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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.

Let Us Return unto the Lord. By W. A. Maier. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1947. 319 pages, 5¼×7½. \$2.00.

Dr. Maier no longer needs an introduction to listeners who tune in on religious programs in our country. For well over a decade his powerful voice has been heard by millions of Americans, and as each new season of broadcasts comes and goes, the voice speaking of salvation in Christ reaches new areas and new ears, for the management in control of the Lutheran Hour broadcast is constantly adding station after station to the chain at home and abroad. The sixty-four pages of the Foreword bear eloquent testimony from many quarters of the world of the faith in Christ which people from all walks of life found through hearing the Christ-centered Gospel messages of the Lutheran Hour. Every-one of the seventeen sermons of this volume breathes the same spirit, the spirit that is anxious to bring every listener to Jesus and have him or her look up to Him who is the only Helper in distress, the only Savior from sin, the only Hope of the world, the only Guide through the valley of death, the only Voice that can raise the dead body out of the grave, the only God who can bestow upon the believer joy and contentment after this life has run its course. This spirit is evident in the very themes of the sermons. Here are some of them: "The Unsearchable Riches of Christ"; "Be Born Again in Christ"; "Jesus Christ is Our Peace"; "Come Home to God"; "God's Promises Never Fail"; "Jesus Never Fails." The strength in these sermons, as in all the Lutheran Hour sermons, lies in Dr. Maier's ability to talk the Gospel of Jesus into the heart of the listener. The thousands of letters that flow into the Lutheran Hour office each week enable the Lutheran Hour speaker to put his finger on the pulse of thoughts that surge through myriads of hearts and to offer adequate answers from God's holy Word that quiet disturbed minds and lead them to Christ.

The reviewer is always refreshed and satisfied when he hears or reads Lutheran Hour messages. They are far superior to much that passes for Christian preaching in our era. *Best Sermons*, edited by G. Paul Butler, contains a number of pulpit efforts that one can readily classify as models of the mechanics of homiletical art, but since Christ, the Redeemer, as preached by Paul, is sadly missing in these *Best Sermons*, they do not meet the standards set week after week in the Lutheran Hour sermons.

It is quite significant to know that Princeton University has several complete sets of the Lutheran Hour sermons in its library. The thumb marks on the pages in these volumes are evidence that numerous students pore over them in search of preaching power. They do not search in vain. We hope God will lead these students to become Christ-centered preachers.

May God continue to bless the Lutheran Hour speaker and the messages he proclaims every Sunday!

ALEX WM. C. GUEBERT

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The Essentials of Preaching. By J. H. C. Fritz. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1948. 73 pages, 5×7½. \$1.50.

The purpose of this splendid little book on preaching by Dr. Fritz is indicated by the subtitle, "A Refresher Course in Homiletics for Preachers." After spending a number of years in the ministry it is quite natural for some men to grow more or less mechanical in pulpit work. Pastoral visits, committee sessions, youth work, meetings with various congregational organizations can draw a pastor away from persistent, thorough study necessary for meaty sermons and reduce his pulpit utterances to mere platitudes and pious zeros. Then, too, there is the minister who is looking for inspiration and guidance whereby he can improve his pulpit style. Whatever a minister's attitude to sermonizing may be, Dr. Fritz's book will help to make indifferent preaching better, and lift good preaching to a still higher plane. The essentials of preaching are presented under these heads: 1. Ex Bibliis Sacris; 2. Agape; 3. Imagines Rerum; 4. Praedicator Suorum Scriptorum; 5. Genus Concionandi; 6. Applicatio Ad Res Praesentes; 7. Salus Hominum. These seven chapter headings are packed into the following sentence written by Loewentraut, whose forty-eight-page book *Sieben Geheimnisse der Predigtkunst* was the springboard for Dr. Fritz's book: "Predige den Text der Heiligen Schrift aus begeisterter Liebe und lebendiger Anschauung, nach deiner eigenen Ausarbeitung und Predigtart, fuer die gegenwaertigen Verhaeltnisse deines Wirkungskreises und zum ewigen Heile der Menschen." (P. 72.)

As far as this reviewer is concerned, the first chapter, which deals with the study of the text, is basic for effective preaching. Conscientious textual study is the unifying thread that runs through all the chapters. Ignore that, and you ultimately lose contact with the revelation of God, whose aim is the salvation of souls.

Every pastor ought to have this little book on his desk. It will help him to become a better ambassador of Christ.

ALEX WM. C. GUEBERT

Growing Up with Jesus. By A. C. Mueller. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1948. 6×8¾, xiv and 166 pages. \$2.50.

This volume is designed to implement Christian training in the home and as such is an outstanding contribution to the literature in the field. Many words have been used to point out the faults of the home in its task to educate the young; here is a book that wastes no words in offering constructive suggestions to parents and teachers in the guidance of pre-school children. It is designed as a nursery manual and as such offers help especially when used with *Story Picture Lessons for Little Children*.

The volume is divided into four sections: The Training of Young Children, Teaching the Course, Special Helps for Teaching and Training, and The Nursery Department. The volume is highly recommended for the library of every pastor and nursery teacher as well as Christian parents of little children.

ARTHUR C. REPP

Christian Ethics. By A. D. Mattson. Augustana Book Concern, Rock Island, Ill. 377 pages, 8×6. \$3.00.

This book is a revision of a volume printed in 1938 which the author, Prof. A. D. Mattson, professor of Christian Ethics, August-

tana Theological Seminary, was asked to place again on the book market after it had gone out of print. It was designed as a guide to a practical course in Christian Ethics, and for this reason it was based upon work done in the classroom which has been extended over a period of years. In the first part of the book the writer treats general introductory material and states the basis of Christian Ethics with its theological, Scriptural, anthropological, and soteriological postulates. In the second part he discusses the content of the Christian ideal, that is, the Christian virtues, as they are considered in their relation to God, to one's self, and to one's fellow men, in the realms of the family, the State, and the Church. There is also an appendix on divorce and on birth control. Because of its simplicity, clarity, soberness, and its Christian orientation in general, the book deserves cordial recommendation. There are whole chapters where the writer's judgment is in full agreement with Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions. But the book shows also limitations and aberrations. The reviewer, for example, does not see why "the subject of divorce must be thoroughly studied before any declaration of the attitude of the Lutheran Church can be made" after the fundamentals of the problem have been stated so carefully and well (p. 361). Nor can he understand why the author recommends that "the Church for the present make no official statement on the subject of birth control; and that it be left to a committee to study the subject carefully in all its relations" (p. 371), after he has supplied so many and valuable data on the basis of which the reader is enabled to reach a pretty definite conclusion. Books on Christian Ethics should really furnish to the reader guiding verdicts, since, as the writer himself demonstrates, the standards of Christian Ethics are fixed and stable. The downright regrettable chapter in the book, however, is the one on "inspiration." Here Professor Mattson, rather unnecessarily, launches an attack on verbal inspiration which is as uncalled for as it is unscriptural. He writes, for example: "The Bible nowhere claims verbal inspiration for itself; the facts do not substantiate the theory, and if we analyze the implications of the theory, it robs us of any certainty we may have as to the inspiration of the Bible. The Spirit of God quickened and guided human souls and thus inspired the Scriptures, but this does not imply verbal dictation or inspiration with respect to exact words. Neither does it insure freedom from errors of memory, accuracy of historical detail, or scientific fact. When the Holy Spirit led men to receive a revelation, He gave all the inspiration necessary, and under all circumstances we shall have to be content with what He has done" (p. 97). Does not the author see that the denial of the inspiration of the Bible, and by this we mean verbal and plenary inspiration, destroys the very basis on which Christian Ethics rests, since an errant, fallible Bible cannot serve Christians as a safe doctrinal and ethical guide? His argumentation against the divine inspiration betrays personal prejudice and the manifest purpose that the doctrine of Biblical inspiration should be discarded. But such denial of divine inspiration makes it impossible for reviewers to recommend the book in areas where Christians are convinced that the doctrine of verbal and plenary inspiration is clearly taught in God's Word and that anyone who tries to do away with it is undermining the very foundation of the Christian faith.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

The Christian View of God and the World. By James Orr. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 255 Jefferson Ave., S. E., Grand Rapids 3, Mich. 480 pages, 9×6. \$3.50.

Dr. Orr's *The Christian View of God and the World* belongs undoubtedly to the relatively few religious classics in Christian Apologetics which never grow old and which, therefore, merit reprinting in case they go off the market. That Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company has taken upon itself the financial risk of making this valuable work once more accessible to students, deserves much praise, and we are sure that the venture will hardly prove itself a financial failure. Dr. Orr was one of the most profound Bible scholars of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. From his chair as professor of Apologetics and Christian Theology his influence spread on both sides of the Atlantic. Of his outstanding apologetic works, *God's Image in Man*, *The Virgin Birth*, and *The Christian View of God and the World*, the last is in many respects the greatest. The material consists of lectures, originally delivered at United Presbyterian Hall, Edinburgh, in 1891. His lot was cast in a time of great mental unrest affecting men's beliefs in every sphere, a time especially of revolt from authority and of unique development of the critical spirit, when all theories and doctrines were alike called in question. The volume contains nine lectures, the contents of which are comprehensively outlined in a "Table of Contents" in the forepart, a help which the reader greatly appreciates. The first four lectures are introductory, stating the problem and setting forth the postulates of the Christian world view. The last five lectures discuss the Christian world view especially from the angle of the incarnation and atonement of Christ. The scope of the lectures is so broad that it enables the author to deal with practically every major antichristian and antitheistic "ism" opposing itself to the Christian faith. Just because the writer largely centers his attention on fundamentals and universals in the realm of unbelief, the book, though first published almost sixty years ago, seems strangely modern and timely. Kant, Schleiermacher, Ritschl, and other foes of the Christian truth are still being studied, while materialism, pantheism, agnosticism, and other vagaries of the human mind never change essentially. Of special value are the appended notes to the lectures, treating subjects that could not be considered adequately in the text, and the comprehensive general index. We cordially recommend this excellent apologetic to our readers, though they are bound to find in it statements with which they cannot agree. It belongs to the few rare books, outside the Bible, through which the theologian ought to plow his way at least once in his life.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

The American Churches. An Interpretation. By William Warren Sweet. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York-Nashville. 153 pages. Indexed. \$1.50.

Dr. Sweet, professor of the history of American Christianity in the University of Chicago since 1927, is well known for his important books in the field of American church history, such as his four-volume work *Religion on the American Frontier*, a volume each on the Baptists, the Presbyterians, the Congregationalists, and the Methodists; *The Story of Religion in America, Methodism in*

American History, Revivalism in America, and others. In this new book from his pen he presents a clear and concise analysis of the factors and forces that have made our American churches what they are. The chapter heads are the following: I. Left-Wing Protestantism Triumphs in Colonial America; II. Religion in the Winning of the West; III. Revivalism in American Protestantism; IV. The Multiplicity of Denominations; V. The American Negro and His Religion; VI. Roman Catholicism in the United States; VII. Activism in the American Tradition. An invitation to occupy the Beckly lectureship in England before the British Methodist Conference in 1946, gave the initial incentive to the author for the preparation of the chapters of this book. In the first chapter Dr. Sweet describes the two types of Protestantism which emerged from the Reformation. The right-wing Protestant churches were those established by law in the lands of western Europe, churches which were confessional, that is, they formulated elaborate creeds or confessions of faith; but the left-wing type of Protestantism gained the upper hand in America. "The left-wing type of Protestantism (beginning with the Anabaptists) as the name implies, was radical, and coming, as it did, out of the mass of the common people, its leaders were of secondary importance and therefore were little known. In contrast to the right-wing Protestantism these left-wing movements rejected all union between Church and State and repudiated the right of the civil arm to interfere in any way with matters of religion and conscience. . . . They also differed from the right-wing phase of Protestantism in that they stressed the inner, personal, character of religion, played down its institutional character, and put much less stress upon creeds and Sacraments. . . . All the great concepts for which American democracy stands today, individual rights, freedom of conscience, freedom of speech, self-government, and complete religious liberty, are concepts coming out of the left-wing phase of the Reformation."

In discussing the multiplicity of denominations of which there are at the present time 310 in the United States with a membership of 72,492,669, Dr. Sweet points out that on the basis of these figures every single American church group is a minority group and emphasizes the historic fact that only when one denomination becomes a majority group religious liberty is endangered. "So it can be said truthfully that the multiplicity of religious expression which prevails in the United States has not been entirely fruitless; at least it has served, and still serves, the cause of religious freedom."

In his chapter on Roman Catholicism he points out that in the winning of the West "it was Protestantism which saved the restless and reckless frontier from sinking into barbarianism; Catholicism was the largest factor in keeping the American cities from becoming veritable Sodoms and Gomorrah's." In the same chapter, speaking of the political activity of the Roman Catholic Church, he quotes with approval Dr. W. E. Garrison:

No more serious error can be made in judging of the spirit, the attitudes, and the methods of Roman Catholicism in the United States at the present time than the assumption that it has been permeated and transformed in some subtle fashion by the spirit of American institutions. There may have been some justification for such an opinion thirty years ago. There is none now. That individual laymen exhibit modern attitudes is of course true. But the attitudes of the hierarchy, the

"teaching Church," are unchangingly medieval, and the pressure of this hierarchy is exercised without cessation upon all laymen—except when some specific object is to be attained by allowing the liberal utterance of a layman—such as Al Smith in the presidential campaign of 1928—to go temporarily unrebuked.

Dr. Sweet's judgment of the contributions of the Lutherans to the American life may be seen from the following statements: "The Lutherans in America became churches apart from the main currents of life, centering their interests upon people of their own kind and background." Again: "Through insulating themselves to a large degree from the common church life in America, the people who constitute the great Lutheran bodies, both Germans and Scandinavians, have fairly generally been loyal to American democratic ideals and have made worthy contributions to all phases of American life. Although there are numerous Lutheran colleges in America, American Lutheranism has not made any large contribution to theological scholarship."

We recommend this book to our pastors as an interesting and concise evaluation of the work of the American churches.

W. G. POLACK

Pioneering for Christ in East Africa. By Victor Eugene Johnson. Augustana Book Concern, Rock Island, Ill., 192 pages. \$2.00.

The author of this interesting book spent years in the Lutheran Augustana Mission in Tanganyika, East Africa. All his personal diaries from 1928 to 1941, together with other records, were lost in the sinking of the ill-fated *Zamzam*. So the volume had to be written from memories and the available periodicals in the official files of various departments of his synod, as well as the records of his mission board.

The result is not disappointing. It is a well-written and well-organized story of his three terms in the field, including many human-interest accounts, descriptions of the natives' homes, dress, diet, means of livelihood, conflicts with native medicine men, witch doctors, etc. A worth-while addition to anyone's missionary library.

W. G. POLACK

Touring Tanganyika. By S. Hjalmar Swanson. Augustana Book Concern, Rock Island, Ill. 221 pages. \$2.00.

This book is a good companion volume to Missionary Johnson's *Pioneering for Christ in East Africa*, also briefly reviewed in these pages. The publishers say this of the book:

This is the story of Lutheran Missions in Tanganyika.

Tanganyika is a territory in East Africa, four times the size of Minnesota. It is a land of lions and giraffes, baobab and umbrella trees, tropical jungle and elevated bushland, and the home of several million Africans.

Here the Augustana Church conducts mission work among two tribes.

Three societies from Germany sent missionaries to this territory before the turn of the century and developed strong missions in five areas. With World War II these missions became "orphaned" when 172 missionaries were interned. Augustana has carried the responsibility for these missions since 1941 with funds provided by the National Lutheran Council. Two boards from Sweden also came to the rescue and have rendered very valuable service.

Dr. S. Hjalmar Swanson, Executive Director of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Augustana Synod, recently visited these areas. In this book he is reporting his observations. It is the first time that the story of Lutheran Missions in Tanganyika is made available to American readers.

All in all, a perusal of this book gives one the impression of a well-organized mission that is doing a blessed work.

W. G. POLACK

A Handbook of Evangelism for Laymen. By Dawson C. Bryan. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn. 96 pages, $4\frac{3}{4} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$. 50 cents.

This little volume presents a plan by which thousands of laymen have won others for Christ. Many of the things said in it do not apply to our circumstances, yet there are not a few very valuable, tried-and-tested methods of approach suggested which may be used to good advantage. The author points emphatically to the challenge of our "unattached membership" as well as of the recent accessions. With respect to the latter he says: "Unless you get a new member to become active in the life of your church within thirty to sixty days after he joins, he will become a liability. There are a few exceptions, but it is still true, get them active quickly or watch them become spiritual invalids or corpses." We do well to take this to heart.

O. E. SOHN

Sweet Singer of Israel. By Max I. Reich. Moody Press, Chicago. 191 pages. \$2.00.

This volume contains the devotional thoughts, poems, and a memoir of Max I. Reich, a Christian Jew. There are some very beautiful things among his poems, particularly those on redemption and the Cross. Some have a very definite millennialistic tone. Carefully selected, some of these poems could be a valuable aid in evangelism among our Jewish neighbors.

W. G. POLACK

A Study of History. By Arnold J. Toynbee. Abridgment of Volumes I—VI by D. C. Somervell. Oxford University Press, New York and London, 1947. xiii and 617 pages, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$. \$5.00.

This work is a one-volume abridgment of Toynbee's massive six-volume opus of the same title on the history of civilizations. Toynbee's method is to compare phenomena of history, which he terms "civilizations" and of which he identifies some twenty, by pointing out parallels in their rise and fall. He analyzes a number of factors in this process and seeks to measure the amount of trouble and difficulty which a civilization can face, within and without, so that it be stimulated to progress and be spared from stalemate or deterioration. This volume suffers from the disadvantages of an abridgment: it does not provide the wealth of literary and historical allusion which is the chief charm of Toynbee's complete work; and it appears to make the findings and parallels even less tentative and exploratory than in the original. The result is a somewhat oracular and final cast, which is probably the reason for the tremendous popular vogue which the book has had. Also in the original work, Toynbee's concept of *Palingenesia* is rather subjective, and his documentation with Biblical materials as illustrations of myth is unfortunate. However, the work is of

importance. It is a useful antidote for the preoccupation with Western civilization which hampers American thinking. It trains the reader to think of history as a living and organic process filled with meaning and promise, rather than a series of capricious events. And it is imbued with a recognition of religion as primary in the thinking and significance of a culture. The present summary has the advantage of providing the perspective which in the original work was achieved only through interminable cross references; and its Table V, reprinted from the study of another reviewer, is a neat summary of the plot of the entire work.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

Family Affairs. By Harold B. Kildahl, Jr. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minn., 1948. $5\frac{3}{4} \times 8\frac{3}{4}$, ix and 102 pages. Paper cover. 75 cents.

This is one of the few books in the field of social studies written from a Christian viewpoint. The Rev. Harold B. Kildahl has designed this for Lutheran Sunday school teachers to counteract the present secularization in the whole field of social studies. As such it provides a fine background to the study of the family, not merely from the historical and the Biblical background, but chiefly in presenting trends in the American family and the conditions and problems which arise out of the arrested family, the broken family, and mixed marriages. There is also a fine section on the approach to family reform. It is refreshing to read a book of this nature which is both scholarly and Christian. The modest price makes it doubly attractive.

ARTHUR C. REFF

BOOKS RECEIVED

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

Bible History References, Vol. II. By F. Rupprecht. 639 pages, $5 \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. \$3.00.

Staying Married. By Erdman W. Frenk. Tract No. 153. 48 pages, $3\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{3}{4}$. 12 cents.

Portals of Prayer No. 84. — The Way of Life. Daily Devotions from July 4 to Aug. 20, 1948. By Prof. Paul Bente of Fort Wayne, Ind. Single copy 10 cents, postpaid; 7 for 50 cents; 14 for \$1.00; dozen for 60 cents (direct to one address); 100 for \$4.50, all postpaid.

Worte des Lebens. German Daily Devotions from July 4 to Aug. 20. By Dr. Otto Hattstaedt of Milwaukee, Wis. Same price as above.

Concordia Bible Teacher, Vol. IX, No. 4. \$1.00 per annum.

Concordia Bible Student, Vol. XXXVII, No. 4. 60 cents per annum. By Rev. J. M. Weidenschilling, under the auspices of the Board for Parish Education, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. "God's Law and the Christian Life" (A Course on the Ten Commandments). July—September, 1948.

