

11-1-1953

Book Review. - Literatur

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Recommended Citation

Scharlemann, Martin H. (1953) "Book Review. - Literatur," *Concordia Theological Monthly*. Vol. 24, Article 71.

Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol24/iss1/71>

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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 GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW. By G. E. P. Cox. SCM Press, London (Macmillan, New York). 168 pp., 5×7½. \$2.00.

This commentary is one in a series known as the Torch Commentaries. This is a set worth knowing. The authors of the volumes in the Torch series do not follow the usual pattern of commentators. They seek to present in a very concentrated form the essence of each book of the Scriptures. The aim of the whole series is to provide the general reader with the soundest possible assistance in understanding the message of each book considered as a whole and as a part of the Bible. The set is worth recommending particularly to very busy pastors.

This particular volume on St. Matthew is done by the chaplain and lecturer in divinity at St. Katharine's College in Liverpool. Mr. Cox uses the traditional division of the Gospel into five books. In fact, he takes this division as the framework for his exegesis. He sees the structure of the Gospel as a prolog followed by a central section in which we find "five great discourses of Jesus' teaching preceded by narratives skillfully adjusted to introduce them." The message of the whole Gospel reaches its climax and is summarized in an epilog which sets forth the story of the Passion and resurrection of Jesus and His commission to the Church to preach the Gospel to all mankind.

Mr. Cox devotes a minimum of space to the question of authorship and of synoptic sources. Although we cannot fully agree with the results of his work, he presents his materials very succinctly and very effectively. He is to be commended for not going into greater detail; for this whole area is full of speculation and hypothesis. The distinction between the words and works of Jesus is highly debatable. Gerhard Kittel once said it is impossible to separate these two. Mr. Cox makes every effort at being scholarly and of using the results of modern Biblical theology.

Perhaps what he says on page 34 in connection with the Virgin Birth can give us the measure of this book. There he says: "It is important that at this time of day we do not simply reject it [the Virgin Birth] on supposedly scientific grounds as contravening 'laws of nature.' Natural science no longer makes confident claims for the immutability of the natural order as did a generation or two ago. The universe is no longer regarded as a 'closed system' in which no external interference is possible, nor are the 'laws' of nature regarded as other than empirical and incomplete formu-

lations of her normal modes of behavior. Too many 'impossibilities' have become very real facts in recent years for men to lay down with confidence the limits of the possible. . . . This is doubtless a 'miracle,' but without it, as agnostics have acknowledged, the greater miracle of the personal sinlessness and the unclouded moral and spiritual insight of Jesus, overcoming from the beginning the universal human tendency to err, becomes even more inexplicable than it is."

It may also be of some interest to present very briefly what this commentator says on Matt. 16:18. This paragraph is found on page 110. It reads as follows: "The basic idea is doubtless that of Isaiah 28:16. There is, however, an ancient midrash or 'edifying religious story' based on Deuteronomy 21 which describes how when God sought to create the world, foreseeing the faithful Abraham, he said, 'Now I have found a rock (*petra*) on which to build and establish the world' (cf. Is. 51:1,2). Similarly, Peter is said to be the foundation rock of the new Israel."

Of three possible interpretations of the phrase, "the keys of the kingdom of heaven," Mr. Cox prefers the one which describes the keys as "the symbol of unlimited authority in the royal household." He does admit, however, that there are two other possible interpretations. One of them might find a parallel in Rev. 1:18, where Christ holds the keys of hell and of death. The other interpretation is based on an analogy with Luke 11:52. According to this interpretation, Peter opens the kingdom of heaven to others by his knowledge and insight into its mystery, which he makes plain.

Mr. Cox does not interpret Matt. 16:18, 19 in such a way as to describe the primacy of the Bishop of Rome. He is quick to note that the authority and disciplinary powers granted to Peter were to be shared by the other Apostles. On page 113 he dismisses the whole question of the Papacy in this one sentence: "The question of Peter's successors is a matter which, whatever its merits, can hardly be said to stand upon the witness of Scripture alone."

All in all, this is a rather thoroughgoing commentary, which has much to recommend it. It is readable and interesting. It is not cluttered up with any footnotes or lengthy discussions on individual words or other details. It proposes to present the essence of the Gospel according to St. Matthew. In that task Mr. Cox succeeds admirably.

MARTIN H. SCHARLEMANN

DR. MARTIN LUTHERS EVANGELIENAUSLEGUNG. By Erwin Mülhaupt (ed.). Five volumes. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1938 to 1953.

The several volumes are:

- I. *Die Vor- und Weihnachtsgeschichte bei Matthäus und Lukas.* Second ed., 1952. 304 pages. 23.80 DM.
- II. *Das Matthäus-Evangelium.* Second ed., 1948. 872 pages. 48 DM.

- III. *Das Markus- und Lukas-Evangelium*. The last of the three fascicles appeared this summer. Price of bound volume about 30 DM.
- IV. *Das Johannes-Evangelium*. All fascicles have now appeared. Price of bound volume about 35 DM.
- V. *Die Passions- und Ostergeschichte*. 1950. 484 pages. 37.50 DM.

The publication of this work is a theological event of primary importance. For the first time a devoted student of Luther's works undertook the huge task of assembling from *all* of Luther's diverse published writings those passages in which Luther interprets the sacred text of the Four Gospels, of weaving these passages together, and of therefore giving us a running commentary on the four Gospels by Martin Luther. Though Luther published commentaries on some Old and New Testament books, he did not publish a commentary on any one of the Four Gospels. Nevertheless he expounded the Gospel pericopes in his sermons, published interpretations of the Lord's Prayer, the Magnificat, the Sermon on the Mount, the discourses in St. John's Gospel, etc., and in his devotional, polemical, political, and reformatory writings gave his interpretation of many passages in the Four Gospels. After twenty years of most patient and laborious investigation, Erwin Mülhaupt and his associates have, a few months ago, published the last fascicles so that by now all five bound volumes ought be available.

The editors proceed as follows: Scripture passage(s) in Luther's original translation; brief but meaningful heading by the editor; reference(s) to sources in Luther's works; Luther's exposition (in current standard German). Sometimes Luther's interpretation of a brief passage covers several pages; sometimes he apparently has nothing to say on a given passage. A well-done table of contents and a composite list of references conclude each volume.

This work is a *must* for the preacher who is eager to know Luther's thought on a given passage in the Gospels. In this work, Luther the preacher, the professor, the writer, the consultant, stands before us in the full regalia of a devout, Bible-believing, and Spirit-filled New Testament exegete. Practically all of Luther's theology is imbedded in these interpretations in his own, albeit sometimes brusque, always clear and challenging language.

If you can read German (and the editors have tried to make Luther speak a simple language); if you want to draw close to Luther's theology; and if you trust Luther to tell you how to approach the sacred text; then order, read, and make diligent use of this work. A hint: Order at once Luther's exposition of St. John. Luther is, in this writer's opinion, nowhere better than in his interpretation of the Fourth Gospel! Here you will find the quintessence of Luther's theology, his unsurpassable Christology!

We shall permit Dr. Mülhaupt, the editor, to conclude this review:

Wenn ich schliesslich einen Hauptgrund nennen darf, um dessentwillen mir besonders viel daran liegt, dass meine Brüder im Amt und die junge Generation bei Luther in die Schule gehn und bei ihm in der Schule bleiben, dann ist es folgender:

Luther predigt für den einfachen Mann, aber ohne Kanzelton und dennoch aus der Tiefe und Fülle der biblischen Wahrheit, und endlich: er "kann's noch nicht"! (z. B. S. 23 und 90 dieses Bandes). Wie sagt er doch selber!: "Man muss nicht prächtig und kunstreich predigen, dass man sehe, wie gelehrt man sei, und seine Ehre suchen. Man soll sich den Hörern akkommodieren. Das fehlt gemeinlich allen Predigern; sie predigen so, dass das gemeine Volk gar wenig daraus lernt. . . . Einfältig zu predigen ist eine grosse Kunst" (WA, Tischr. IV, 447; Nr. 4719).

Oberflächlich predigen ist keine Kunst, auch mit geistlichen Gemeinplätzen und unechter Salbung predigen ist keine Kunst, hochtheologisch und für Pfarrkonferenzen und Freizeithörer predigen ist auch noch nicht das Beste. Aber so schlicht und anschaulich und dennoch so aus der Fülle des Evangeliums und so aus ehrlichem menschlichem Herzen predigen wie Luther, das ist eine Kunst. Möchten viele diese Kunst von Luther lernen zum Heil der Tausende, die sich auch heute noch unter unsern Kanzeln das Evangelium auslegen lassen! (From Dr. Mülhaupt's preface to the third volume.)

PAUL M. BRETSCHER

REVELATION AND INSPIRATION. By James Orr. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. 224 pages, 6×9. \$3.00.

This is a reprint, but one which attracts the reader by its clear print and fine mechanical equipment. It is an old book, but one which still bears reading. The first book which Dr. Orr mentions in his "Bibliography" is Rothe's *Zur Dogmatik*, 1869; the last, D. M. M'Intyre's *The Spirit in the Word*, 1908. The scholars whom the author opposes are such "destructive higher critics" as Wellhausen, Duhm, Stade, Cornill, and others; but wrong views on revelation are still being spread, and the doctrine of Biblical inspiration is still attacked. There are new methods of attack, but much of what James Orr writes still holds. Dr. Orr lived from 1844 to 1913. He was a member of the United Presbyterian Church in Scotland, where he sought to promote the union between the United Presbyterians and other free churches. A native of Glasgow, he there served his Church both as pastor and professor of church history. He was personally well known in our country, which he visited repeatedly. Among his books his *Problem of the Old Testament*, *The Virgin Birth*, *The Christian View of God and the World*, *God's Image in Man*, and *The Progress of Dogma* are still popular and are widely read. In *Revelation and Inspiration* he treats such topics as "Revelation and Inspiration in Current Thought," "Naturalistic Schemes of Revelation," "Need of Special Revelation," "Revelation and History," "Prophecy," "The Element of Miracle in Revelation," "Jesus Christ, the Supreme Revealer," "Revelation and Its

Record—Inspiration," "Inspiration—the Scriptural Claims," "Inspiration—Results for the Doctrine of Holy Scripture." For the practical pastor the three last topics are perhaps the most important. Dr. Orr does not hold the doctrine of the absolute inerrancy of Scripture, but believes that there are limitations to inspiration arising from the progressiveness of revelation, the varying degrees of inspiration, and the fragmentariness or other defects of the materials with which inspiration deals (p. 175). His assumption of "degrees of inspiration" is very modern (p. 177). He believes that the sources of information with which inspiration had to deal may have been defective (p. 179). He does not like the expression "verbal inspiration," since that has been taken to mean "mechanical dictation," and he suggests "plenary inspiration" in its place (pp. 209 ff.). Nevertheless he holds that "the most searching inquiry still leaves them [those questioning the divine revelation in the Bible] with a Scripture, supernaturally inspired to be an infallible guide in the great matters for which it was given—the knowledge of the will of God for their salvation in Christ Jesus, instruction in the way of holiness, and the 'hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised before times eternal'" (p. 217). And what assures the believing reader that the Bible is the inspired Word of God is the testimony of the Holy Spirit (pp. 201 ff.). He closes his defense of the inspired Bible with the words: "The Bible that embodies this word will retain its distinction as the *Book of Inspiration* till the end of time!"

J. T. MUELLER

THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF CREATION AND REDEMPTION. By Emil Brunner. Translated by Olive Wyon. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1952. 386 pages, 6×9. \$6.00.

When Emil Brunner writes, others read. A theologian does not ignore him, whether he agrees with him or not. Curiosity is an additional incentive when he tells the reader that he has done something which has not been done before. Such is the case in this second volume of his series on dogmatics, in which he undertakes to emphasize the importance of the "I-Thou" truth in philosophy for Christian thought. Hitherto, he says, this has never been done within the sphere of dogmatics. The persistent curiosity on the part of the Athenians to hear something new no doubt encouraged the study of philosophy. In addition, it brought them to Areopagus, where they heard Paul. Some, indeed, mocked when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, but others said, "We will hear thee again of this matter." This is not to compare Brunner to Paul but to suggest that his presentation might induce some readers to hear Paul, particularly regarding the resurrection of the dead. The newness in Brunner's writings may, however, remind the reader also of something less complimentary, namely: a stanza of Nikolaus Selnecker's hymn "Lord Jesus Christ, with us abide, For round us falls the eventide," in which the poet speaks of those who "always set forth something new, devised

to change Thy doctrine true." This applies particularly to those who believe that they must allegorize or demythologize, or whatever it may be, Holy Scripture, in order to make it conform to the prevailing world view.

The fundamental aim of this volume is to present the truth of the personal character of faith as "encounter" with Christ. This, says the author, "means liberation from the rigidity and ethical sterility of orthodoxy and sets us free to have a faith which is based on nothing save the Love of God revealed in Jesus Christ" (p. VI). The author regrets that "the rediscovery of Biblical truth has again, as at the period of the Reformation, led to a rigid fundamentalism and confessionalism, which offers plenty of vulnerable points for rationalistic attacks from the intellectual Left Wing, and makes it appear as though criticism and convinced Christian thought were opposed" (p. V). Accordingly, he here presents the doctrine of creation and redemption in a manner which, he believes, is based on the conviction that sound criticism and genuine Christian thinking are not incompatible. He hopes to remove the difficulties which confront modern man in a strict exposition of all the words of the Old and the New Testament. "The Biblical story of Creation," he says, "is bound up with the picture of the world current in antiquity, which no longer exists for us. The failure to distinguish between a particular world-view and religious truth has made ecclesiastical theology first the enemy, and then the laughing-stock of science" (p. 28). To stop such laughter he proceeds to eliminate those items from the Old Testament which seem most laughable to him and thereupon subjects the New Testament to the same sobering treatment. At this point it might be well to recall that with all due respect for *sound* criticism the preaching of the Cross is to them that perish foolishness. God will permit neither the Jews nor the Greeks to tell Him what to do or how to do it.

The author's criterion for what he considers sound criticism and genuine Christian thinking is, not acceptance of "revealed truth," but "encounter" with the living Christ. He says, "He [Christ] makes Himself known to us through the collective witness of the Apostles, through the story of His life (in the Gospels), and the explanation of this story which the Apostles give us, through which we see Himself, and can ourselves learn to know Him as they saw Him and knew Him" (p. 371). Unfortunately the emphasis is on the word "collective." That fact is significant in the light of the author's theological canon "that in all theological statements about divine revelation we must begin with Jesus Christ as the Word of God Incarnate, and that we are not bound by any Biblical passages taken in isolation, and certainly not by isolated sections of the Old Testament" (p. 52). This canon is further clarified by his description of the witness of the Apostles as that witness which contains both the story of His life and the doctrine of His Person (p. 371). This means that any event in the life of Jesus which is not alluded to by the Apostles in their presentation of doctrine may be ruled out of the canon.

Thus, for example, the Virgin Birth may be ruled out, since "in the preaching of the Apostles, in the preaching of Paul and of John, as well as of the other writers of the New Testament, this idea does not play even a small part—it plays no part at all" (p. 354). The author's theological canon thus applied makes it a most unreliable instrument for measuring the authenticity of any Bible passages taken in isolation. Add to this his conclusion that "the Gospel of John has rightly presented this 'Jesus of History' as the Christ and the Son of God, although it is possible that He never really uttered those words which 'John' put into His mouth," and the criterion becomes still less effective.

In accord with his principle of viewing everything in the light of the living Christ as encountered in the New Testament, the author rejects the Genesis account of the Creation. Thus, basing his cosmogony on the first chapter of the Gospel according to John, he is, at least, certain of two things, namely: that the earth had a beginning and God is its Creator. He immediately casts a shadow of doubt upon this conclusion, however, by discrediting his authority with the suggestion: "It is probable that the Genesis view of the universe was also that of John" (p. 16). But by rejecting the Genesis account, he has conveniently eliminated the problem of the six days of Creation. The reader, however, is dismayed by the author's subjective handling of Scripture.

The justice of this criticism is supported by the author's arbitrary treatment of the New Testament. It seems that anything not repeated as often as, or where, he thinks it should be, is suspect. The Virgin Birth is a case in point. In spite of the clear statements of Matthew and Luke, he asserts: "The historical credibility of this narrative, however, is not such that of itself theological misgivings would be silenced" (p. 355). The rules of textual criticism certainly lend no support to such an assertion. It must, therefore, be based entirely on a theological presupposition, without any basis in fact.

The Christ whom the author encounters is conditioned by his canons of historical criticism. This is attested by the pains he takes to explain away the Empty Tomb. Since Luke and John are the ones who speak of it, he feels free to reject their testimony as that of later witnesses and as contradicting Paul. Reading his own exegesis into Paul's glorious chapter on the resurrection of the dead, he concludes: "Resurrection of the body, yes: Resurrection of the *flesh*, no!" (P. 372.) From this the reader apparently is to conclude that also in the case of Jesus there was a resurrection of the body, but not of the flesh, which must then still be in the tomb. The risen Lord indeed assured His disciples on the first Easter Day that they were witnessing more than "the continuity of the individual personality on this side, and on that, of death" of which the author speaks (p. 372), when He said: "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see

Me have" (Luke 24:39). Again, according to John 20:20: "He shewed them His hands and His side." But, then, these are the same "later" witnesses who speak of the Empty Tomb! The Christ whom the author visualizes is evidently not entirely the same as He into whose side Thomas could thrust his hand. Textual critics do not reject the passages which relate to the Empty Tomb, but for dogmatical reasons the author does.

This is not the place to discuss the author's hermeneutical principles, though a study of them might prove an interesting experience. Says the author: "When Paul [1 Cor. 9:9] expounds Deut. 25:4 by saying that these are not real 'oxen' but 'apostles,' then we must have the courage to say: at this point Paul is wrong." Really?

In conclusion, let it be remembered that also the so-called orthodox regard faith as encounter with the Living Christ, but they see more of Him through the medium of God's inerrant Word than the author is able to see in a book which to him is replete with myths and unreliable traditions.

L. W. SPITZ

DIVORCE. By John Murray. The Committee on Christian Education, The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. 117 pages, 6×9½. \$2.50.

The material published in this book was first presented in the *Westminster Theological Journal* between 1946 and 1949. When requests came for the presentation of the articles in a book, Dr. John Murray, professor of systematic theology, Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, edited and changed his studies in places, but so that the material in this reprint is substantially the same. In his Preface the author describes his approach to the subject and mentions the Scripture passages on which he bases his treatment of the Biblical teaching concerning marriage and divorce. The subject matter is treated in four chapters: "The Old Testament Provision," "The Teaching of Our Lord," "The Teaching of Paul," and "Practical Cases." While the reader may not agree with the author on every point, he will find these studies both wholesome and helpful. Regarding the Old Testament he writes in conclusion that "while divorce was suffered in the Mosaic economy, we have no warrant to suppose that under any circumstances was it sanctioned or approved as the intrinsic right or prerogative of the husband" (p. 15). Perhaps the most important chapter is that which treats the teaching of Christ on marriage and divorce. After a careful exposition of the Gospel passages involved he reaches the conclusion that "our Lord not only provided that a man may divorce his wife for the cause of fornication but that the wife also may divorce her husband for the same offence" (p. 54). With regard to 1 Cor. 7:15 he voices the warning: "If we are to interpret 1 Cor. 7:15 as legitimating dissolution of the bond of marriage, it is most necessary to restrict this liberty to conditions and circumstances which are analogous to those of the situation dealt with by the apostle. It is here that the gross abuse of this particular interpretation must be deplored and condemned"

(p. 78). Of special interest to pastors is the final chapter in the book on "Practical Cases," in which the author, so to speak, tests the principles he has laid down by applying them to specific cases. In view of the spread of the divorce problem also in our congregations we are sure that our pastors will welcome this book in their church libraries. The studies were written not only for ministers but also for laymen. J. T. MUELLER

DAS LUTHERISCHE BEKENNTNIS IN DER UNION. By Peter Brunner. Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1952. 103 pages. Paper. DM 4.80.

This work is primarily a critique of the new Church Order of the Evangelical Church of the Old Prussian Union of February, 1951, and of the new Rhenish Church Order of 1952.

Peter Brunner, Professor of Systematic Theology at the University of Heidelberg, is well known to readers of this periodical as one of Europe's outstanding contemporary Lutheran theologians. His competence to discuss the issue in question in this brochure is heightened by his service from 1936 to 1947 as instructor in Lutheran dogmatics at the Theological School in Wuppertal-Elberfeld and from 1937 on as pastor of the Lutheran Bekenntnisgemeinde in Elberfeld. This appraisal is simultaneously a word of caution and of warning and a plea for patience.

Brunner here writes frankly as a Lutheran for Lutherans, addressing himself to the "nonunited (*nichtunierte*) Lutheran" and the "United-Lutheran" (*uniert-lutherisch*) parishes in the territorial churches comprising the Old Prussian Union. (The former, very few in number, are parishes which, while remaining members of the respective territorial church body, have accepted the Union only in a limited administrative way; the latter, considerably more numerous, are parishes which accepted the Prussian Union in principle, without giving up their specifically Lutheran confessional position. These two classes of parishes stand in distinction to the "United" parishes, which accept as their confessional basis both the Lutheran and the Reformed confessions in so far as they agree with one another, the "United-Reformed" parishes, and the "non-united Reformed" parishes. The latter two correspond to their Lutheran counterparts.) By a careful, penetrating, often word-for-word analysis of the constitutional documents involved, Brunner demonstrates the legal and the historical right of the Lutheran confession to exist within the Union. He is concerned that the Lutherans whom he addresses use every means at their command to prevent either the Union or the respective territorial church to which they belong from becoming more than a "confederatively articulated (*konföderativ gegliederte*) union," in which the admission of Reformed communicants to Lutheran altars takes place at most on a basis of brotherly charity rather than as a canonically secured right.

According to Brunner, the ideal solution to the problem presented by the existence of the various confessions in the Union would be the

achievement of complete harmony on the basis of the Word of God. The next-best solution is what he calls an "ecumenical" one, in which the Lutherans and the Reformed would exist side by side, each group adhering loyally to its own confessions, with the Union restricted to administrative matters. The obstacle to this "ecumenical" solution is the existence of "United" parishes, which actually constitute a third denominational type. The *historic* right of these "United" parishes to exist cannot be denied; that they have no justification in Christian dogma for existence is an insight which cannot be legislated. In these premises, the only tolerable solution is one which faces humbly, penitently, and prayerfully the fact of the confessional differences. The Lutherans must work seriously toward the preferable "ecumenical" interim solution, while standing in conscious commitment to the earnest search for the ultimate, ideal solution.

This is no theoretical discussion of ecclesiastical unification, but an existential document which in an earlier draft form helped demonstrably to influence the course of some of the church events here commented upon.

It has other values as well.

It recapitulates a phase of German Evangelical church history about which American Lutherans generally have heard little and know less.

As a contemporary church-historical document it shows us a German Evangelical Church which is still far from conquering its rationalistic past. It has not yet fully recovered Nicene, let alone confessional Lutheran (or Reformed), orthodoxy. It is possible for a candidate to be ordained in it without confessing unequivocally the articles of the Holy Trinity, the deity of our blessed Lord, and His virgin birth.

Those who have been accustomed to evaluating ecumenical activities in terms of Stygian black and snowy white will find highly instructive the careful distinctions which Brunner makes among the various gradations of "legitimate" forms of ecclesiastical unification: "Regional conjunction" of church bodies with substantially identical confessional positions (like the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Germany); "reunion" of confessionally identical church bodies which have been administratively disrupted by schism (like the Church of Scotland in 1929); "absorption (*Resumption*)" of one body which changes its historical position by another which does not (like the submission of the Uniate Churches to the Roman Church); "concord" between two bodies with different doctrinal positions, in which each reconsiders its position in the light of the Gospel and finds it possible to adjust its position sufficiently to establish harmony (like the Wittenberg Concord of 1536). In the realm of ecclesiastical association he distinguishes "confederation" of church bodies with admittedly different confessional positions (like the German Evangelical Church Federation of 1922 or the present Evangelical Church in Germany); "ecumenical co-operation" (as in the World Council of Churches); intercommunion; and varying degrees of altar fellowship (full altar fellowship both in the *celebration* of, and in *admission* to, the Holy Communion;

unlimited admission to the Blessed Sacrament; *limited admission* to the Blessed Sacrament under exceptional circumstances). He also differentiates seven different types of church union that exist or have existed in Germany.

Brunner's obvious sympathy for the Old Lutheran (Breslau) Free Church, with which the Synodical Conference is now in communion, is most interesting to an American Lutheran reader.

The reader is tempted to want to ask Professor Brunner a number of questions. For instance, How comprehensive in reality is the "fellowship (*Gemeinschaft*) in the proclamation of the Word of God" which the Evangelical Church of the Old Prussian Union and its member territorial church bodies profess to have? Or, in the light of the corresponding article in the Apology and of the Summary Concept article of the Formula of Concord, is Article VII of the Augsburg Confession, with its "given" unity of the whole Church, quite as applicable to the problem of denominational unification as Professor Brunner would appear to make it? Or, if (as Professor Brunner argues) the creation of a schismatic free church or churches is no solution to the confessional problem posed by the Old Prussian Union, ought there at least not be a constitutional way for a parish which has once voluntarily accepted the Union to recede to a confessionally more independent status, so that, for example, under strong confessional leadership, a "United" parish might become "United-Lutheran" or a "United-Lutheran" parish might become "non-united Lutheran"?

ARTHUR CARL PIEPKORN

GROWING IN CHRIST. AN EXPOSITION OF LUTHER'S SMALL CATECHISM. By the Catechism Committee of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. St. Louis 18, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House. 296 pages, 5½×8. \$1.50.

In this book appears Synod's answer to the insistent demand for an attractive, illustrated, simplified Catechism for intermediate Grades 4 to 6, written in simple language and providing instructional materials of such nature and arrangement as to encourage the employment of predominantly inductive rather than deductive teaching methods. It is nonabstract, functional. With it appears also a Catechism workbook, bearing the same title and offering "supplementary learning activities designed to encourage ethical evaluation and to personalize the religious instruction."

The content of this new Catechism is well planned and arranged in four major parts, viz.: (1) Luther's enchiridion; (2) an exposition of the six chief parts of the Catechism, with three introductory units on the existence of God, the Triune God, and the Bible; (3) a brief biography of Luther; (4) children's prayers, a list of the books of the Bible, and alternate Bible stories which can be used in addition to, or as substitutes for, the Bible stories used in the expository units.

The manner in which the doctrines of Luther's Small Catechism are

presented promises to simplify and facilitate greatly the work of parents, pupils, and instructors. The uniform order of presentation in each of the 36 instructional units is as follows: (1) The Catechism text for the unit. (2) A Bible story briefly and simply told in a child's language. (3) Pertinent Bible texts with the Bible references. Coming immediately after the Bible story, these texts logically and naturally are to be used not primarily as proof texts, but as materials for inductive study and teaching. (4) A paragraph or two of Bible teachings drawn from the story and the texts. (5) A series of short questions and answers, averaging about 12 to 15 in number. (6) Word study, or a dictionary of difficult or new words employed in the unit. (7) A hymn stanza of devotional or prayer value. (8) A prayer, simple and quite liturgical. (9) A brief study exercise, usually in one paragraph, titled *What This Means to Me* and designed to bring the Bible doctrine "into relationship to living values and living problems of the learner."

The book merits high rating as an eye-appealing product of the printer's art. It is attractively bound in durable red cloth and richly, helpfully illustrated in colored original line drawings. The print is large enough to be easily read, and the type used is varied enough in size and kind to differentiate clearly the multinatured content of each unit. Unfortunately, the print and illustrations show somewhat through the pages.

In elementary schools of one or two rooms this Catechism can be used side by side with the so-called new synodical Catechism of 1943 or with Schwan's exposition. It will serve to meet a keenly felt need for Saturday and summer, or vacation Bible, schools. The effective manner in which it correlates Bible history and Catechism doctrine suggests the thought that, especially in congregations without elementary schools, it can and will be used to great advantage in the Sunday schools. In many two-year confirmation classes this intermediate Catechism could be used during the first year of instruction, and the regular Catechism during the second year.

Also this intermediate Catechism will not be introduced in congregations and put to the test of use without evoking criticisms and suggestions for improvement. Some individuals may express the fear that the multiplication of Catechisms will lead to confusion in the church as well as in the mind and life of the child. Others may express regret because Luther's wording of the Sabbath Day Commandment does not appear even parenthetically in this Catechism, as it does in the 1943 edition of *Luther's Small Catechism*. Still others will point to possibilities for improvement with regard to emphases in exposition, to illustrations, to questions and answers, to words and phrases, and to like matters. However, inadequacies of this kind may find ample counterbalance in the many excellent features in content and make-up of this book. May the Lord graciously bless its introduction and use in the churches.

A. G. MERKENS

SEX AND RELIGION TODAY. Edited by Simon Doniger. New York: Association Press. 238 pages, 5×7¼. \$3.00.

This is a volume of ten longer or shorter articles examining the relationship between sex and religion. One wonders why, on the one hand, men should speak of sex as a sacrament, as a means of grace and salvation, as a saving power, as an instrument of salvation and redemption, and, on the other hand, make it appear that premarital sex relations are merely a breach of a social code. Has the Sixth Commandment become outmoded? Scripture is referred to and quoted repeatedly, but not as a norm by which men must be guided in daily life. The article on "Christianity and Sex" by Roland H. Bainton, giving an historical overview of marriage and concomitant problems, is in the main quite instructive and stimulating as well as helpful for ready reference.

O. E. SOHN

SOME PREACHERS DO. By Bertie Cole Bays. The Judson Press, Chicago-Philadelphia-Los Angeles. Third edition. 93 pages, 5¼×7¾. \$1.25.

This little book endeavors to acquaint a young aspirant to the Christian ministry with the opportunities and pitfalls of that noble profession and to suggest the proper course to follow. It is written in a humorous way and with so much sarcasm that its effectiveness is greatly reduced. Perhaps this is a case of *de gustibus non est disputandum*, but we could appreciate a more serious approach to the problems of the holy ministry.

O. E. SOHN

RURAL CHURCH ADMINISTRATION. By Rockwell C. Smith. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York and Nashville. 176 pages, 5 by 7½. \$2.00.

In essence this little volume is an abridged pastoral theology placed against a town-and-country background, but readily adaptable to a city ministry. The author's conservatism often leads him to suggest procedures which are current in our circles, but, among other things, his views and suggestions concerning the nature and administration of the Sacraments are totally inadequate for us. Read with proper discernment, the book offers some very helpful suggestions for effective parish work, especially in the rural areas. The chapters on Parish Worship were particularly provocative.

O. E. SOHN

MORE POWER FOR YOUR CHURCH. By Willard A. Pleuthner. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Young. 408 pages, 5½×8¼. \$3.75.

We can best characterize this ambitious volume of 26 chapters as a comprehensive manual of practical church work in which the emphasis is placed on ways and means of developing the congregation's effectiveness. It presents tested plans and projects for increasing a church's power. To mention but a few of the suggested means, the

book discusses such subjects as the enlistment of the laity, every-member surveys, projects for teen-age groups and other organizations, every-member canvass plans, tithing, keeping the church plant and premises attractive, broadcasting, public relations, etc. It is the type of book that is useful to have around for various church undertakings. The author is an energetic layman who has drawn on the experiences of many clergymen and church workers in the compilation of this volume. Stewardship committees or secretaries could find in it a wealth of helpful suggestions, including detailed plans.

O. E. SOHN

EXPOSITORY PREACHING FOR TODAY. By Andrew W. Blackwood. Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1953. 224 pages, 5½×7¾. \$3.00.

Dr. Blackwood's definition of "expository preaching" is preaching whose "light comes mainly from a Bible passage longer than two or three consecutive verses." Ultimately Dr. Blackwood recommends a sequence of texts from the same book of the Bible. He emphasizes the need for a "unifying truth" for each sermon. In his discussion of varieties of sermon structure, he recommends the method of developing a truth by means of cases from life. In the course of the volume Dr. Blackwood discusses a number of problems related to preaching and parish administration, including the use of the church year, the relation of preaching to the Sunday school and the evening service, and the influence of good preaching on the preacher himself. Dr. Blackwood has written many volumes, and this fine book does more than repeat previous materials and emphases.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

SUCCESSFUL FUND-RAISING SERMONS. Compiled by Julius King. New York: Funk and Wagnalls Company. 274 pages, 8×5½. \$4.00.

No pastor will regret the purchase of this book of thirty-six sermons and addresses by prominent Protestant pastors and laymen on the subject of church finances. This is no endorsement of its over-all theology, which either is Christless or presents a merely human Christ. Only one of the sermons actually dwells to any extent upon the Atonement and uses it as the chief motivation for the practice of Christian stewardship. Though occasionally one also sees genuine Gospel texts quoted, the book presents the social gospel throughout.

But if one is looking for excellent material and direction on efficient and effective ways of preaching Christian stewardship, on preparing for and carrying out the annual canvass, and the like, one will find it in this book. These men are experts who speak from long and wide experience in this field and present the matter so attractively that one does not tire of reading sermon after sermon. With but little effort this material can be given the proper Christian basis and motivation, so that it will prove a powerful aid in promoting Christian stewardship in all its aspects.

O. E. SOHN