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The True Criterion of Orthodoxy.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER, St. Louis, Mo.

Among the numerous questions that have come to the front in connection with the controversy between Fundamentalists and Liberalists, the one pertaining to the true criterion of orthodoxy is no doubt foremost in importance. In the general confusion which has followed in the wake of the discussion, men have repeatedly asked: What determines orthodoxy? Is orthodoxy a creedal shibboleth or merely a spiritual principle? That so simple a query has been raised in sober earnest, indeed, that it has been made a *status controversiae* in a controversy that engages the minds of learned theologians, is certainly a *testimonium paupertatis* to the present-day Christian Church. It shows the extent of the decay which rationalism has caused in the Church, and proves that the canker of infidelity, having already blighted the whole body of Christian doctrine, is about to destroy the very core of the Christian faith. No truly Christian theologian would seriously put that question and make it the subject of dubious inquiry. To every believing theologian the issue is clear from the start. He knows what orthodoxy means and entertains no doubts in regard to its criterion. To him there is only one test of orthodoxy — the Word of God. Only that is orthodox which is Biblical. *Quod non est Biblicum non est theologicum.* It is only since Modernism has discarded the fundamentals of Christian belief and annulled every article of the faith which was formerly regarded as an impregnable fortress that men must again ask what orthodoxy is and by what standard it should be gauged.

Of course, the reply of Modernists is negative. According to the liberalistic views of modern theologians, orthodoxy has nothing to do with dogma, tenet, or creed. Orthodoxy is therefore no creedal shibboleth. It is not determined by any confession or

BOOK REVIEW.

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

Popular Commentary of the Bible. New Testament. Vol. II: Romans to Revelation. *Paul E. Kretzmann, Ph. D., D. D.* 664 pages, 7×10½. \$4.50.

We are pleased to announce that Volume II of the *Popular Commentary* is now ready. This volume completes the New Testament, Romans to Revelation. The make-up of the volume is the same as that of the first: the text stands out in bold type, then follows the commentary on the text, and finally a summary is given. Also for this volume, as for the first one, the author has written a number of articles and excursus. We quote the titles: "Justification," "The Election of Grace," "The Christian's Conduct in Things Indifferent," "Church Discipline," "The State of Holy Wedlock," "Christian Giving," "The So-called 'Social Gospel,'" "The Difference between the Moral and the Ceremonial Law," "Obedience—Absolute and Relative," "Antichrist," "Slavery," "The Universal Priesthood of the Believers," "Christ's Descent into Hell," "Chiliasm."

The completion of these two volumes of the *Popular Commentary*, covering the whole New Testament, deserves more than passing notice. Not only our pastors and our teachers in the church-school are thereby given a desk-book of ready reference, and Sunday-school teachers a valuable help for a better understanding of the lessons taken from the New Testament, but the average Christian has been given a New Testament commentary which is reliable as to doctrine, can easily be read and understood, and is within the reach of his purse. In fact, it was the plea of the laity which persuaded our Publishing House to arrange for the publication of a popular Lutheran commentary in the English language. It will mean much to our Lutheran Church if its English-speaking members—and these are, of course, the young people and those of middle age—will not neglect to study the Scriptures. It is the attention which our Synod has given to doctrine which accounts for its conservatism, its growth, and its success in the past seventy-five years. The reason for the deplorable condition of the visible church in our country and throughout the world is that many have forsaken the Word of God and have accepted "another gospel." But it is with reference to this "other gospel" that Paul says: "As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." Gal. 1, 9.

Our Publishing House announces that Volume I of the *Popular Commentary* had a large sale. All the owners of Volume I will, no doubt, immediately send for Volume II. Others have perhaps been waiting for the time when they could purchase both volumes. In any case, the *Popular Commentary* ought to be bought and studied by our people.

Dr. Kretzmann is working on the Old Testament and has his manuscript for the first volume ready. May God graciously continue to guide him and let him well finish the great task of writing a commentary on the whole Bible! May the Lord graciously keep us in His grace and in His Word and spread His truth for the salvation of many! May He let the *Popular Commentary* be a means toward this end!

FRITZ.

Synodical Reports: *Southern Wisconsin District.* 63 pages. 28 cts.—
Northern Illinois District. 68 pages. 30 cts.—*Colorado District.*
 32 pages. 14 cts.—*Central District.* 68 pages. 30 cts.

The report of the Southern Wisconsin District contains a doctrinal essay by Pastor R. Schroth on "Christians Exercising the Functions of Their Priesthood"; that of the Northern Illinois District, an essay by Pastor H. Heise on "The Kingly Office of Christ"; that of the Colorado District, a very brief outline of Theses V and VI of an essay by Pastor Th. Hoyer on "The Saving Grace of God"; that of the Central District, an essay by Pastor Th. G. Frank on "The Threefold Office of Christ" and also an essay by Pastor F. J. Lankenau on "The Church and Missions." FRITZ.

Ye Fathers. Christian Home-Training. A fundamental requirement for improving the School Situation of Synod. *A. C. Stellinghorn.* Single copies, 4 cts.; in quantities, 3 cts.

This pamphlet is published by the School Board of our Synod. It is a most excellent exposition of the duties of Christian parents to rear their children in the admonition of the Lord, and should be scattered broadcast in our congregations. MUELLER.

Verlag des Schiftenvereins (E. Klaerner), Zwickau, Sachsen:—

Der Brief des Jakobus. Ausgelegt von *Dr. C. M. Zorn.* 40 cts.

"Deutsches Christentum" und "Deutsche Kirche." Eine zeitgemaeesse Warnung von *Dr. Otto Willkomm.* 4 cts.

Zeugnisse fuer die Wahrheit der Bibel.—Welchen Zweck hat die Bibel?—Was ist die Bibel, und wie ist sie entstanden?—Enthaelt die Bibel Irrtueemer? Each 4 cts.

Verlag Schriftwort, Koenigsberg, Yorkstrasse 55:—

Was heisst eigentlich "lutherisch"?—Der lebendige Gott—Deutschlands einzige Rettung!—Jesus Christus—deine einzige Rettung!

These excellent tracts, written by Dr. Willkomm and Rev. Huebener of the Saxon Free Church, as well as Dr. Zorn's lucid and practical explanation of the Epistle of St. James, serve the purpose of spreading the truth of God's Word, especially in Germany. Hence they are missionary tracts designed for the propagation of the Gospel, and as such set forth the teachings of Scripture in its whole truth and unadulterated purity. This blessed work demands our heartiest support, and it is for us Lutheran Christians, blessed so bountifully in temporal and spiritual matters, to promote it by our liberal contributions. The topics discussed are timely and of value also to our Christians. A most simple and effective way of supporting the missionary work in Germany by means of these tracts would be for Lutheran congregations in this country to order them in large quantities, and distribute them among those who still understand and appreciate the German language. The tracts and pamphlets have been gotten up with great care, and, while brief, set forth the respective Scripture doctrines with great lucidity and force. The tracts may be imported through Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. MUELLER.

Lutheran Book Concern, Columbus, O.:—

The Active Church-Member. *R. C. H. Lenski.* \$1.25. Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

This manual was written principally for Christian laymen. Hence, in the nine chapters of this book the author treats in simple and popular style the main aspects of church-work, grouping them under the following headings: The Power, the Work, the Worker, the Spirit, the Organization, the Obligations, the Method, the Aids, and the Glory. The treatment of these subjects is succinct and clear, yet the author offers a store of information which the Christian church-worker ought to know. Occasionally the reviewer differed with the author. Thus it is claimed: "Because the pastor is the head of the congregation by virtue of his office, he ought to preside." (p. 93.) We beg to differ on this score. The very fact that also in the congregational meeting the pastor is the *teacher* of his flock ought to keep him out of the chair, in order that he may concentrate his efforts on the elucidation of difficult questions which are apt to arise at any time. Occasionally, too, there are statements lacking in clearness, as, for example: "When a man only thinks that he has the Word, he may be as confident as the old Jews who trusted in themselves that they were righteous. . . . Such confidence is like trusting in a shadow." (p. 83.) The proof-reader might have taken greater care to eliminate the large number of typographical errors which mar the book. Apart from these minor deficiencies, the book is good, both in content and in make-up, and we cheerfully recommend it to our pastors and laymen as a popular manual on questions that deserve greater study than is usually accorded them.

MUELLER.

The Castle Press, Philadelphia:—

The Way. A Little Book of Christian Truth. *Charles M. Jacobs.* 178 pages.

It is possible that already in the *Didache* the term *he hodos* was taken to mean "a system of religious teaching," a guiding compend pointing the way to the inquirer or novice for the possession of the entire truth. The author of this treatise points to the revised version of Acts 24, 14, as justifying his choice of a title for the same. In the easiest and simplest manner imaginable he offers the literary product of odd moments of his life—a statement of elementary Christian truth, the need of which, he believes, is felt by men and women "amid the questionings of an age that is not on the whole an age of faith." While the questionings which the author must have had in mind are not merely the tame and timid efforts of children and beginners to learn the truth about Christianity, but the violent and bold doubts of defiant opponents of Christianity, there is not a warlike note and nothing of the combative spirit of the controversialist in this book. Even its occasional rebukes, mostly in the field of ethics, are mild. The author's aim was to "put in some connected form of plain words the convictions that he holds about the things that are most worth while." In twelve chapters he discusses the Church of Jesus Christ, Human Nature, Jesus, God, Christ the Teacher of Righteousness, Christ the Savior, Faith, the Holy Ghost, Means of Grace, a Christian's Life, the Kingdom of God, the Christian Hope. Each of these subjects is developed in a manner peculiar to the author: from readily admitted facts he leads up gradually to his final positions. To note a few of the author's views, he is undecided

whether *ekklesia* in Matt. 18, 17 is the local congregation. (p. 8.) On the differences between the visible churches he says: "We do not all agree as yet; indeed, there are many very important things about which we entirely disagree. So long as this is true, it is better that we have our many churches, each standing for its own beliefs, than to have a single organization, filled with disagreement and contention. Our divisions are harmful only when they do not express real differences, or when they become the servants of intolerance and bigotries." (p. 14.) The last sentence weakens the preceding one: also where there are real differences, as between the Lutheran and the Reformed churches, or between Lutheranism and Romanism, the divisions certainly prove harmful and are, as a rule, characterized by intolerance and bigotry. No division among people professing to believe in Christ can be viewed or treated with anything like complacency. Christian truth is ever one, and it is exclusive; the Christian Scriptures, accordingly, are both *pros paideian* and *pros elegchon*. The view propounded on pp. 18—27 on the seemingly illimitable potential greatness and the bright side of human nature, on the one hand, and its unfathomable possibilities of evil, on the other hand, is rightly referred to the domain of common human experience, "without Christ," but even so it is an overstatement of the bright side. Even the *justitia civilis* and the use of reason in the affairs of this present life are tainted and ever retarded by sin, as the Lutheran Confessions point out. The Bible teaches not only that we were made in the image of God, but also that the divine image in us is lost. If the author's remarks on the possibilities of the human nature should be applied also to spiritual affairs, — and we are afraid that they will be so applied, — they are wrong according to John 15, 5; Eph. 2, 1. 5, etc. What the author has said about human nature should be read in connection with what he has said in the chapter on the Holy Ghost about regeneration, but even there the statement regarding the two adverse wills in the regenerated might be strengthened by a remark that the power which would raise us up is implanted in us by the Holy Ghost, is a new element in us, and therefore not in the same sense "a part of us" as the power that would drag us down. (p. 112.) On this latter point the author speaks correctly on p. 76 f. In the chapter on Christ the Savior, which exhibits the heart of Christianity, we find the substitution of Christ in the sinner's place and in consequence of this the reconciliation of the sinner world, taught. Of course, the very term "reconciliation" points to the wrath of God that made the atonement, propitiation, etc., necessary. A few words on this subject of the wrath of God and the vicarious satisfaction would be most timely at this place, in place of a popular error that is ever more spreading among men. So, too, we could wish not to have the State mentioned on a line with the family and the Church as the forces by which God brings His kingdom a little nearer to men (p. 161); for, as the author states p. 166, the State and the Church differ as regards their aims, means, and ends. D.

George H. Doran Company, New York:—

The Preacher and His Sermon. Rev. J. Paterson Smyth, B. D., LL. D., Litt. D., D. C. L., late Professor of Pastoral Theology, University of Dublin. 143 pages, 5¼ × 7¾. \$1.50.

This book contains five lectures on the following subjects: The Preacher; The Preacher: His First Five Years; Placere; The Quality

of "Grip"; Preparing the Sermon; Preaching the Sermon. Dr. Smyth quotes Archbishop Magee, who described three types of preachers: "There are some preachers whom you *cannot* listen to; there are some preachers whom you *can* listen to; there are some preachers whom you *must* listen to." Dr. Smyth adds: "I think there is a considerable number of the first, a very great number of the second, and extremely few of the third, extremely few; and I do not believe this need be so." The author makes a plea for more preachers of the third class, those whom people *must* listen to, and gives some valuable advice along these lines.

Some statements in Dr. Smyth's book we cannot approve. He says, for instance: "Especially should you try gradually and steadily to correct those old false views about the Bible and verbal inspiration which are the chief stronghold of skeptical attacks on Scripture. It is so easy for skeptics to point out to simple people in the Old Testament permitted usages that we would not tolerate to-day, and sentiments of inspired men which, we feel, could not win the approval of Christ." FRITZ.

The Macmillan Company, New York:—

The Ministry as a Life Work. *Rev. Robert Lee Webb, S. T. M.,* Corresponding Secretary, the Northern Baptist Education Society. 96 pages, 5¼×7¾. \$1.00.

This book makes a plea for more ministers. As reasons for the shortage of ministerial students at the theological schools of the various church denominations, the author, Dr. Webb, mentions low salaries and a lack of appreciation of the minister's work. Both of these reasons do not explain. Dr. Webb comes closer to the real reason when he says: "It should be noted also that lately the spiritual life of the churches of our land has not been of the type to emphasize the call to the ministry. . . . In the last analysis the solution of the problem lies in the spiritual atmosphere of the Church of God." But, after all, also in these words Dr. Webb's trumpet gives an uncertain sound, and "who shall then prepare himself for the battle?" The real reason for the shortage of theological students in other denominations (our own colleges are filled to overflowing) is the rank theology of those churches. When professors are tolerated in the chairs of theology who teach modern liberalism, denying the very doctrines plainly taught in the inspired Scriptures for the salvation of sinners, and when this same modern liberalism is preached in the pulpits of the churches, how, then, *can* young men be persuaded to study for the ministry; in fact, *why* should they be persuaded to do so? Modern theology is not filling the churches with people, and, of course, also not the seminaries of those churches with students. We agree with Dr. Webb when he says that the minister of the Gospel should be physically fit, mentally fit, and spiritually fit. The last needs to be specially emphasized and rightly understood. We also agree with Dr. Webb when he insists that the minister should be well trained for his work. He says: "Greek and Hebrew may not be necessary from our modern viewpoint, but it does seem fitting that the man who is to deliver the message of the Gospel should have at least a working knowledge of the wonderful language in which that Gospel was given to the world. The man unacquainted with Greek is shut out from the beauties and spiritual suggestions conveyed only through that matchless language. Such a man can

never be an independent investigator of the truth, for he must ever be subservient to the judgment and scholarship of other men. Moreover, the minister needs the intellectual training that comes from stiff courses of study, especially in the realm of language. He needs an education that will give a certain hardness to his intellectual and moral fiber; a power to face hard questions, to think them through to satisfying conclusions both for himself and the cultured men and women of his congregation. Other professions are steadily increasing their educational demands upon their members, and the ministry cannot afford to fall behind in the character and equipment of its members. Remembering the exacting conditions of our times, the many problems that demand wide observation, breadth of knowledge and culture, and clear, accurate thinking; remembering the increase of general education whereby college-bred men and women are found in every congregation; remembering the glorious greatness of the Gospel-message, we can hardly overemphasize the need of adequate preparation for the men who are to become 'stewards of the mysteries of God.'

Finally, Dr. Webb says: "The only corrective for the chaos, restlessness, and laxity of the present is more religion." Yes, but of the right kind, namely, that of the Holy Scripture, "which is able to make men wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." FRTZ.

What Christianity Means to Me. A spiritual autobiography. *Lyman Abbott*. \$1.75.

The Christianity advocated in this volume is not the Christianity of Paul, but rather the reconstructed and recast paganism of present-day rationalists. What this reconstructed Christianity means to a Modernist Lyman Abbott has endeavored to show in his "Spiritual Autobiography." To men like Abbott, "the foundation of the Christian Church is not Peter's doctrine of Christ, but Peter as a type of humanity transformed by the inspiration which he had received from a year of intimate companionship with Jesus." (p. 35.) "Hence the Christian Brotherhood, which is more than the Church or all the churches combined, is founded not on agreement in opinion, that is, on a creed; not on agreement in forms of worship, that is, on a ritual; not on agreement in the form of organization, . . . but on love and loyalty to a living Messiah, forever incarnate in the hearts and lives of His disciples, in a more intimate companionship and with a far mightier influence than when He trod the earth with a few score of faithful friends whom He gathered about Him." (pp. 43. 44.) "Obedience to Christ's commands is the only condition which congregations must prescribe for membership in the Christian Brotherhood." (p. 51.) "The real Church of Christ being the age-long and world-wide Brotherhood, *service* is its main postulate, as Christ's work consisted in the service of suffering humanity." (pp. 42—60.) "This Christ spirit, seeking by a common effort to save society from the ignorance which imperils it, has created and maintains the public school; has established social systems; has inspired the better forms of socialism; has sent thousands of Christian teachers, doctors, and preachers to carry into foreign lands and into the poorer portions of our own land the message of Christ's sermon at Nazareth." (p. 62.) "He who, inspired by the divine life of love, service, and sacrifice, is carrying glad tidings to the poor, deliverance to the captive, sight to the blind,

and liberty to the bruised, is a follower of Christ." (p. 82.) "The message of the ancient prophets was, in the main, that God is a *human God*, whose presence is intimate, continuous, inescapable. Man cannot escape from God, because God dwells in man, and man cannot escape from himself." (p. 96.) "Jesus Christ is the supreme manifestation of that love of the spirit which we can share with Him and His Father, an immortal life which the decay of the instruments it uses does not and cannot destroy." (p. 118.) "The *Gospel* is not the good news that guilty men may be saved from punishment, but the good news that guilty men may be made virtuous. In one word, salvation is character." (p. 140.) "Justification by faith no longer means to me that Christ has suffered the penalties of my sins, and therefore, if I accept His sacrifice, God will treat me as if I were innocent, although I am guilty; it means that Jesus Christ offers Himself to me as my divine companion, and if I accept his companionship, I can be made virtuous although I have been guilty." (p. 140.) "Atonement no longer means to me that Christ has made a reparation to God for the wrong I have done, and therefore God is reconciled to me. It means that Christ has by His life and teaching interpreted God to me, and by His personal presence inspires in me the will to do my Father's will, and so has reconciled me to God." (p. 141.) "Regeneration does not mean to me a new faculty miraculously given to man by some magic formula, as baptism, or some supernatural experience for which man must wait. In every normal man is the capacity for goodness and truth, for love and service, for hope and joy. But this sleeping capacity is naught unless it is awakened into life. It is a seed, but a *lifeless seed until it is given life by a divine power above itself.*" (p. 141.) "Incarnation means to me more than that the spirit of God dwelt unrecognized by the world centuries ago for a few years in Jesus of Nazareth. It also means to me that the same spirit still dwells in the world, carrying on now with the followers of Jesus the work of serving and saving men which the same spirit carried on with Jesus then. Incarnation to me is not merely a historical episode; it is an eternal fact." (pp. 141. 142.) "God is love. Where God is, love is. And love is everywhere, a universal presence, a mighty, though not resistless, power in human life." (p. 142.) On page 185, the author summarizes what Christianity means to him. He says: "Christianity means to me: A new spirit of love, service, and sacrifice in humanity; a new, ever-developing life in art, literature, music, philosophy, government, industry, worship. A relief from the heavy burden of remorse for past errors, blunders, and sins; an ever-growing aspiration for the future and an ever-increasing power toward achievement. Faith in ourselves and in our fellow-men; in our infinite possibilities because in our infinite inheritance; faith in our present possession of a deathless life of the spirit which we share with the Father of our spirits and our divinely appreciated leader." We have quoted so profusely from the volume before us because the statements of the author show how far the Christianity of Modernists has drifted away from the Christianity of Christ and the apostles. It is a monster, though appearing as an angel of light. It denies salvation and the Scriptural means of salvation. It is rank paganism camouflaged in Christian idiom.