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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 Organization of the Missouri Synod. By William Dallmann, D. D. Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, Wis. 32 pages, 4¼ × 6¾. 15 cents.

This is an essay presented to our Centennial Synod in Chicago, July, 1947, and published by request. In his inimitable style the author first gives a brief summary of Dr. C. F. W. Walther's well-known books *The Church and the Ministry*, *The Proper Form of a Christian Congregation*, and *The Lutheran Church the True Visible Church*. Nearly one half of the pamphlet is composed of tributes to the grand old man of the Missouri Synod. The essay itself closes with a stirring appeal for the unity of the Spirit in our Synod and for brotherly love. The foreword is by President John W. Behnken.
O. E. SOHN

The Free Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland. Translated by J. Hirsto. Published by the Free Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland. Paper bound. 30 pages. Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis 18, Mo.

This is the twenty-fifth anniversary booklet of the loyal group of Finlanders who established a free church in 1923 and who through the instrumentality of our Synod's leaders were led by the grace of God to build on the solid foundation of the Word of God and the Lutheran Confessions. It is a story little known to the rank and file of our people, and our pastors will do well to get the booklet and inform their constituents about this brave little body of confessors.
W. G. POLACK

The Lutheran Annual, 1949. By O. A. Dorn, Editor, and Armin Schroeder, Statistical Editor. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 272 pages, 8½ × 5½. 50 cents.

The Lutheran Annual for 1949 is of professional interest because of a series of historical articles, prepared by Dr. W. G. Polack. While popular in form, they are sufficiently detailed to merit a place with permanent historical materials. "A Hundred Years Ago in Synod's History," "From the Reminiscences of the Rev. John Strieter," "The Centennial of the Birth of a Great Man" (Dr. A. L. Graebner), "The Centennial of an Inspiring Missionary Society" (Hermannsburg Missionary Society), "The Man Who Predicted the End of the World a Century Ago" (William Miller), and anniversaries of six hymn writers comprise the historical materials. Additional articles on the Lutheran Hour and KFYO complete the materials.
RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

Amerikanischer Kalender fuer deutsche Lutheraner auf das Jahr 1949. — Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 272 pages. 50 cents.

One is truly amazed at the wealth of informative material concerning our Synod and the Synodical Conference that is packed into this well-known publication as well as in its companion volume,

the *Lutheran Annual* for 1949. The bulk of this material is identical in both editions, though, of course, the devotional and educational material comprising thirty pages is different. The complete roster of pastors, teachers, and congregations alone makes it highly desirable that a copy of either edition find its entrance into the homes of our membership.

O. E. SOHN

The Death of Christ. By William Dallmann. D. D. Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, Wis. Second edition. Revised. 32 pages, 4¼×6¾. 25 cents; per dozen, \$2.40.

The author here gives a detailed compilation of Scripture texts which have a bearing on this central doctrine of the Christian religion. Our pastors will find it a very convenient summary of Bible texts bearing on this doctrine, suitable especially for advanced Bible class work.

O. E. SOHN

Atonement and Forgiveness. By Jacob Tanner. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis. 1948. XI and 114 pages, 5½×9. \$1.75.

The venerable author (born 1865) selects one of the many aspects under which the Scriptures present the doctrine of the atonement. The thesis of the entire study is: The purpose of the forgiveness is not only to clear the past, but primarily to become the power of God unto salvation, to free man from the power of Satan and sin, and to change the future for man. The author believes that it is a misplaced emphasis when the work of Christ is viewed primarily as resolving the tension between God's justice and mercy and only secondarily — if at all — as providing a forgiveness which frees man from the power of sin. Currently the so-called classic idea of the atonement (held by Irenaeus and other church fathers) is presented in some Lutheran circles as truly Biblical and genuinely Lutheran. According to G. Aulen (*Christus Victor*) Luther viewed Christ's work as *mirabile duellum* between Himself and the five tyrants of man's soul: sin, death, the devil, the Law, God's wrath. The Atonement must therefore not be viewed so much as Christ paying the debt of our guilt, but as His glorious victory over man's tyrants. It is, of course, significant that Luther wrote no Lenten hymns, but victorious Easter hymns, that Luther rejected the Anselmic "satisfaction theory," and that in his explanation of Christ's work in the Large Catechism (Second Article of the Creed) Luther emphasizes Christ's victory over our enemies. But one dare not overlook that this redemption was accomplished by Christ's paying my debt for me. The so-called classic idea is a one-sided emphasis of one phase of Christ's work. In his zeal to establish the indissoluble connection between the Atonement and our sanctification Dr. Tanner by-passes and even questions some doctrines which are basic. The most serious defect appears in the author's contention that the problem of the Atonement was not in God, but in man, that it was not necessary to appease or even to modify God's wrath (48). At times it is difficult to follow the author's line of thought, as when he states that Christ was under God's special curse (56), and a little later rejects the view that God accepted the payment of His Son for the accursed sinner (63), or when he states that by His substitutionary death Christ removed the curse (53, 55), while he had said previously (44, 48)

that Christ's Cross is an incentive to repentance and that such repentance and the subsequent obedience turns away God's wrath. In preaching the Atonement the pastor will certainly take the "forward look" — a life of sanctification — but he will so proclaim it that the "backward look" — Christ's payment of our debt on Calvary — is not lost sight of. In our preaching not a "different emphasis" is required, but the same twofold emphasis: Christ died and arose both to free me from the wrath of God and the tyranny of my enemies, so that God for Jesus' sake finds His delight in me and that I can serve Him in everlasting righteousness.

F. E. MAYER

Millennial Studies. A Search for Truth. By Rev. Geo. L. Murray. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 207 pages, 8×5½. \$2.50.

During the past decades, especially since Dr. Scofield's *Reference Bible* was accepted by the majority of Fundamentalists as the only correct guide of Scripture prophecy, Premillennialism, in particular, Dispensationalism, became so very popular that but few voices were raised against this strange doctrinal vagary. Of late, however, earnest Bible students have begun to study Scripture prophecy in the light of the Christian Confessions and the writings of the leading Christian dogmaticians that repudiated Millenarianism, so that today there is an increase of antimillennialistic literature. *Millennial Studies* follows the best traditions of those who in the past have exposed and condemned the errors of Premillennialism. The author of the book is pastor of the First United Presbyterian Church, Boston, Mass. His approach to the problem is simple and constructive. In fourteen, not too long, chapters he shows from Scripture that the right principle of Scripture interpretation does not allow Dispensationalism to stand. After two introductory chapters ("General Consideration," "God's Covenant with Abraham") he examines carefully the "Testimony of the Prophets," the "Testimony of Jesus," and the "Teachings of the Apostles," pointing out that they do not teach Millennialism. Then he subjects to a thorough Scriptural scrutiny the "Millennial Theories," the "Seventy Weeks of Daniel," the "Great Tribulation," the "Rapture," the "Resurrection," the "Judgment," "Revelation Twenty," and closes his investigation with a "Testimony of History." The Lutheran reader must bear in mind that the writer is a conservative Calvinist and that his faith finds expression in many ways and places. But while he may not agree with the writer in such matters, he will certainly find himself in agreement with the final results of his Bible study. Dr. Murray rightly insists that the "New Testament should be allowed to explain the Old" (p. 41); that "it is Christ, rather than the Hebrew people, who is the subject of the Old Testament prophets"; and that "the Bible announces no special plan of salvation for the Jews in this present age" (p. 57); that "Jesus did not speak of an earthly, but of a heavenly; not of a material, but of a spiritual kingdom" (p. 72); that the Premillennial teaching concerning the "setting up of an earthly Jewish kingdom, the return of the Jews as a people to Palestine, the rebuilding of the temple, and the whole millennial program . . . is utterly devoid of New Testament authority" (p. 81);

that the Millennial theories are fraught with contradictions and absurdities (pp. 83 ff.); that the seventy weeks of Daniel ended with the "final rejection of God by the nation" (p. 98), this "final national transgression having its climax at the place called Calvary" (*ibid.*); that the "great tribulation" (Matthew, ch. 24) took place in 70 A. D. (p. 130); that the "rapture" (1 Thess. 4:17) will take place, not as a "secret rapture" before Christ's final coming to Judgment, but publicly on Judgment Day (p. 142); that there will be but one resurrection of the dead, taking place at the same time (pp. 145 ff.); that there will be only one Judgment, namely, that on Judgment Day, and not seven different and scattered ones, as the Millennialists teach (pp. 159 ff.); that the expression "all Israel" (Rom. 11:26) denotes the "elect of God" (p. 78); and that neither the Early Church nor the later Christian Church officially taught the Millennial doctrine (pp. 191 ff.). We state these matters in detail to show what an invaluable help this book is for all those who wish to study and refute the Millennial aberration. *Millennial Studies* was selected by the United Presbyterian Church as the religious Book of the Year. Dr. Murray, besides pastoring his congregation, the oldest Presbyterian church in Boston, also serves as guest lecturer in the Gordon Divinity School in Boston, where he teaches History of Doctrine.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

The Religion of Maturity. By John Wick Bowman. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York, Nashville. 1948. 336 pages, 6×9. \$3.00.

This book is a modern quest for the "true religion." The thesis is: In the life and work of Jesus we find the only correct response to the "prophetic revelation" of the Old Testament. The author states that this prophetic revelation is the "word of God" received by audition for the purpose that Israel might become the "redemptive community." This revelation challenged Israel to render unconditional obedience to the sovereign Lord and thus reveal by word and deed that complete surrender to God is man's ultimate purpose and the way to salvation (pp. 38, 51). But Israel failed, and the prophets addressed their message to the remnant, known also as the "Messiah," "Suffering Servant," "Son of Man" (55). Jesus acknowledged this prophetic message for "he was conscious of a unique spiritual force which welled up within him and which gave creative power to his utterances" (72 f.). He reiterated and enforced the "prophetic" revelation, that man's chief end is to reflect the image of God, "a character of righteousness" (76). Thus Christ establishes the kingdom of God on the plane of history, and by combining the eschatological with the ethical he was true to the "prophetic" revelation (77).

According to the author, religion is the response of man to God's revelation. At the time of Christ three responses to God's revelation, each an immature religion, can be traced: the religion of the altar, the book, the throne. Here the author offers much valuable information and makes very stimulating suggestions. However, the entire presentation is based on the theories of higher criticism and extra-canonical priestly literature. The gist of the religion of the altar is that salvation can be procured through the priestly office, the sacrificial system, and the institutional service

of the temple. Jesus was not antagonistic to a priestly religion; in fact, he offered himself as a free personality for the sin of the world and expects his people to share in his self-immolation for the salvation of men and thus to constitute a kingdom of priests (136). Jesus was interested primarily in the prophetic office, as is evident from the fact that he did not inaugurate new rituals (86), but took existing rites, e. g., the Lord's Supper, and made them symbols of prophetic teaching (133, 135).—The religion of the book teaches that salvation is attained by a totalitarian submission to the letter of the book, resulting in an atomistic righteousness and a conduct pattern (138, 154 f.). Jesus also recognized the authority of the book, but as a *prophetic* revelation, which emphasizes the acquisition of character and of the proper motivation of the entire personality in its relation to God and man (181).—The paradox of an all-righteous God and the sufferings of his people led to the third response to the prophetic revelation: the religion of the throne, an apocalyptic religion. Was Christ's religion apocalyptic or prophetic? There is no final answer, because there is the possibility that the church colored her account of our Lord's teachings with her own apocalyptic outlook (236). Jesus also spoke of the impending doom, though he may have erred regarding the date of a future event (247). But this must not be viewed as "a historical blunder," because Jesus was not interested in foretelling the future, but in revealing God's ultimate purpose, namely, that man be brought progressively into submission to "Christ" and his message (250). Had Jesus been apocalyptic in his outlook, he would not have founded the Christian Church to improve this world, if the world was so shortly to be destroyed.—The religions of altar, book, and throne are ego-centric and appeal to man's emotional, intellectual, and volitional needs. But the religion of maturity (Heb. 6:1) is essentially a religion of the word *and* the act. In other words, the response to the word must result in a "redemptive community." The Word became flesh means that the divine word was fulfilled in the divine act, the establishment of "a community of moral, mature personalities, . . . first in the person and work of Jesus and then in the Church, which is his body" (272, 274).

The three religions described by the author find their counterpart in modern Christendom, and from this viewpoint the book offers rich material. But judged on the basis of three significant criteria, the book, in spite of its scholarship, keen insights, and interesting material, is written in the spirit of liberal theology. (1) The author speaks of the person of Jesus as the Word of God and the power of God, the only-begotten Son, etc., but adds that "these terms are intended separately and collectively to say that the Church has found the man Christ Jesus to be the God-given means of mediating God to man" (276). Christ's "authority," Matt. 11:27, "was no doubt the moral kinship which existed between the Son and the Father. . . . Jesus was so attuned to the will of his Father that when he spoke it was the word of his Father and when he acted it was the act of his Father" (279). The Vicarious Atonement is reduced to the following: "As God's act he accomplished God's righteous will for man's salvation and so manifested the Father to his people. At the same time he also vindicated man in God's sight by achieving on man's behalf the *imago Dei*. . . .

In the former capacity, Jesus was God's act of revelation, in the latter he was equally man's response to that revelation" (282). (2) The aim and essence of religion is the production of a community of moral, mature personalities who shall reflect God's moral person on the plane of history. (3) Revelation consists of a word and an act, and the act is the incorporation of the word in a community of moral, mature personalities (273). "By faith Jesus has become for the Church the divine act as the prophetic word was the divine word for the Hebrew people" (277). F. E. MAYER

Around the Mediterranean with My Bible. By Harriet-Louise H. Patterson. Foreword by Gaius Glenn Atkins. The Judson Press, Philadelphia (Chicago, Los Angeles). 366 pages, 5½×9. \$3.00.

This book does not belong to that large class of productions concerning which one with a sigh says they need not have been written. It is a delightful work, which helps one to appreciate the Bible lands and to understand the narratives of our Holy Scriptures. The author, Miss Patterson, has repeatedly traveled in the Holy Land, and she has personally conducted study tours to Palestine. What makes her book valuable is that she describes vividly what she saw when she traveled in Bible lands. She takes the reader by the hand, as it were, and leads him from place to place and points out to him what is interesting. Her book begins with a description of Gibraltar, from where she traverses the Mediterranean. A brief stop is made at Marseilles, thence she goes to Crete and Egypt. In the latter country she conducts us about in Cairo and vicinity and the land of Goshen. Going northward and having come within view of Sinai, she proceeds to Jerusalem. The Holy City and its many interesting sights are thoroughly visited. The itinerary next takes one to Hebron, to Bethlehem, and through the wilderness to Jericho. There follows a tour of the Trans-Jordan country, with its interesting remains of Greek and Roman culture. Next a trip is made from Jerusalem to the north, and the traveler is taken through Samaria to Galilee, where Nazareth and the Sea of Tiberias with its many interesting details engage our attention. Starting out again, we are taken to Damascus and Baalbek, with its incredibly majestic ruins. There follows a cruise along the coast of Palestine, past Jaffa, northward to Haifa and Mount Carmel, a visit to Beirut and vicinity, and a look at Tyre and Sidon. The return voyage takes the visitor to Athens, Naples, and Rome, and the journey ends "beneath the wooden cross in the Coliseum."

Miss Patterson remains true to her title as she writes; the Bible is always in her hand, and she connects the sites she visits with the accounts in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament. What lends a special charm to her description is the wealth of little details which she submits in her narrative. Now and then an opinion is voiced by her which is theologically unsound; the reader will have no difficulty in distinguishing between observation and speculation.

Not too much can be said in praise of the illustrations which the book contains, they are simply superb. The photographs on which they are based were taken by Miss Patterson herself. Having myself had the privilege of visiting the sites depicted, I can vouch for their authenticity.

W. ARNDT

The Devotional Bible. Volume Two. The Gospels According to Saint Luke and Saint John. Centennial Series. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 1948. 528 pages, 5¼×8¾. \$3.00.

The second unit in *The Devotional Bible*, published under the auspices of the Synodical Centennial Committee, brings meditations for the family devotional on Saint Luke and Saint John. Meditations introductory to Saint Luke are from the pen of the late Dr. L. Fuerbringer; those to Saint John, by Professor Martin H. Franzmann. The meditations on Saint Luke were written by Dr. Theodore Hoyer; on Saint John, by the Rev. H. W. Gockel. Each author preserves his characteristic style; all are alike in their practical penetration into the text. This volume should do much for encouraging a family altar which is not merely ritual, but an approach to God through His Word. The simple device of utilizing the text of the Gospels achieves for this volume an overpowering concentration on Christ—a thing sorely needed in the Church and in its devotional aids.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

No Uncertain Sound. By Ray C. Petry. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia. 1948. xiii and 331 pages, 9×6. \$4.50.

This stout volume is an anthology composed of excerpts of sermons and essays of the great preachers of the Christian Church from Origen to the pre-reformers. Great names like Chrysostom, Augustine, Bernard, Berthold of Regensburg, and Savonarola are there. However, the editor gives excerpts also of administrators such as Gregory I and Innocent III; of doctrinal teachers such as Hrabanus Maurus, Anselm of Canterbury, Bonaventura, and Thomas Aquinas; mystics such as Eckhart, Tauler, and Nicholas of Cusa; and lesser known but equally significant preachers as Wulfstan, Peter Damian, Peter of Blois, Jacques De Vitry, and Michel Menot. The editor has done a superior job in supplying sources and translations, and his bibliography is in itself most valuable. He has supplied a 44-page introduction, giving a summary of development and method. This introduction is especially stimulating and in subsequent editions deserves to be extended into a more complete section with subheads. Dr. Petry has put not only homileticians but historians of thought and the systematians into his debt. He is professor of church history at Duke University and produced this volume through funds supplied by it jointly with the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

Report to Protestants. By Marcus Bach. The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis. 277 pages, 6×8½. \$3.00.

This is a fascinating report by a roving reporter. Dr. Bach, now a professor in the School of Religion at Iowa City, begins his story in a small Kansas town, where he entered the ministry as pastor of the Evangelical church. Imbued with a spirit of ecumenicity, he unsuccessfully tried, with the help of the young Baptist preacher, to merge the community's churches. Disillusioned by a series of unhappy experiences, he resigned his pastorate and joined the ranks of the unemployed. After a brief association with a Pentecostal group, he enrolled at the State University of Iowa, where a Rockefeller fellowship in creative writing made it possible

for him to embark on his travels along "Church Street," observing the various sects and cults along the way. He relates his experiences with Roman Catholics, Christian Scientists, necromancers, palmists, yogis, astrologers, and many others. In these he senses a definite threat to historic Protestantism — aggressive Romanism attacking from the right, the cults from the left — and suggests how it must meet this threat.

Dr. Bach is a chastened ecumenicist; his experience in Kansas sobered him. He discovered a serious weakness in the social gospel he had preached. "A man caught in the conflicts of daily life," he says, "did not want a dissertation on world affairs. . . . What he needed was a definable reality in the Christian life and a usable power to meet his personal, everyday needs." After fifteen years of research he concludes: "The strength of the Christian faith is in the individual, and faith demands personal work." "In my anxiety about church union," he confesses, "I had by-passed the spiritual quest of my people." This, he says, was the fatal error of his first pastorate. He warns Protestantism to avoid that error.

Dr. Bach should give every Christian group something to think about. But in this book he does not reveal the real source of Protestant strength. It is not enough to give the patient individual attention; he must be given the right remedy for his sickness. That is found in the three "*solas*" of the Reformation: alone by the Scripture, alone by grace, alone by faith! There you have the remedy which Luther used against the corruption of Rome and the enthusiasm of the cults. Without these Protestantism is shorn of its strength: defenseless against Rome and all other work-righteous sects and cults. Dr. Bach has traveled a long way in the right direction on "Church Street"; perhaps he will go all the way in reclaiming Protestantism's precious heritage.

L. W. SPRITZ

Great Missionaries to the Orient. By J. Theodore Mueller. Published by Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 133 pages. \$1.50. Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis 18, Mo.

This is another in a series of popular volumes which Dr. Mueller has written, one that our pastors will do well to recommend to young and old in their congregations. It would have been better to have entitled the volume "Great Missionaries to Japan," as all the persons included in the book were missionaries to that country or to countries conquered by Japan and taken into its empire. One misses any reference to Lutheran missionaries.

W. G. POLACK

