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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 Abiding Word. Doctrinal Essays. Vol. II. Edited by Dr. Theo. Laetsch. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis 18, Mo. 783 pages, including a comprehensive bibliography and a topical index, 9½ × 6½. \$2.00.

Of the various publications commemorating the one hundredth anniversary of the founding of the *Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*, the two volumes of *The Abiding Word* are unquestionably the most important. Since with the publication of Vol. II the series is now complete and one may scrutinize the abundance of theological material, both doctrinal and practical, which is being offered in it, every Lutheran reader who is grateful for our precious heritage will certainly give thanks to God for having placed at the disposal of our pastors, teachers, and laymen these two excellent volumes. There is no need of reminding our readers that the essays contained in the two books were read at the District conventions held in 1946 and 1947, where they received the benefit of critical hearing and of thorough discussion. The mechanical make-up of the books is excellent. They are made to please the eye and to stand long and hard usage. There is sufficient margin for notes and references which the reader may want to make. The print is clear and chosen for easy reading. The presentation, for the greater part, is admirable; what our founding fathers said in good German is here reproduced in good idiomatic English. Unnecessary details are omitted, but no essentials. There is no dogmatic terminology rendering the reading difficult for such as have not received a special training in systematics. There are enough prooftexts from Scripture and sufficient quotations from our Confessions to show that what is said is both Scriptural and distinctively Lutheran. There are also helpful subheads and paragraphs to facilitate and render attractive the study of the books. It may be added, too, that the essays supplement one another, though, on the other hand, there is little real repetition. The index is exhaustive enough to assist the reader in finding without delay the special material for which he is looking. The theology of *The Abiding Word* is ecumenical Christianity, confessional Lutheranism, and true Bible teaching. The question facing our Church now is how to induce our pastors, teachers, and laymen to buy and study these fine and timely volumes, for they are not intended merely for parsonage libraries, but for grateful study throughout our Church and, please God, beyond the confines of our Synod. The spread and study of the books, moreover, might be made the duty of the administrative department of our Synod. It might be discussed by our Presidium, our District Presidents, our Visitors, our pastoral conferences, our various societies, our voters' meetings, and the like. The books, moreover, could be placed into public libraries as well as school and Sunday school libraries for general study of sound, confessional Lutheranism. The subjects might also be reviewed at seminars and other meetings of our laity on the basis of brief outlines. The "ads" which accompany the books recommend them especially be-

cause, among the essays presented, there are also "some which treat practical congregational matters." It is well to stress this, but what we need today more than ever before is the study of the fundamentals of the Christian doctrine in order to recall to our minds what true Lutheran doctrine is and to learn anew to distinguish between what is Lutheran and what is Calvinistic or Romanistic or also downright enthusiastic leaven. As we have crossed the threshold into the second century of our Church's existence, there rests upon us a grave responsibility. What our Synod will be a hundred years from now depends largely upon what we are today doctrinally and confessionally. Unless we are good theologians, we shall not be well-qualified pastors. Nor can we find ourselves at home in practical theology unless we are thoroughly at home in the doctrinal theology which the Word of God inculcates. The reviewer emphasizes this so strongly because it is a matter which is of the greatest importance to the welfare of our Church in the future.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

"The Devotional Bible." Volume I. The Gospels According to St. Matthew and St. Mark. Centennial Series. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 1948. 404 pages, 5½×9. Price, \$3.00.

This is the first volume of a work whose appearance should be greeted with genuine satisfaction and gratitude. In 1944 our Synod "resolved to publish, as part of its Centennial program, 'a devotional work of the nature of the incomparable Altenburger Bibelwerk.'" In these brief words the Foreword of this volume explains the origin of the venture whose first fruits, as it were, lie before us. Our congratulations are extended to the Synodical Centennial Committee and to Concordia Publishing House for having successfully inaugurated this ambitious undertaking. The exterior of the volume is most attractive; it is beautifully bound and ornamented in a very becoming style. The meditations on the Gospel according to St. Matthew were written by the Rev. Alfred Doerffler, those on the Gospel according to St. Mark by Dr. M. F. Kretzmann, men who both are well known and highly esteemed in our Church. Both sections are introduced by historical meditations coming from the skilled pen of our sainted Dr. L. Fuerbringer. Dr. Theo. Hoyer has written a meditation, introducing the whole series, on the text John 5:39.

A few words on the method employed must be added. As in the Altenburger Bibelwerk, before a part of a chapter is printed, there are a few introductory remarks. The Scripture section is followed by some comments which throw light on the content of the passage. A prayer concludes the meditation. To give an example: On p. 134 a meditation begins which is number 43 and has the title "Ashes for Bread." The section studied is Matt. 15:32-39; 16:1-12. The introductory remarks cover a little more than half a page. They describe the condition in which the multitude of the five thousand found itself, the religious dangers troubling them, and the want of physical bread. The Scripture section then is printed in somewhat smaller but very legible type. The comments that follow dwell on the second part of this section and have to do with the attitude of the Pharisees and Sadducees. The words of Jesus spoken with reference to these errorists are

explained. A proper prayer in which the lessons of the Scripture passage are basic concludes the meditation. Naturally, the comments cannot be very searching and penetrating. The discussion is supposed to be of a popular nature and learned theological observations are avoided. But let us say with all emphasis that the spiritual food which we all need is here offered in a very definite way. May God richly bless this venture and use it as a means of bringing the readers into the presence of our Lord, who breaks to us the bread of life.

W. ARNDT

Sabbath or Sunday? By John Theodore Mueller. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 19-page tract, 3½×5¾. Tract No. 152. 10 cents.

This is a good tract to put into the hands of people living in a community where the Sabbatarians are making propaganda for their false teaching concerning the Sabbath. The tract may also be well used to reassure the members of our churches that our teaching in reference to the Sabbath and Sunday is in accordance with Scripture.

J. H. C. FRITZ

A Manual of Church Services. By Gordon Palmer, D. D. Fleming H. Revell Co., New York. 164 pages, 8×5½. \$2.25.

A brief volume on pastoral theology, in which the author outlines the minister's part in the various church services, regular and special. The dominant note is that the minister "demonstrate the Gospel" in all he does in the church. Particularly well done is the first chapter, in which he pleads for great care in the public reading of the Scriptures, lest one misrepresent God. His Baptist views on the administration of Holy Baptism and Communion hold no appeal for us, though again we commend him for his insistence that "whatever we do for Christ in the church needs to be done unhurriedly, thoroughly, and reverently." There are some very fine comments on the marriage service, including a usable form for wedding anniversaries. A special feature is a 50-page summary of marriage laws of all States of the Union. In general it is a helpful volume containing many fine suggestions for keeping church services on an efficient and dignified level.

O. E. SOHN

The Doctrine of Our Redemption. By Nathaniel Micklem. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York and Nashville. 1948. 155 pages, 5½×7¾. \$1.50.

The author, a professor of dogmatic theology at Mansfield College, Oxford, discusses the doctrine of redemption, as he defines it, and traces it in historical sequence as it has been viewed by some prominent churchmen throughout the Christian era. He personally does not think that we can compress the wonder and mystery of the love of God in Christ into any one theory or system. In view of this opinion it is obvious that his definition of redemption cannot be limited to Luther's explanation of the Second Article. Micklem chooses to think of redemption in terms of "a cosmic salvation." He confesses: "I cannot believe that those now dying in ignorance of his [Christ's] saving name are passing beyond the scope and efficacy of his redeeming blood." This book, according to the author, is not an apologetic writing for non-Christians.

L. W. SPIRZ

Christ or the Lodge? A Report on Masonry. Tracts for Today No. 11. 24 pages. 10 cents. Order from The Committee on Christian Education. The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Room 728, Schaff Building, Philadelphia 2, Pa.

The merits of this tract are fourfold. First, it deals with the issue with a rare degree of objectivity. Second, it demonstrates conclusively that Masonry is a religion. Third, it clearly exposes the anti-Scriptural teachings of the Masonic religion. Fourth, it supports its argument with a large number of direct quotations from Masonic literature.

It is heartening to know that there are others besides Lutherans who recognize and oppose the pagan character of the Masonic religion.

PAUL M. BRETSCHER

They Have Found a Faith. By Marcus Bach. The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis. 300 pages, 8½×5½. \$3.00.

The author is professor in the School of Religion in the University of Iowa. Led by "the adventurous spirit of his culting hobby," he accompanied Jehovah's Witnesses in their witness work; observed the work at Los Angeles' famed Foursquare Temple; conferred with the leaders of Spiritualism at Chesterfield, Ind., visited the group meetings of Buchman; dined in the banquet hall of Father Divine; gained firsthand information from the adherents of Bahaism at Wilmette, Ill.; saw Unity in action at Kansas City; and at Moscow, Idaho, he consulted with Frank Robinson concerning Psychiana. The author reports his experiences in a most interesting way and permits the reader to share vividly in the personal interpretations which each leader gives to his or her respective group. Thus the reader will obtain a clear insight into the underlying principles of each of these bizarre and less-known cults. The information is up to date and reliable, as far as we know these sects from their literature. However, the reader must keep in mind that the author's interest in the cults is psychological and sociological, not theological. The author believes that "all roads that lead to God are good," and that in its peculiar way each group offers spiritual help to the honest seeker.

F. E. MAYER

This Holy Venture. Edited by H. Torrey Walker. Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia, 1948. 224 pages, 5½×8¼. \$2.50.

This collection is interesting for two reasons. It is edited by the lay Executive Secretary of the Board of Publication of the United Lutheran Church, and as such reveals a variety of treatment and a directness of expression in sermons which would appeal to any layman. Furthermore, it presents a complete cycle of Lenten sermons—the three Sundays before Lent, the Sundays in Lent, the Wednesdays beginning with Ash Wednesday, a full set of weekday sermons for Holy Week; and a sermon for Easter morning. The advantage of a collection of this sort is the panorama of preaching style and insight which it provides; the disadvantage is that the reader may not become acquainted with the method of one man sufficiently to understand him. This reviewer found some phrases a bit uncertain, some emphases askew at least to his taste; and at least one sentence that would not go down: "The law of God written in our hearts by God, purified and

cleansed and strengthened by the love of Christ, is the mainspring of our action" (p. 83). However, one fact always obtains, that you have to see and know the preacher if his sermon should really strike home. Reading this volume made this reviewer want to see and know these preachers; for all seemed to have the urgent desire to make their hearers know Christ and the power of His suffering and resurrection. The title is the theme of the sermon for Palmarum on Philippians 2:5-11. RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

Christian Faith and the Spirit of the Age. By Clarence E. Macartney, D. D. American Tract Society, New York. 236 pages, 5¼ × 7¾. \$2.00.

This book, written by a man who believes that the Bible is the Word of God and that the sinner is saved by the vicarious atonement of Jesus Christ, is a worth-while book. The author treats such subjects as: The Divine Origin of the Bible, the Bible Confirmed by the Ruins and Monuments, The Gospels and the Miracles, Christianity and the Moving Pictures, Marriage and Divorce, The Death of Christ the Greatest of all Themes. In Part Four, where the author speaks of The Christian Destiny, more emphasis might have been given to what the inspired writers of both the Old and the New Testament say, and comparatively less space might have been given to what others have said.

The American Tract Society, convinced that there is an urgent and widespread need of popular treatises on essential evangelical truths and that "the Gospel of Christ is the only force which can save the world," announced a Prize Book Contest requesting manuscripts. Of the 116 excellent manuscripts submitted, thirteen are now being published. Dr. Macartney's book is one of these.

J. H. C. FRITZ

The Bible Jesus Knew. A Popular Study of the Old Testament. By Sidney A. Weston. Fleming H. Revell Company, New York, 1947. 5 × 7¼, 128 pages.

The subtitle explains the purpose of this booklet. The author offers a popular introduction to the Bible that Jesus knew: the Old Testament.

The author succeeds admirably in making the approach to the Old Testament popularly simple and personally practical. There is no learned jargon. Applications to present-day situations and illustrations from the current scene make the message of the Old Testament come to life. Thus after each chapter there are added sections with such headings as "For Further Thought and Discussion" and "Something to Do."

However, we regret that this fine technique presents the Graf-Wellhausen basis for the origin of the Old Testament books. In fact, because the presentation is simple and popular, the documentary hypothesis appears in a more dogmatic form than in learned dissertations on this subject. One example will suffice to illustrate: "This man's name was Amos, whose little book is the earliest written book in the Old Testament. Genesis is the first book you find in the Old Testament but Amos is the earliest. It was written about 750 B. C. Keep that date in mind." (P. 15.) The theology of the author is reflected in statements such as these: "The Old Testament is the record of God's revelation of Himself"

(p. 13). "The Old Testament (also) is the record of man's search for God. Through its pages we see man groping for something higher than the life he lived—the record of this search for God is thrilling and inspiring" (p. 127).
WALTER R. ROEHR

More Stewardship Parables of Jesus. By Roswell C. Long. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York. 140 pages, 5×7½. \$.60.

This little volume treats eight well-known parables of Jesus with the view of increasing the consciousness of our stewardship responsibility. The method is practical rather than expository and contains many fine things, beautifully said, which remind one of one's omissions and stir up the spirit of greater consecration. One might justly desire greater elaboration on the vicarious atonement of Jesus as the mainspring of the Christian stewardship life. The chapter on putting the entire membership to work is particularly stimulating and worth studying.
O. E. SOHN

The Lutheran Pastor. By G. H. Gerberding. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minnesota. 464 pages, 5½×8½, \$4.00.

Repeated requests from ministers and theological professors persuaded the publishers to place on the market this volume on pastoral theology. It has merited the printing of a considerable number of editions which have preceded this one.

When the sainted Dr. Gerberding in 1902 gave to the church *The Lutheran Pastor*, it was the first authoritative textbook on Lutheran pastoral theology to appear in America in English. It filled a growing need in the Church, as the various Lutheran groups gradually adopted the language of their fellow citizens. It is still an authoritative reference book on pastoral theology.

The twenty-three chapters cover six major divisions: I. The Pastor's Office and Call. II. The Pastor as a Man. III. The Pastor's General Work. IV. The Pastor in the Sanctuary. V. The Pastor's Private Work (*Private Seelsorge*). VI. The Pastor's Relation to Synod and Conference.

We commend the publishers for making this helpful volume available to the clergy of today.
LOUIS J. SIECK

Protestant Church Building. By William H. Leach. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York. 188 pages, 6×9. \$3.00.

While not written from the Lutheran point of view nor for specifically Lutheran purposes, this easy to read and well-illustrated book offers many suggestions which every building committee will do well to peruse when planning the erection of a new church or parsonage. It covers planning, designing, and financing, including valuable suggestions on lighting, heating, cooling, air conditioning, and amplification. The author is editor of the magazine *Church Management*.
O. E. SOHN

BOOKS RECEIVED

From Der Rufer—*Evangelischer Verlag, Guetersloh (Bertelsmann Verlag)*:

Der heilige Ruf. Oskar Hammelsbeck. 263 pages.

Herr ist Jesus Christus. Martin Niemoeller. 270 pages.

Der Trost Gottes. Paul Althaus. 303 pages.

- Die Gnade in Gottes Gericht.** Edmund Schlink. 64 pages.
Kommt, lasset uns anbeten! Rita von Gaudecker. 101 pages.
Die kirchliche Kinderliebe. M. Albert-B. H. Forck. 56 pages.
Lehrplan fuer das zweite Jahr des kirchlichen Unterrichts, aufgestellt vom Katechetischen Ausschuss in Westfalen. 52 pages.
Lehrplan fuer das erste Jahr des kirchlichen Unterrichts. 46 pages.
Verkuendiget von Tag zu Tag sein Heil! Oskar Hammelsbeck. 449 pages.
Der Triumph des Gekreuzigten. Erich Sauer. 246 pages.
Komm, o mein Heiland Jesus Christ, Mein's Herzens Tuer dir offen ist! Traugott Hahn. 129 pages.
Heimsuchung. Hans Kressel. 176 pages.
Ich bin der Herr, dein Gott! Paul Gronemeyer. 159 pages.
Hilfe im Kindergottesdienst. Karl Niemann. 168 pages.
Der Kleine Katechismus D. Martin Luthers fuer Katechumenen und Konfirmanden vom Katechetischen Ausschuss in Westfalen. 227 pages.
Der Kleine Katechismus D. M. Luthers. 63 pages.
Warum Bekenntnisschule? Ernst Klessmann. 29 pages.
Erneuerung der Kirche aus dem Evangelium. Wilhelm Hahn. 32 pages.

Tracts:

- Es ist das Heil uns kommen her (Paul Speratus).** Wilhelm Wittgen.
Du hoerest sein Sausen wohl (Gerhard Teerstegen). Elisabeth Budde.
Evangelisch-kirchliche Maennerarbeit heute. Oskar Hammelsbeck und Friedrich Linz.
Der Herr ist mein Hirte (Martin Luther). Martin Peisker.
Das Wort vom Kreuz. Johannes Busch.
Der christliche Heilsweg. Ulrich Altmann.
Der Gott der Bibel. Ulrich Altmann.
Unser Glaubensbekenntnis. Werner De Boor.
Gottes Wort. Johannes Busch.
Die Entstehung unseres Neuen Testaments. Friedrich Buechsel.

Kirchbuechlein:

- Konfirmationsbuechlein.** Oskar Hammelsbach.
Das Gewissen (Martin Luther). G. Buchwald.
Gesegneter Abendmahlsgang (Martin Luther). G. Buchwald.
Mutter, was weisst du von deinen Kindern? Ruth Fuehrer.
Was hat uns die Offenbarung des Johannes zu sagen? Hermann Strathmann.

Passionsbuechlein:

- Elternpflichten. Kindesdank (Martin Luther).** G. Buchwald.
Arbeit (Martin Luther). G. Buchwald.
Die Pest in Unna. Elisabeth Budde und Philipp Nicolai.

- Viereinhalb Jahre Redeverbot. Daniel Schaefer.
 Martin Rinckarts Schwerer Weg. Elisabeth Budde.
 O du froehliche (Johannes Daniel Falk). M. v. Koenneritz.
 Wie ein deutsches Trostlied entstand (Georg Neumark). Elisabeth Budde.

Unfortunately an adequate review of these works is impossible. We single out two for brief comments. *Der Trost Gottes* by Paul Althaus is a volume of sermons ("Predigten in schwerer Zeit"). We have not read these discussions and merely wish to say that Althaus, professor in Erlangen, has the reputation of possessing unique pulpit ability.—The work of Erich Sauer, *Der Triumph des Gekreuzigten*, while it contains many excellent passages, is a thoroughly Chiliastic production. W. ARNDT

From Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Goettingen:

- Vom Geist und Erbe Thules. Walter Baetke. VII and 240 pages.
 Neutestamentliche Grammatik. Blass and Debrunner. XVII and 280 and 83 pages.
 Die Briefe an die Korinther (Das Neue Testament Deutsch). Heinz-Dietrich Wendland. 176 pages.
 Die Versuchung der Kirche. Guenter Jacob. 136 pages.
 Evangelischer Kirchenbau vor neuen Aufgaben. Gerhard Kunze. 79 pages.
 Die Sammlung. 2. Jahrgang, 1. Heft. 64 pages.
 Die Sammlung. 2. Jahrgang, Nov. 1946—Feb. 1947, 2. Heft. Pages 65—128.
 Die Sammlung. 2. Jahrgang, 3/4 Heft. Pages 129—224.
 Die Sammlung. 2. Jahrgang, 5/6 Heft. Pages 225—344.
 Die Sammlung. 1. Jahrgang, Okt. 1945—Aug./Sept. 1946 (10 volumes).
 Staat und Evangelische Kirche seit der Reformation. Kurt Dietrich Schmidt. 32 pages.
 Der Glaube der Christenheit. I. Teil. Unsere Welt vor Jesus Christus. Helmut Thielicke. 472 pages.
 6. Der Brief an die Roemer. (Das Neue Testament Deutsch). Paul Althaus. 130 pages.
 Das Vaterunser. Ernst Lohmeyer. 216 pages.
 Kultus und Evangelium. Ernst Lohmeyer. 128 pages.
 Das Zeugnis des Neuen Testaments von der Gemeinde. Otto Michel. 98 pages.
 Vom Freien Willen. Erasmus von Rotterdam. Verdeutsch von Otto Schumacher. 93 pages.

Time and space do not permit that we draw up and present exhaustive reviews of these works. A few remarks on some of them seem desirable. The commentaries belonging to the series entitled *Das Neue Testament Deutsch* were characterized in our journal when they first appeared. Baetke's book *Vom Geist und Erbe Thules* contains interesting essays dealing with the history of Nordic and German ideas and religion. In the chapter on the Christianization of the German tribes, among other things, the in-

teresting question why the Goths tenaciously clung to Arianism is examined. — The *Neutestamentliche Grammatik* of Blass-Debrunner is presented to us in its seventh edition, published in 1943. The foreword says that the edition had to be considerably enlarged, and among the factors necessitating this step are mentioned the present availability of the Chester Beatty papyri, which now constitute the oldest New Testament manuscripts we possess, and many new considerations resting on the lively investigations of recent years. The new material, consisting of further notes to the various paragraphs of the book, is chiefly submitted in an appendix of 83 pages. In our view there is no more authoritative New Testament grammar to be had than this work. — Lohmeyer's book *Das Vaterunser* is, as a brief glance shows, a detailed philological as well as theological discussion of the various parts of the Lord's Prayer. The work by the same author entitled *Kultus und Evangelium* is a discussion of public worship in the light of the Gospel. — A wealth of material on what the New Testament teaches on the Church and the local congregation is offered in the book of Otto Michel, *Das Zeugnis des Neuen Testaments von der Gemeinde*. — The famous diatribe of Erasmus, on the free will (*Vom freien Willen*), which evoked one of the grandest books Luther produced, dealing with the "enslaved" will, is here presented in an excellent and copiously annotated translation. *Die Sammlung* is a journal devoted to pedagogy. W. ARNDT

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

My Redeemer Lives. An Easter Program. By William G. Kennell. 15 pages. Single copy, 7 cents postpaid; dozen copies, 72 cents plus postage; 100 copies, \$5.00 plus postage.

From Abingdon Cokesbury Press, New York:

The Sovereign Emblem. By Ernest Wall. The Meaning of the Crucifixion and the significance of the Lord's Supper as a demonstration of that meaning. 117 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. \$1.25.

From Pickering and Inglis, Ltd., London, England:

One Thousand Wonderful Things About the Bible. By Henry Pickering. Gleaned from every source for all who love the grand old Book. 228 pages, $5 \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. \$1.75.

From Fleming H. Revell Company, New York:

The Beginning of Wisdom. By Emile Cailliet. An answer to spiritual confusion among the present generation. 192 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. \$2.50.

From Van Kampen Press, Chicago, Ill.:

Meet Yourself in the Bible. By Roy L. Laurin. 30 penned sketches on Bible characters who were conquerors of such situations as fear, doubt, pride, jealousy, etc. 282 pages, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$. \$2.50.

From Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich.:

Florence Nightingale. The Lady with the Lamp. By Basil Miller. 125 pages, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$. \$1.50.