½×8¼. \$1.00.

From E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York, N.Y.:

New Day for Evangelism. By Aaron N. Meckel. 191 pages, 51/2×73/4. \$2.00.

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

Till Break of Day. Pen Sketches of Life in Bundelkhand. Central India, by Catherine De Vol Cattell, 210 pages, 51/2×8. \$2.50.

The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism, By Carl F. H. Henry. 89 pages, 5½×7¾. \$1.00.

Beacon Lights of Grace. By Richard Ellsworth Day. 169 pages. 7½×5. \$2.50.

Two Hundred Select Illustrations. Compiled and Edited by Stuart P. Garver, B. D. 185 pages, 51/2×8, \$1.50.

The Power of the Cross. By Herman Hoeksema. Eight Addresses. 135 pages, 5¼×7½. \$1.50.

Comfort to Spare. By J. K. Van Baalen. Fourteen Talks to the Sorrowing. 88 pages, 7½×5¼. \$1.00.

From the Lutheran Free Church Publishing Co., Minneapolis, Minn.:

In the Footprints of the Lamb. By G. Steinberger. 69 pages, 73/4×51/4. 75 cents.

From Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich.:

Selected Sermon Outlines. B. J. B. Tidwell, 120 pages, 5½×7¾. \$1.50.

Chapman's Choice Outlines and Illustrations. By J. B. Chapman. 103 pages, 51/2×73/4. \$1.25.

Christianity Is Christ — A Christian Life Library Selection. By W. H. Griffith Thomas. 159 pages, 5½×7¾. \$1.50. Keys to the Word — The Bible Book by Book. By A. T. Pier-

son. 163 pages, 5½×7¾, \$1.50.

From the Westminster Press, Philadelphia 7, Pa.:

The Holy Spirit in the Life of Today. By F. W. Dillistone. 126 pages, 51/4×73/4. \$1.50.

From the Judson Press:

The Prayers of the Bible. Compiled by Elinore Mapes Pierce. 183 pages, 7¼×4½. \$1.50.

A second edition within two years testifies to the helpfulness of this little volume.

Some Preachers Do. By Bertie Cole Bays. 93 pages, 71/2×5. \$1.25.

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