

6-1-1951

Book Review. - Literatur

W. Arndt

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



Part of the [Practical Theology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Arndt, W. (1951) "Book Review. - Literatur," *Concordia Theological Monthly*. Vol. 22, Article 37.
Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol22/iss1/37>

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

BOOK REVIEW

All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 South Jefferson Avenue, St. Louis 18, Missouri.

THE WORK AND WORDS OF JESUS. By Archibald M. Hunter, B.D., Ph. D., D.Phil., Professor of Biblical Criticism, Aberdeen University. Philadelphia, Westminster Press. 196 pages, 5½×9. Price, \$2.50.

Let me say at once that this is a very useful book. The author did not intend to write an exhaustive "Life of Christ," but to put at the disposal of his students a convenient guide for a study of the life of our Lord, a guide which would contain the latest information as to the opinions of scholars on controversial questions pertaining to the interpretation of the Gospels and the historical data they supply. He says in the Preface: "Whatever be the reasons, our New Testament scholars nowadays are not writing 'Lives' of Christ; and when I looked around for a short one, embodying the results of recent scholarship, to put into the hands of my divinity students, I found none suitable to my purpose. This is a very modest attempt to supply one." Continuing, he states that he has tried "to use seriously the four sources which Streeter and others have found to underlie the Synoptic Gospels." He adds: "And since there are many who vaguely know about Q, M, and L, but have small idea what these sources contain, I have printed an English text of them at the end." Q, M, and L are symbols which Streeter in his famous work *The Four Gospels* employed to designate certain documents assumed by him to have existed and to have been used in the composition of our Synoptic Gospels. As an outline acquainting theologically trained readers with problems and trends of thought and investigation this little book is admirable. The work consists of three chief parts, the first one discussing "The Quest of the Historical Jesus, the Sources of Chronology, and the Background"; the second, the birth of our Lord and His early years, the forerunner, the Baptism, and the Temptation; and the third, the ministry, from the first days to the resurrection. There are three appendices, giving the texts of Q, of M, and of L respectively. Valuable indexes conclude the work, which, it ought to be said, is generously supplied with scholarly footnotes. Of the many excellent paragraphs in the book I should like to call attention to one found in the discussion of the credibility of miracles (p. 59), where the author says: "If Jesus was, and is, what Christians have always believed Him to be, the Son of God in a unique and lonely sense; if in Him the Spirit of the living God was uniquely incarnated; if His will was completely synonymous with the divine will; then there is nothing inherently absurd or incredible in

the supposition that such a one must have had control over the grand frame of nature itself. In other words, grant 'the Grand Miracle' of the Incarnation, and the main objection to the other miracles falls to the ground. The issue has been memorably put by a recent writer with whose words we may close this discussion: 'If the universe is dominated by a Spirit, miracles are possible; if by a Spirit that is Love, probable; and if that Spirit has become incarnate, this miracle would make further ones more probable indeed.'" (T. E. Jessop, *The Christian Faith*, p. 15.)

The attitude toward the Scripture accounts, sad to say, must be criticized because it is not that of the Bible itself, but that of liberal theology; it is significant that the account ends with the Resurrection and not the Ascension. Hence the conservative theologian, while he finds the book brimful of pertinent, scholarly information and enjoys the chaste, reverent language, lays it aside with mingled feelings, with gratitude and with a sigh.

W. ARNDT

DIE THEOLOGISCHE STELLUNG DER APOSTOLISCHEN VÄTER ZUR ALTTESTAMENTLICHEN OFFENBARUNG (Beitraege zur Foerderung christl. Theologie, Band 44, 1). Von Johannes Kleivinghaus. 157 Seiten. C. Bertelsmann Verlag, Guetersloh, 1948. Preis, DM 10.

This Muenster University doctor's dissertation (1936) had the distinction of being published as the first postwar contribution to the famous series of studies founded by Schlatter. It deserves this honor.

The author takes up successively the *Letter of Barnabas*, *First Clement*, the *Ignatian Letters*, the *Shepherd of Hermas*, and the *Didache*. Pursuing a thorough-going inductive method, the author asks how these writers read the Old Testament in the light of God's revelation in Christ. It is established that failure to apprehend fully the significance of Christ's redemption has led these writers to a disastrous confusion of Law and Gospel and this, in turn, to a lack of understanding of the place of Israel and the Law in God's economy of salvation.

Apart from the special subject under investigation, this study has permanent value. It offers good sketches of the total conception of Christianity as found in Barnabas, Clement, and Ignatius. It is very helpful, in particular, in its soundly evangelical criticism of the *Didache*. Incidentally there are numerous interpretations of difficult and controverted passages.

The recent publication of Goodspeed's translation of the *Apostolic Fathers* has aroused new interest in these sub-Apostolic writings among many of our pastors. We may expect that when the Arndt-Gingrich reworking of Bauer's *Lexicon* appears, covering also the vocabulary of these extra-canonical writings, larger numbers in our circles will busy themselves with the Greek originals. The competent study of Kleivinghaus will prove a valuable aid in their interpretation.

VICTOR BARTLING

SAINT PAUL SHOWS US HOW. By O. H. Schmidt. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 119 pages, 5×7½. \$1.50, net.

The genesis of this book harks back to a meeting Dr. O. H. Schmidt had with a conference of workers in the Orient. The result of his studies on St. Paul's instructions on mission work given to the Colossians was read there as a conference paper. After thorough revisions it is now being presented to the Church as a study on mission methods. It indicates the manner in which missionaries will approach their mission tasks on fields at home and abroad, and it will also instill in the hearts of the individual readers a desire to be a missionary every day wherever he or she may be, and it allows St. Paul to show us how.

The busy pastor will soon be planning his fall and winter activities for Bible classes, for youth work, and for his women's guilds and men's clubs. This book should be purchased in quantities so that each one in a study group can have his own copy to mark and note. The material is divided into four sections according to the four chapters and would lend itself nicely to a season of Bible class activities, because it is a well-planned and careful interpretation of the Scriptures. There are discussions on false teachers, Christian liberty, false humility, the new life, the labor question, how to speak the truth in love, intercessory prayer, and many more topics. It is a fine birthday or Christmas gift suggestion. E. C. ZIMMERMANN

A PRIMER OF CHRISTIANITY. Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press, London, New York, Toronto, 1950. \$3.75.

As the title indicates, this book is a primer, "designed to provide the casual and not too well-informed Christian with the basic facts about his religion." It includes three volumes, numbering 116, 168, and 167 pages respectively. Part I: "The Beginning of the Gospel," a Gospel harmony in modern English, with explanatory remarks introducing the various narratives, is by T. W. Manson, Professor of Biblical Criticism and Exegesis at the University of Manchester. Part II: "The Furtherance of the Gospel," a brief history of Christianity, was written by R. W. Moore, Head Master of Harrow School. Part III: "The Truth of the Gospel," is a presentation and defense of the Gospel as viewed by the author, G. B. Caird, Professor of the New Testament at McGill University, Montreal. The authors do not believe in the inerrancy of Scripture. Professor Caird doubts the virgin birth of Christ; nor does he consider that doctrine of any importance. The Biblical exegete will find himself in disagreement with him on some other points as well.

L. W. SPITZ

LUTHERISCHE RUNDSCHAU. Bimonthly periodical published by the Lutheran World Federation, 17, Route de Malagnou, Geneva, Switzerland. Annual subscription price: 3 Swiss francs. 32 pages.

This is the title of a new German periodical published by the Lutheran World Federation in Geneva, under the editorial supervision of S. C.

Michelfelder, Carl E. Lund-Quist, and Hermann Ullmann. The first issue (March-April, 1951) contains brief but stimulating articles by Anders Nygren, Hans Meiser, S. C. Michelfelder, Franklin Clark Fry, Eivind Berggrav, and Hanns Lilje. Reports on the plight of the Lutheran Church in eastern and southeastern European countries and on the activities of the LWF are supplied by Igor Bella, Fredrik A. Schiötz, Martin O. Dietrich, Stewart W. Herman, and Antonie Nopitsch. In addition, Theodore G. Tappert reviews Lutheran theological literature recently published in our country, and Otto Bruder the two symposia *Worldlutheranism of Today* and *Viva Vox Evangelii*, dedicated respectively to Anders Nygren and Hans Meiser.

For an overview of the activities of the LWF, for an insight into the state of Lutheranism in Europe, and for a deeper appreciation of the task of the Lutheran Church in our day this new publication will become, in course of time, indispensable as a gold mine of information.

PAUL M. BRETSCHER

THE MUHLENBERGS OF PENNSYLVANIA. By Paul A. W. Wallace. 358 pages, 9½×6½. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 1950. \$4.00.

This thoroughly delightful volume is a chronicle of the immediate family of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg. It deals especially with the patriarch himself and with his three sons, Peter (John Peter Gabriel), Friedrich August Conrad, and Gotthilf Henry Ernst. Each of the sons grew to attain prominence in some field outside the ministry for which they were all trained — Peter as a general, Frederick as a statesman, and Henry as a botanist. Wallace tells the story of each in engaging and authoritative fashion, sketching in the history of the American Revolution as a backdrop.

For the church historian the most important parts of the book are those that deal with Henry Melchior himself. Though it was not the author's purpose "to trace the course of Muhlenberg's labors as an organizer of the Lutheran Church in America" (p. 39), he does supply us with insights into the character of H. M. M. often overlooked in conventional church histories.

At times, it seems, the book makes excursions into church history which should have been either omitted or amplified. Thus the picture of Halle Pietism presented in Chaps. VIII—IX (pp. 56—73) is considerably overdrawn; and the author's effort to explain this by comparing Muhlenberg and the men of Halle, much to the detriment of the latter (p. 73), is not completely satisfactory. Students of colonial church history may also take exception to Wallace's evaluation of the relation between Zinzendorf and Muhlenberg (pp. 31—33).

But, taken as a unit, Wallace's book makes fascinating reading. The chapters on the Revolution help the reader to relive those exciting days,

and here, as throughout, the author displays an excellent narrative gift. Several illustrations help to enliven the book, whose price, especially these days, seems very reasonable.

JAROSLAV PELIKAN

THE BRETHREN OF THE COMMON LIFE. By Dr. Albert Hyma, Professor of History, University of Michigan. Wm. B. Erdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mich. 222 pages. \$3.50.

In 1924 Dr. Hyma published a book that soon was indispensable for every student of Reformation history: *The Christian Renaissance. A History of the Devotio Moderna*. In the Preface to the present volume the writer says: "At that time the historians of Europe and America evinced little interest in this phase of the medieval culture. As a result it was difficult to locate the original sources and to evaluate the contributions of those men and women who participated in the work begun by Gerard Groote and his associates. . . . But during the past fifteen years a large number of scholars have turned their attention to the *Devotio Moderna*, with the result that thousands of manuscripts have been carefully examined and their contents made known. The outstanding mystics, reformers, and humanists who were connected with the movement are now much better understood by us than they once were. For this reason a second history can now make its appearance which presents a clearer delineation than was possible before." This book contains that part of the old issue which speaks more specifically of the Brethren of the Common Life, with slight revisions except for the last section on the original version of the *Imitation of Christ*, usually ascribed to Thomas à Kempis; that is new.—The Brethren of the Common Life have their place in Reformation history. They were not reformers in the sense that they recognized *basic* evils in the established Church and set out to change them. Certain things in the Church at the time shocked them; Hyma quotes Gerard Groote on the papal schism: "I wish that both popes with all their cardinals would sing a 'Gloria in excelsis' in heaven, and that a true Eliakim would bring peace and harmony upon earth. This schism cannot be healed without some terrible blow to the Church, which has long been in a position of decrepitude, ready to fall to pieces, and now the head itself is in a sad condition" (p. 35). But they had no desire "to adopt those views which the church of Rome considered heretical"; "no desire to break away from the church." With all the other mystics their desire was to deepen the traditional piety; but the Brethren were less vague in their endeavors, more practical than the average; and by their insistence on Bible study, through their educational work chiefly among the lower classes of the people, and above all by their devotional writings they definitely helped to prepare the soil for the Reformation. Luther always thought highly of the Brethren who were teachers in the school in Magdeburg which he attended, and he is quoted, later on, as wishing that there were more of them. But Luther was always inclined to give others more credit than they deserved; it is significant

that relatively few of the Brethren followed Luther; Hyma points out one of the fundamental differences between them when he again cites Groot: "Man is not wholly depraved. He still possesses a small spark of divinity within his breast, a radiant gleam of light, which may be fanned into a bright flame."—Professor Hyma's book is a required text for the student of Reformation history.

THEO. HOYER

FIRE UPON THE EARTH. The Story of the Christian Church. By Norman F. Langford. Illustrated by John Lear. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia. 207 pages. \$2.00.

This story of the Christian Church is written "for senior-young people." It will serve as well those who are still "young" in their knowledge of Church History. Under the four headings: "The Church Conquers an Empire, The Church Becomes an Empire, The Church Shakes the World, The World Shakes the Church," the author picks striking incidents in the history of the Church, sketches them in a dramatic way, and then draws a picture of the background and the results—making it in all an intensely interesting account. It is, of course, very condensed—207 pages, rather large print; but the information offered is disproportionately large; at times almost every sentence on a page might serve as chapter headings for a little book.—It seems to me that books of this type serve chiefly to create interest in history and arouse the wish for more information—or is that wishful thinking?—This book is a fine acquisition for your school, Sunday school, and Bible class library. Encourage the reading of this interesting "moving picture" of the march of the Gospel over all the earth.—It is almost self-evident that no two men could agree as to what should be included in such a brief account and what omitted. This reviewer's answer is: Let the next man do better! The more the better!—A few items might be changed in a future edition. Barnabas was not an Apostle, p. 19. A false impression of the decision of the Apostles' Council at Jerusalem is given, p. 20, when the statement is made: "Certain of the simpler Jewish laws must be obeyed by Gentile Christians." And—again!—on Luther's Enlightenment the statement is not sufficient; a few words added would make it right, but "faith in God" is not enough. The story of Henry VIII's divorce, p. 149, is a little easy on the Pope and hard on Henry.

THEO. HOYER

THE ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY AND CATHOLIC THEOLOGY. By Victor Bennett and Raymond Winch. Published by S. P. C. K. and printed by Hazell, Watson and Viney, Ltd., London and Aylesbury, 1950. 120 pages, 5×7½. \$1.00.

Though this book failed in its purpose to discourage the papal definition of the Corporeal Assumption of the Virgin as a dogma of the Roman Catholic faith, it is still a valuable addition to Mariology. Having examined the historical evidence, the theological arguments, and the dogmatic criteria which Rome has marshaled in support of its new dogma, the

authors, who in all fairness to Rome wrote from the Roman Catholic point of view, must admit that the reasons thus advanced for the papal definition are inadequate. But why be concerned about historical evidence or any other kind, as long as an *ex cathedra* pronouncement by the Pope satisfies the faithful?

L. W. SPITZ

KIERKEGAARD THE MELANCHOLY DANE. By H. V. Martin, M. A., B. D., Ph. D. 119 pages, 5×7½. Philosophical Library, New York, 1951. \$3.00.

It was probably inevitable that someone should write a book about Kierkegaard with the phrase "the melancholy Dane" in the title. Dr. Martin has done so and in the process has done a competent and sympathetic job.

Though apparently a priest in the Church of England, the author shows—and admits—the influence of Karl Barth (cf. p. 7, pp. 93—94). This influence enables him to interpret Kierkegaard as he wished to be interpreted, namely, as a Christian thinker interested in a theological reconstruction.

With most of the author's historical conclusions this reviewer finds himself in agreement, e. g., that "by his approach to the problem of ultimate truth [Kierkegaard] . . . breaks away from . . . the generally accepted conception of the task of Christian theology since Melanchthon" (p. 43). As for the author's theological approach, it is thoroughly Kierkegaardian and, as already indicated, not unaffected by Barth. On the point where it seems to this reviewer Kierkegaard is most vulnerable—the doctrine of the Church—Martin's defense seems inadequate (pp. 104 to 106), perhaps because of these influences.

Nevertheless, this little book is of primary usefulness as a theological introduction to "the melancholy Dane." For those who have read nothing of Kierkegaard and are looking for orientation, it should provide the very thing they need.

JAROSLAV PELIKAN

RUSSIAN NONCONFORMITY. The Story of "Unofficial" Religion in Russia. By Serge Bolshakoff, D. Phil. 192 pages, 5½×8½. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1950. \$3.00.

Current political developments are causing a revival of interest in the history and life of the churches of Eastern Christendom, notably in the history of Christianity in Russia. The fact that very few American churchmen and theologians have command of the languages of Eastern Orthodoxy has tended to keep the Eastern Church *terra incognita* for many.

All the more beneficial, therefore, is the publication of this volume by Serge Bolshakoff. In less than two hundred pages, Dr. Bolshakoff has succeeded in narrating the whole complex story of the sectarian and non-conformist movements in Russia, which may have had as high as twenty million adherents by the time of the Revolution (pp. 15—16).

In addition to his discussions of the Old Believers and other groups already known to the non-Slavic reader, Dr. Bolshakoff has favored us with a sympathetic interpretation of those groups which have given the Russian dissenters an unsavory reputation—the Skoptsy (pp. 92—95), the Dukhobors (pp. 97—105), and the Molokans (pp. 105—109). Of great value, too, are the author's insights into the fate of Roman Catholicism in Russian lands (pp. 133—150).

Concerning the prospects for Christianity in Soviet Russia, Dr. Bolshakoff has these thought-provoking sentences: "The Communists already have realized that they cannot exterminate Christianity in Russia. . . . In a great multitude of Russian novelists, artists, musicians, historians, and scholars of the past Christ has his own missionaries who cannot be silenced. . . . Although difficulties facing the Russian Church are great, they are less than those in the West where skepticism and religious indifference are so strongly entrenched. The latter are far more difficult to overcome than an open hostility" (pp. 175—176).

An extensive bibliography closes the book. Its usefulness would have been increased by the inclusion of most English studies connected with Russian nonconformity, e. g., F. C. Conybeare, *Russian Dissenters* (Harvard University Press, 1921), as well as of articles in American learned journals. The book is dedicated to the memory of Archbishop William Temple.

JAROSLAV PELIKAN

BOOKS RECEIVED

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

MANUAL FOR VACATION BIBLE SCHOOLS. Second Series (Revised). Editor: Arthur W. Gross. 70 pages, 8¼×10¾. 50 cents net.

HANDICRAFT PROJECTS. Beginners, Primary, Junior, and Senior. 8½×11. 20 cents net each.

From Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mich.:

THE SONG THAT JESUS SANG AND OTHER SERMONS. By John Linton. 88 pages, 5½×8. \$1.00.

TALKS WITH GABRIEL. By Arjen Miedema. Translated by Henry Zylstra. 253 pages, 5¾×8½. \$3.00.

From Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia, Pa.:

GROWTH IN GRACE. A Manual of Adult Instruction. By Wm. M. Horn. 128 pages, 4½×6¾. 65 cents.

From The Westminster Press, Philadelphia 7, Pa.:

THESE FOUND THE WAY. Edited by David Wesley Soper. 175 pages, 5¾×8¼. \$2.50.

From Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich.:

CALVARY'S WONDROUS CROSS. By F. J. Huegel. 116 pages, 5½×7¾. \$1.50.