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Book Review. - Literatur

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Book Review

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The Protestant Dilemma. An Analysis of the Current Impasse in Theology. By Carl F. H. Henry. Wm. B. Eerdmans Company, Grand Rapids, Mich. 248 pages, 8×5½. \$3.00.

Dr. Carl F. H. Henry is now professor of Philosophy of Religion at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif., after having served the Northern Baptist Theological Seminary at Chicago in the same capacity and Gordon College Divinity School, Boston, and Wheaton College, Wheaton, Ill., as visiting professor. The theological background will help the reader to understand why Dr. Henry takes issue with modern naturalistic and supernaturalistic liberal theology. This is his third of a series of volumes on current philosophico-religious thought, the two former being *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism* (1947) and *Remaking the Modern Mind* (1948), and in it he discusses above all the liberal theology of Karl Barth, rendered popular in our country especially by Emil Brunner, whose works are now being widely read. His analysis of contemporary liberal thought is conducted under five heads: 1. "The Mid-Twentieth Century Impasse," an over-all picture of the problems involved in modern Liberalism; 2. "The Mid-Twentieth Century View of Revelation"; 3. "The Mid-Twentieth Century View of Sin"; 4. "The Mid-Twentieth Century View of Christ"; 5. "The Protestant Horizon," which is a review of the problems discussed. To these chapters is added an important Appendix, consisting of five brief, but timely discussions of special problems, e. g., "Calvin on the Word and the Spirit"; "Luther on the Word and the Spirit"; "The New Testament on the Word of God"; "Subjective and Objective Authority"; "W. M. Horton's Christology." The reader will no doubt find the "Index of Subjects" and the "Index of Persons" very helpful for review and special study. He will also thank the writer for his clear analysis and keen discernment of modern theological and philosophical thought. He quotes many Modernist, Barthian, conservative Reformed, and conservative Lutheran theologians (among these Drs. Engelder and Reu) and shows that he is well acquainted with Luther's theology, which usually (though not always) he presents accurately and correctly. He writes the book not primarily as a systematician, but as a student of the Philosophy of Religion who carefully dissects the errant views of modern Liberals and as a keen apologist who disclaims all pretenses of conceited reason and leads his readers right back to Scripture as the only authority in religion. This does not mean that the Lutheran reader will subscribe to every statement made in the book, but it does mean that after he has carefully studied it, he will thank Professor Henry for having cleared up in his mind the intangible falsities of modern Liberalism, which perhaps he has felt, but has been unable to define. The author's viewpoint is not that of a strict Fundamentalist, but rather that of a conservative evangelical believer whose theological taproots strike down deeply into solid Reformation soil. At times his juxtapositions seem a bit novel, as, for example, when he writes: "Liberalism often points out that there are many systems of Fundamentalism —

[394]

Plymouth Brethren, Missouri Lutherans, Wesleyan Methodists, Orthodox Presbyterians, and Northern Baptists" (p. 54). But then he goes on to show that conservative evangelical theology cannot be equated with Fundamentalism at all. While the writer's analyses of the modern liberal views of sin and of Christ (which he shows to be at variance with conservative evangelical theology) are indeed important, his discussion of the modern liberal view on revelation is perhaps the most weighty, for here he comes to grips with the major premise of liberal supernaturalism and so with the most burning of all present-day theological questions, the vital question of what revelation is and where and how it may be determined. He points out that both modern supernaturalism and modern naturalism, because of their false premises, cannot speak of having any revelation, while conservative evangelical theology, which accepts the Bible as God's inspired Word, or as God's inerrant objective Revelation, is in agreement with both Scripture and common sense. The reviewer believes that this is the simplest, clearest, and most convincing refutation of the Barth-Brunner liberal theology which so far has been presented within the reach of the average reader's intelligence and withal the most persuasive appeal to present-day evangelical theologians to go back to the traditional doctrine of Christianity concerning the authoritative Bible as the true, objective "Word of God" and the sole source and rule of faith and life. He therefore heartily recommends this book to his fellow pastors for private and conference study. It will help them to see the old faith in new glory and the new theological aberrations in the old sham of untruth and deceit.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

Notes on the New Testament, Explanatory and Practical. By Albert Barnes. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. Vol. I (Matthew and Mark), 409 pages. Vol. II (Luke and John), 400 pages, 9×6. \$3.00 each.

Little did modest, scholarly Pastor Albert Barnes, Presbyterian minister in Philadelphia, Pa., think that when between 1832 and 1851 he published his *Notes on the Bible*, the first edition would be sold in more than five hundred copies and that subsequent editions would be read by millions of ministerial and lay students of the Bible, not only in English, but also in foreign languages of every sort, such as Welsh, French, Tamil, and scores of others. In other words, Barnes' *Notes* proved itself a best seller from the very beginning, and it is still a best seller today. The Bible student, therefore, owes the Baker Book House a hearty vote of thanks for getting out the *Notes* in this new enlarged-type edition, edited by Dr. Robert Frew, "with numerous additional notes and a series of engravings." The print is clear and so easily read, even the footnotes, which in former editions often were almost illegible on account of the small type that was used. There is no need to explain at any length the nature and purpose of Barnes' *Notes*. They were written primarily for Sunday school teachers and other church workers to enable them to expound the Bible successfully to children and adults. For this reason the *Notes* are simple, clear, brief, yet comprehensive, and quite to the point. At the end of each chapter there are added, under the title "Remarks," special lessons which apply the truths set forth in the text in a larger way to

present-day conditions. Very valuable also are the "Introductions" and "Prefaces," in which the author discusses essential *prolegomena* either of the whole Bible or else of special Bible books. We hope that the Baker Publishing House will succeed in putting out without too much delay the entire commentary of Barnes, including not only the New but also the Old Testament. We say this despite the fact that Mr. Barnes was a Reformed minister and his Calvinistic views are strongly reflected in many of his expositions. But this fact will enable the pastor to explain to his Bible students the doctrinal differences between the Reformed and the Lutherans, especially on the Sacraments, though on the whole the commentary is not aggressively controversial so far as Protestant teachings are concerned. The reviewer has used Barnes' *Notes* for years; and for all practical purposes, since Holy Scripture is essentially a perspicuous book, the average Bible student and teacher need no more than just such brief, practical, pithy notes as are offered in this commentary. The format is very handy for study, and the mechanical make-up of the book leaves nothing to be desired.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

In Understanding Be Men. By T. C. Hammond. The Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, Chicago, Ill. 255 pages, 7½ x 5. \$2.00.

The "Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship" is a conservative, evangelical movement which fosters Christian indoctrination and profession among students in English-speaking countries. The subtitle of the volume before us is *A Handbook on Christian Doctrine for Non-Theological Students*. Its author is the Rev. T. C. Hammond, principal of Moore Theological College, Sydney, Australia, who also has written a number of other textbooks for the "Fellowship." The method of study used is the following: 1. An outline is presented of the main problems connected with each doctrine; 2. Then follow Scripture passages bearing on the doctrine; 3. Next come questions concerning the more important aspects of the subject; 4. Finally, there is a bibliography for further study of the doctrine. The viewpoint of the author is that of a moderate Reformed Fundamentalist, but the differing teachings of other denominations, such as the Catholic, the Lutheran, the Episcopal, etc., are also presented, though not always accurately and correctly. The books referred to in the Bibliographies are on the whole those of conservative divines, such as A. A. Hodge, James Orr, W. G. T. Shedd, H. R. Mackintosh, Bishop Wescott, J. G. Machen, R. A. Torrey, just to mention a few well-known names. For further study of the Lutheran doctrine the students are referred to only one source book, namely, Martensen's *Christian Dogmatics*, though in a "General Bibliography" also Dorner is mentioned, but not the title of his *Dogmatics*. In general, the reader of the book is favorably impressed with the instruction that is here offered, since the writer endeavors to set forth the fundamentals of the Christian faith according to the traditional church teaching. There is also much historical material and much that belongs into the field of Comparative Symbolics. With regard to the Lutheran doctrine of the Real Presence, Mr. Hammond writes: "It is a modified form of Transubstantiation which hesitates to say that the substance of the elements is changed and yet would like to do so. It comes from an undue emphasis upon the words, 'This is My

Body'” (p. 228). Nothing, of course, is farther removed from Lutheran teaching than this. About Baptism the writer says: “The Lutheran doctrine agrees with the Roman in holding an *ex opere operato* view, but attaches the ‘operatus’ to the Word of God associated with the sacramental action” (p. 221). Here again the author errs, for while the Lutherans teach the efficacy of the Gospel also in Baptism, this is not understood as an *ex opere operato* efficacy, but as one coming from the Holy Ghost, who is indissolubly connected with the divine Word and always works in and through it. In a Preface the author warns that the “booklet is only introductory” and “must be supplemented by more extended study if full justice is to be done to the topics of which it treats.” It should by all means be supplemented by more extended study of Lutheran dogmaticians in order that the incorrect presentation concerning Lutheran teaching in this handbook may be corrected and the students may learn what the Lutherans really teach.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

Thy King Cometh. Sermons Preparing for the Lord's Supper. By Fred H. Lindemann. Published by Ernst Kaufmann, Inc., New York. 144 pages, 5½×8. \$2.00.

It is a disagreeable task when a reviewer is called upon to write an unfavorable review when both the author and his subject matter are of a kind which would incline the reviewer to speak a word of commendation. Pastor Fred Lindemann in his book *Thy King Cometh* is offering “sermons preparing for the Lord's Supper” in the form of homilies. He has written a preface of ten pages, giving his view of the place, the prominence, and the importance which the Lord's Supper should be given in the Lutheran church service. He says: “Our Lord gave only one directive as to what His believers were to do when they gathered for corporate worship. This sole directive is to eat and drink to His memorial. . . . As the people learn again to understand the Lord's Supper more fully and to use it properly and know its power from experience, they will not be content with only an occasional Celebration. As they recapture the art of Christian worship, they will instinctively sense that the sermon was never intended to be the climax. The realization will dawn that the sermon is part of The Liturgy preparing for the Lord's Supper. As the process of patient education continues, the congregation will discover that a chief service on Sunday morning without the Holy Communion is a headless torso, a form of worship that ends prematurely before reaching the climax towards which the whole liturgy aims.” “The chief service on Sunday morning without the Holy Communion a headless torso!” A torso, having no head, is a lifeless thing. Applying such a designation to a church service in which the Word of God is preached but Holy Communion is not administered is denying the all-sufficiency of the spoken Word to create, sustain, and strengthen faith. That such a thought was in the author's mind is borne out by another statement also found in the preface. Speaking of the historical and liturgical use of the sermon, he says that the sermon is merely “a preparation for the Lord's Supper, as a part of The Liturgy that leads up to the point when Christ comes and the Real Presence is experienced.” [Italics our own.] Christ is said not to come through the sermon, but after the sermon through the Lord's Supper. All this is contrary to the plain teaching of the

Lord, our Savior, Himself. He says: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," Mark 16:15-16 a: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life," John 6:63; "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My Word and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life," John 5:24; "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem," Luke 24:46-47. Perhaps the author is not willing to admit the implications of his statement, for in one of his sermons he says: "We eat when we believably and thoughtfully read God's Word or have the Gospel applied to our hearts through a sermon. But the *most satisfying eating* [italics our own] is done when we not only hear that Christ died for us but also proclaim His death and our confident faith by eating the Body given for us and drinking the Blood shed to establish the covenant of forgiveness," p. 120. But even here the author harks back to his previous statement when he says that "the most satisfying eating" is when we partake of the Lord's Supper. The author also says: "In the end, the Sacraments effect nothing that the Word does not effect. But it has pleased God to tie certain effects of the Word to the Sacraments. So we say and believe that these effects are produced in us and on us only through the Sacrament," p. 131. What has happened? That which so often has happened in the history of the Church: going from one extreme to the other. The author deplors the fact — so do we — that in many of our churches the Lord's Supper is not frequently administered and that many church members commune very seldom. In this they are not responding to the Lord's invitation and are not following the example of the early Christians, nor even of the Christians in the days of Luther. But instead of pointing out the great blessings of the Lord's Supper and the Lord's urgent invitation to receive these blessings and thus persuade the Christian to use the Sacrament of the Altar more frequently, the author exalts the Lord's Supper at the expense of the spoken Word.

Let us exalt the Lord's Supper, administer it frequently, encourage our Christians to commune often. If the Lord's Supper were administered every Sunday in our churches and every Christian would commune every Sunday, that would not be too often and would be pleasing to the Lord. But let us refrain from making a distinction between the means of grace which the Lord Himself has not made, and let us not exalt one at the expense of the other. And let us beware of becoming legalistic in our approach to this matter.

J. H. C. F.

Valiant in Fight. By B. F. C. Atkinson. The Inter-Varsity Fellowship, London. 192 pages, 5×7½. \$2.25.

The author correctly explains that in publishing this book it was not his purpose to write a detailed or technical history, but to give some account of God's dealings with His people in the past in the hope that it might prove an inspiration to Evangelical sacrifice today, give encouragement to our witness, and afford guidance in our stand for truth. He pleads for a courageous response to Christ's great Gospel commission to His disciples and recounts

the fortitude with which they bore witness to the truth in the past, in the face of severest opposition.

He describes the persecutions of the believers by the pagans in the early Church and later by papal Rome and others. In these days, when Rome pitifully laments the imprisonment of some of her churchmen, it may be a sobering exercise for her to remember that she herself has prepared the pattern for such things and worse. And whereas Geneva has long since erected a monument to Michael Servetus, Rome has never repented of the burning of John Hus and of countless other martyrs, nor has she to this day officially renounced her past policy of religious intolerance and oppression.

The author has weakened his case by a number of inaccuracies, some of minor, others of greater importance. Without any criticism, for example, he repeats the story of Luther's alleged experience on Pilate's staircase. More seriously, he declares that "Luther was never able quite to rid himself of a veneration for images." He fails in his attempt to explain the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. He manifests no appreciation of the services of monasticism to the growth of the Church. Nevertheless, for a rapid review of some salient facts of church history and a useful reminder of some things Protestants and other friends of freedom should never forget, this little volume may provide a few profitable hours of reading.

L. W. SPRIZ

The Life of God in the Soul of Man. By Henry Scougal. Edited with a historical introduction by Winthrop S. Hudson. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1948. 95 pages, 5×7½. \$1.50.

The booklet provides a reprint of a tiny work by an Anglican Scottish pastor of two hundred and fifty years ago. It has been reprinted innumerable times and has had great vogue among Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Methodists. Winthrop S. Hudson, who is now president of Colgate-Rochester Divinity School and president of the American Society of Church History, has provided an adequate and thoughtful introduction.

Scougal died when only twenty-eight years old. He had been a parish pastor near Aberdeen and professor of divinity at Aberdeen's Kings College. His booklet purports to be three letters to a friend on problems of faith and life. Unusually penetrating and helpful is the first chapter, "On the Nature of True Religion." This is as fine a statement as we have outside the New Testament of the contrast between natural life and religion, and "the life which is hid with Christ in God." The remainder of the work consists of definitions of and methods for developing the traits of the life of God, which are faith, love, purity, and humility. To the Lutheran taste among the methods of achieving these traits the "consideration of the truths of our religion" should occupy a more central position and one preliminary to such activities as "shun all manner of sin," "know what things are sinful," "resist the temptations of sin," "keep a constant watch over ourselves," "often examine our actions," "restrain ourselves in many lawful things," "do those outward actions that are commanded," and "form internal acts of devotion, charity, etc." Pastors will find the booklet useful for thoughtful individuals who are perplexed about the problems of practical Christian living.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

A Child's Garden of Bible Stories. By Arthur W. Gross. Illustrated by Rod Taenzer. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, 1948. 146 pages, 6×8. \$2.60.

Here is one of the most delightful books ever published by Concordia. It is difficult to refer to it without a glow of enthusiasm. Arthur Gross has retold some sixty of the well-known Bible stories from both the Old and the New Testament in a manner that reaches the understanding and emotions of the younger school child. Designed particularly for children from six to eight, it will be welcomed by teacher and parent for the simple and progressive account of man in his relationship to God. According to the publisher, this is exactly the purpose of the book.

Equally important as the simple text are the colorful illustrations by Rod Taenzer. To our knowledge this is the richest book ever produced in Lutheran circles. Through the medium of more than 150 full-color and black-and-white pictures every page is a marvel of artistry and child appeal. The title of the book is not a figment of the author's imagination; it is an apt description of a beautiful book.

ARTHUR C. REPP

Why Do Christians Suffer? By Anthony Zeoli. Van Kampen Press, Wheaton, Ill. 168 pages, 5×7½. \$2.00.

This little volume undertakes to analyze and systematize the many statements of Holy Scripture on the subject of suffering, presenting the matter first in outline form, then more elaborately with Scripture texts printed out in full. For example, it lists an even fifty ways in which the Bible answers the question: "Why do Christians Suffer?" We believe the book can be used to good advantage as a convenient reference in our preaching and sickbed ministry.

O. E. SOHN

