

2-1-1948

## Book Review. - Literatur

W. G. Polack

*Concordia Seminary, St. Louis*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm>



Part of the [Practical Theology Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Polack, W. G. (1948) "Book Review. - Literatur," *Concordia Theological Monthly*. Vol. 19, Article 15.

Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol19/iss1/15>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Print Publications at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Concordia Theological Monthly by an authorized editor of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact [seitzw@csl.edu](mailto:seitzw@csl.edu).

## 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.

**Three Treatises by Martin Luther, with Introduction and Translations by C. M. Jacobs, A. T. W. Steinhäuser, and W. A. Lambert.** The Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia, Pa. 290 pages, 7½ × 5. \$2.50. Order from Concordia Publishing House.

The treatises included in this volume are *An Open Letter to the Christian Nobility*, *a Prelude on the Babylonian Captivity of the Church*, and *A Treatise on Christian Liberty*. They are reprinted, with minor revisions, from the Holman edition (six volumes) of *The Works of Martin Luther*.

These treatises are sometimes referred to as Martin Luther's "primary works." All three were written in 1520 when the struggle between the Reformer and his opponents was at its height. They are fundamental, therefore, in the work of the Reformation and lay down the chief principles of the Reformation. In the first of these treatises Luther attacks the corruption prevalent in the Church of his time and the abuses of the Church's authority. He asserts the right of the laymen to spiritual independence. In the second treatise the great Reformer criticizes the sacramental system and sets up the Scriptures as the supreme authority in religion. This treatise marks Luther's final and irreparable break with the Church of Rome. In the third treatise Luther gives a complete presentation of his position on the doctrine of justification by faith, centering his argument on the following propositions: A Christian man is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to no one. A Christian man is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all. It has been well said that "after the mighty thunder" of the two previous treatises, "the *Liberty of a Christian Man* is like a still, small voice." Luther himself said: "Unless I am deceived, it is the whole of Christian living in a brief form." A French Catholic said of it: "A truly religious spirit breathes in these pages. Provoking polemic is almost entirely avoided. Here one finds again the inspiration of the great mystics of the Middle Ages. . . . He is not a true Christian who would venture to disapprove the pages in which Luther speaks so eloquently of the goodness of God, of the gratitude which it should inspire in us, of the spontaneity which should mark our obedience, of the desire of imitating Christ which should inspire us." It is said that Thomas Jefferson, while he was working on the American Declaration of Independence, spent half a day with a Lutheran minister at Philadelphia studying this treatise of Luther on the liberty of the Christian man.

We welcome the publication of these three important Lutheran documents at this time. The American people, especially the church people, ought to be better acquainted with the writings of Martin Luther. And it is to be hoped that this book may receive a wide distribution, also in our circles, particularly among our laymen. Our pastors are therefore encouraged herewith to direct the attention of their members to this little volume.

W. G. POLACK

**Great Missionaries to China.** By J. Theodore Mueller. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 135 pages, 5½×7⅞. \$1.50.

The publishers say this is the author's sequel to his book *Great Missionaries to Africa*, which in 1945 appeared in its second edition.

The author sketches the geography and the history of China in early chapters and gives a glance into China's religions, briefly sketching Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. Several pages are devoted to the monotheism of the Chiang tribes of the west, their use of groves, altars, and high places, showing resemblances to characteristic features of the religion of the Israelites of old.

After sketching the mission history of China from the Nestorians to the present day, the author devotes a chapter apiece to Morrison, Milne, Guetzlaff, Bridgman, Yates, Taylor, Nevius, Griffith John, and Gilmour. Within these chapters he also sketches the lives of Medhurst, Abeel, S. Wells Williams, Parker, Boone, Schereschewsky, and the last chapter is devoted to "Christ's Other Soldiers to China."

The chief doctrines of the Christian Church are cleverly interwoven into the fabric of these chapters so that the reader not only receives a stimulation as he reads of the lives of great missionaries to China, but there is also food for the building or for the strengthening of saving faith.

This book will doubtless enjoy a deservedly wide distribution.  
E. C. ZIMMERMANN

**Partnership with God.** By August W. Brustat. Ernst Kaufmann, Inc., Chicago. 112 pages, 5×7¼. \$1.50.

The author of this book sets a laudable purpose for himself, namely, to combat the increasing secularistic, materialistic, and mechanistic spirit with which we are surrounded and to promote a deeper and fuller Christian life for the benefit of the individual, the Church, and the world. Demonstrating first how the times in which we live compel such partnership of the Christian with God, he shows how it is to be carried out with regard to church attendance, Holy Communion, Bible study, prayer, witnessing, sharing, and Christian education. Several of these chapters are well done, especially the last one, and a careful perusal of this little volume should be quite profitable. The book also contains a goodly amount of illustrative material. On the other hand, one might call attention to a few defects. The definition of worship, p. 15, is not adequate, inasmuch as it leaves out the sacrificial side of our church service. Neither are we ready to call a monthly celebration of Holy Communion a neglect of the Sacrament (p. 22), inasmuch as the Savior did not specify the frequency with which it should be used. — Does the Incomprehensible really become comprehensible in the Sacrament (p. 25)? — In the chapter on sharing (p. 83): "The example of the poor widow who put all her living into the treasury of the temple (Mark 12:41-44) teaches us that the Christian should start with the tithing, but not stop there." Does it really teach that? — Likewise the dissertation on 1 Cor. 16:2 (p. 85). — And, lastly, is it proper to say: "Tithing will conquer the world for Christ" (p. 94)? — In the main, however, the book is well done and will be read with profit. O. E. SOHN

**The Protestant Pulpit.** By Andrew W. Blackwood. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, Nashville. 1947. 318 pages, 6x9. \$2.75

Dr. Blackwood is one of the most prolific authors and effective teachers in the field of Protestant preaching. This Anthology of Master Sermons from the Reformation to Our Own Day is worthy of his stature. Actually it is a book to be enthusiastic about. In the compass of 288 pages Dr. Blackwood has assembled thirty-nine sermons, twenty by living authors. No. 1 is Martin Luther; No. 39 is Leslie Weatherhead. Other Lutherans in the list besides Father Martin are Walter Maier, Martin Niemoeller, and Paul Scherer. Every other selection is equally valuable, however, for helping to furnish a cross section of Protestant preaching through the ages. These sermons reveal the great emphases and trends of content, and they reveal an amazing diversity of expression.

The editor's foreword is valuable for its paragraphs on the reading of sermons. His principles are amplified in a most practical fashion by means of an appended worksheet, "How to Study a Sermon." Dr. Blackwood's work sheet is useful not merely for reading, but also for writing sermons. Astonishing and gratifying is his recommendation of Rudolf Flesch's *The Art of Plain Talk*, as a guide for translating the thought of the past into the language of today. A brief bibliography of the most useful books in the field and biographical sketches of the included authors round out this eminently useful volume.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

**Doctor Johnson's Prayers.** Edited with an Introduction by Elton Trueblood. Harper & Bros., New York, N. Y. 66 pages, 6½x5. \$1.50.

As the preaching of the Gospel has been called its best apologetic, so also the Christian life of the believer may be said to be Christianity's best apologetic. From this point of view this fine little book is a most important and pleasing contribution, for it is a mighty witness on behalf of the power of the Christian faith, active in the regenerated heart. It proves that Dr. Samuel Johnson, the writer of the first standard dictionary, of numerous excellent essays, of valuable studies in Shakespeare, and of other publications of abiding value, though living in a time of general rationalism, deism, and atheism, was a humble, devout Christian whose life was hallowed by deep piety and constant, earnest prayer, having for its final objective the attainment of everlasting life. The "Introduction" of Elton Trueblood supplies a most helpful explanation of the prayers, for it vividly pictures the consecration of the great man out of whose simple piety the prayers flowed. There are in all one hundred prayers, which Samuel Johnson wrote, especially after the death of his wife until his own peaceful departure in 1785. They are arranged under the following heads: "Amendment of Life," "Work and Study," "Health of Body and Mind," "Family and Friends," and "Birthdays." But these general heads cover a large number of special topics, such as (to name only a few) "Neglect of Duty," "Enlargement of Charity," "Redeeming the Time," "A New Life," "Repentance," "Forgiveness," and so forth. Samuel Johnson was a great man of prayer, who wafted all his troubles and problems to the Throne of Grace in continuous intercession. Very touching and, perhaps, unforgettable is Johnson's "last prayer," a pattern of true Christian supplication. The inter-

cessory prayers for friends and acquaintances evince a profound love which the great man felt for those with whom he lived and labored. When the maid of his mother was dying, he did not deem it beneath his dignity to visit and pray for this elderly, lonesome, and almost deserted servant. Perhaps there is no other prayer of its kind in the history of devotional literature. Those who study the prayers will be greatly enriched in their own devotional life and will be moved to imitate Dr. Johnson's good example.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

**Projected Visual Aids in the Church.** By William S. Hockman. The Pilgrim Press, Boston. 1947. viii and 214 pages, 5½ × 8½. \$3.75.

Here is the first book on visual aids related to religious education that can be recommended with enthusiasm. Mr. Hockman has drawn on his broad experiences in various workshops and as instructor of audio-visual aids at Union Theological Seminary to offer the Church a reliable and practical book. Limited to the projected picture, it deals with the principles and techniques necessary for effective teaching and gives a fairly comprehensive view of the place of opaque material, slides, filmstrips, and the movies in the parish program. Several chapters are given to practical suggestions for the utilization of these aids and the physical factors which so often make or mar an effective teaching situation. Some good rules of thumb are given throughout the book, which will be appreciated by the novice and the veteran. An outstanding value of this book is the emphasis placed on the integration of visual aids into the program of the entire Church.

It is to be regretted that Mr. Hockman did not include an index. We hope a future edition will cite the sources for the many slides, filmstrips, and movies the author has recommended. Perhaps by that time the Missouri Synod will have produced its first educational sound film which can be used in the classroom or the Sunday school, so that it might be included in the illustrations.

This book is a "must" for the pastor and teacher interested in the use of visual aids in his church and school.

ARTHUR C. REPP

**The Heart of the Yale Lectures.** Edited by Batsell Barrett Baxter. The Macmillan Company, New York. 332 pages, 8 × 5¼. \$2.50.

Batsell Barrett Baxter, Ph.D., is a minister of the Christian Church and professor of Speech and Homiletics at David Lipscomb College, Nashville, Tenn. From 1938 to 1945 he was professor of Speech in George Pepperdine College, Los Angeles. He was therefore well qualified to edit his book which he chose to call *The Heart of the Yale Lectures*. Since 1871, during a period of seventy-seven years, with the exception of four widely scattered years, the Lyman Beecher Lectureship on Preaching has presented in the Divinity School of Yale University prominent clergymen who gave a series of lectures on preaching. Sixty-six volumes in this series appeared in print. Dr. Baxter, as the title of his book says, has, after reading these volumes, given us what the lectures emphasize as being of great importance in the art of preaching as far as the study of homiletics is concerned. The compiler presents direct quotations without comment. The reader has to draw his own

conclusions. Much that is said — and well said — pertains to that which is absolutely fundamental in the art of preaching. Our preachers will do well to buy and carefully read this book. It will serve them as a splendid and valuable refresher course in Homiletics as far as the technique of the sermon and related subjects are concerned. I agree with Dale, quoted by Baxter on page 67: "Some men speak contemptuously of lectures on preaching and treatises on the science or art of rhetoric. For myself, I have read scores of books of this kind, and I have never read one without finding in it some useful suggestion. I advise you to read every book on preaching that you can buy or borrow, whether it is old or new, Catholic or Protestant, English, French, or German."

Baxter divided his book into three parts: The Preacher, The Sermon, and The Congregation. Every one of the fifteen chapters presents interesting and important material. Many preachers ought to benefit greatly by reading chapter 12 on "Taking Aim."

J. H. C. FRITZ

### BOOKS RECEIVED

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

**The Greater Glory.** Daily Devotions, No. 80, December 18, 1947, to February 7, 1948, by Dr. O. P. Kretzmann. Single copy, 5 cents, postage extra; subscription for 8 consecutive numbers, 55 cents; 16 numbers, \$1.00. Bulk price: 48 cents per dozen, postage extra; \$3.50 per hundred, postage extra.

**Mein Herr, meine Staerke.** Kurze Andachten fuer die Zeit vom 18. Dezember 1947 bis zum 7. Februar 1948. By Prof. M. H. Bertram. Price, same as above.

**Concordia Bible Teacher.** Edited by Rev. J. M. Weidenschilling, S. T. D., under the auspices of the Board for Parish Education, Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States. Vol. IX, January-March, 1948. No. 2. Studies in the Book of Acts, Part I. 5×7¾. 80 pages. 85 cents per annum.

**Concordia Bible Student.** Edited by Rev. J. M. Weidenschilling, S. T. D., under the auspices of the Board for Parish Education, Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States. Vol. XXXVII, January-March, 1948. No. 2. Studies in the Book of Acts, Part I. 5×7½. 64 pages. 55 cents per annum.

**The Lutheran Annual, 1948.** Editor: O. A. Dorn. Statistical Editor: The Rev. Armin Schroeder. 260 pages. 35 cents per copy.

**Amerikanischer Kalender fuer deutsche Lutheraner auf das Jahr 1948.** Literary Editor: Dr. J. T. Mueller, Statistical Editor: The Rev. Armin Schroeder. 260 pages. 35 cents per copy.

**Little Folded Hands.** Prayers for Children. Compiled by Louis Birk. 48 pages, 4½×6¾. New edition revised and printed in two colors. 45 cents.

