

THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY.

VOL. IV.

NOVEMBER, 1924.

No. 11.

Luther's Preface to the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans.

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The reference, in a previous issue of the THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY (Vol. IV, pp. 227 ff.), to the effect which the reading of Luther's *Preface to Romans* had upon John Wesley suggests as pertinent and opportune the reproduction in English of this masterly introduction of the Reformer to the greatest of the New Testament writings. John Wesley most likely heard the *Preface* read in German, which he had begun to study since his work had thrown him into the company of Germans in Georgia (perhaps even before that time), and since he had begun to wonder at the remarkable faith which had been inculcated upon them.

The question is frequently asked: Why did Luther write no special commentary on Romans as on so many other books of the Bible, seeing that his whole theology is oriented by the Epistle to the Romans, and the restoration of the teaching of this epistle to the Church is practically the achievement of his life, the trophy of all his reformatory work? The question contains the answer. The Lutheran Reformation is a commentary in very act and deed on Romans. From this epistle, as all his writings witness, Luther drew the earliest light, the constant guidance, and the unquenchable zeal for his reformatory endeavors. Luther's commentary on Romans are his collected writings; there was no need of writing a special treatise on this epistle.

The *Preface to Romans* which Luther published in 1522 reveals his masterful grasp and profound penetration of the teaching of this epistle. The translation here submitted will impress the reader with the fact that we have in this brief essay a condensed Christian dogmatics. To facilitate a ready survey of its contents, the following Prospectus is offered. The paragraphing adopted has been taken over from the edition of Walch, which has been retained in the St. Louis edition, although the divisions are not always logical.

PROSPECTUS.

I. Introductory: The Surpassing Value of Romans for the Scriptural Knowledge of Christians, 1. 2.

II. A Study in Pauline Terminology, 3—21.

A. Reading Romans is useless without understanding Paul's terms, 3.

B. The term "law" in Romans, 4—10.

a. "Law" is not an external rule, but an inward principle of the heart, 4.

BOOK REVIEW.

Commentar ueber den Brief Pauli an die Roemer. By *Dr. G. Stoeckhardt*. 649 pages, $6\frac{1}{4} \times 9\frac{1}{4}$. Cloth, \$3.50. (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.)

This is the second edition of *Dr. Stoeckhardt's Commentary on Romans*, published anew by Concordia Publishing House at the urgent request of innumerable applicants both within and without the pale of the Missouri Synod. Second-hand copies of this famous work had become so scarce that antiquarian booksellers easily received up to \$8 for used volumes. The demand for a new edition of this valuable work was so great that the publishers were prevailed upon to issue a second edition. The sales reported since the second edition appeared have fully justified the venture.

Dr. Stoeckhardt's Commentary on Romans is a book of abiding worth.

In a confab which the reviewer had with the sainted exegete about a decade and a half ago Dr. Stoeckhardt remarked emphatically: "Es hat niemand ein Recht, einen Kommentar zu schreiben, der nicht wirklich auch die Schrift auslegen will. Theorien austuefteln und den Autor korrigieren kann ein jeder. Es gehoert des Heiligen Geistes Weisheit dazu, dass man die Schriftgedanken wiedergibt, und *nur* die Gedanken, die faktisch im Texte liegen." In writing his *Commentary on Romans* he himself conformed to this principle. It was his aim really and fully to interpret Paul's excellent and foremost Epistle to the Romans and to set forth in its incandescent light and glory the doctrines of grace, redemption, and salvation. With Stoeckhardt the study of Romans was not an avocation. He loved this epistle of Paul, having lectured on it year after year to large classes of interested students. His commentary grew out of his class-work. It was the mature fruit of many years of nurture in the Word of God, as set forth in Romans. Stoeckhardt wrote his *Commentary on Romans* because he believed it to be a living, inspiring, indispensable message for sin-lost humanity.

We are glad that others appreciate this great and precious book. One reviewer says of it: "We have read portions of this commentary and have been much impressed by the thoroughness and scholarship of the writer. He seems to have covered completely the literature of the Lutheran Church and presents the various opinions before making his decision. It was not written for the sake of furnishing a book for a publishing house to sell. It is the result of many years of deep study and meditation by a man completely absorbed and enthusiastically interested in bringing out the truths in this masterpiece of St. Paul. While we do not agree with him in his extreme views (*sic!*), we believe in encouraging scholarship and advertising a commentary of this kind, which will sustain an advantageous comparison with any commentary on Romans which we have had the opportunity to study." (*G. T. L.*, in *Lutheran Church Herald*.)

In making this statement, the reviewer cannot be accused of exaggeration. More might have been said. As to faithful adherence to the text, clear and objective presentation of Scripture facts, exhaustive treatment of important matters, viewing the whole epistle from the central doctrine of Scripture, namely, that of justification by grace through faith in the divine Savior, who died for the sins of the world, Stoeckhardt's *Commentary on Romans* excels all others that have come within the reach of the reviewer. It is the masterpiece of a true disciple of the Christ, whom Paul in His epistle extols.

MUELLER.

Synodical Reports of the Missouri Synod: Oklahoma District. 72 pages. 34 cts. *South Wisconsin District.* 72 pages. 34 cts. (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.)

The report of the *Oklahoma District* (newly organized) contains two essays: one in German, answering the question, "When Is Our Synodical Union Pleasing to the Lord?" the other on "The Assurance of Success for Lutheran Missions in Oklahoma."

The report of the *South Wisconsin District* also contains two essays, one on "The False Doctrines and the Scriptural Doctrine of Eternal Damnation," the other on "Visitations."

FRITZ.

The Lodge. By *Carl Kurth*. 15 pages, 5×7½. Paper cover. Price: Single copies, 3 cts., postpaid; dozen, 30 cts., postage extra; hundred, \$2. (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.)

The publisher's announcement of this tract (Tract No. 96) reads: "This tract was written by the author as a conference essay with the purpose of showing how this subject might be approached among the real young people, in fact, the schoolchildren. The conference which heard the essay strongly encouraged its publication."

Also as to the lodges the saying holds good, "An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure." FRITZ.

Day by Day with Jesus. A Christian Calendar for 1925. Edited by *W. H. T. Dau*. Price, 60 cts., postpaid; in lots of twelve or more, 50 cts., plus postage. (Ernst Kaufmann, 7—11 Spruce St., New York, N. Y.) Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

This calendar contains a separate small sheet for every day of the year, on which is printed the day of the month, a Scripture-text, a Scripture-meditation, a prayer, and Scripture-lessons for morning and evening family devotions. The meditations were written by Lutheran pastors. The prayers are in part original and in part taken from the church collects and appropriate hymns. All manuscripts were edited by Prof. W. H. T. Dau, D. D. What renders this calendar of special value is the fact that it gives suitable material for family devotions. If in families where family devotions are not now held no more would be done than that the printed matter were read every day, a very good purpose would be served by the purchase and use of this calendar. FRITZ.

Preaching Made Easy. By *Rev. Thomas Flynn*. (Benziger Brothers.)
Hints to Preachers. By *Rt. Rev. Msgr. Hugh T. Henry*. (Benziger Brothers.)

Both of these books are by Roman Catholic authors and have the required *nihil obstat* and *imprimatur*.

In the preface to this book the Rev. Thomas Flynn says: "Many priests regard constant preaching as a difficult and disagreeable task. The object of the following pages is to help to remove this false impression and thus to encourage all to discharge this, the most important duty of the pastor, with pleasure and with profit to all concerned." The make-up of the book is not that of the usual book on homiletics. We are convinced that the difficulties of sermonizing will not be removed by the study of Flynn's book.

The following paragraph by Flynn, taken from the chapter on "Holy Scripture in General," will be of interest to our readers: "Priests not infrequently have derived their knowledge of Holy Scripture, such as it may be, from mere bits and scraps that have come under their notice from time to time either in listening to sermons or in their search for matter for sermons of their own. Many have never read even the New Testament right through consistently as a whole; some perhaps not even a single Gospel or the Acts of the Apostles in like manner. They have become so familiar with the Epistles and Gospels of the Sundays that they sometimes imagine they have read the whole Bible. Others are

always promising themselves to devote more time and attention to sacred Scripture generally, and they resolve to read a portion every day. But their resolution generally ends in nothing beyond the lifeless, uninteresting, aimless, and unprofitable perusal of a few chapters of Genesis."

The second book, by Dr. Hugh T. Henry, "does not pretend to be a formal treatise on homiletics," as the author tells us in his preface, but is simply to present, as the title has it, some "hints to preachers."

To the Lutheran theologian these books are of interest only inasmuch as he can learn from them how the subject of preaching is treated by Roman Catholic authors. It is significant that Flynn says that "many priests regard preaching as a difficult and disagreeable task." FRITZ.

The Making of the Sermon. By *T. Harwood Pattison, D. D.* 392 pages, 5×7¾. \$1.50, net. (The Judson Press, 1701 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Pa.)

This book on homiletics, written "for the classroom and the study," we highly recommend to our pastors. It has chapters on the following subjects: What Is Preaching? The Text, The Treatment of the Text, The Theme, Parts of the Sermon, Rhetorical Elements in the Sermon, The Delivery of the Sermon, The Preacher and His Hearer.

In the course of years the preacher of the Gospel ought to improve in sermonizing. For this purpose he will do well also to read and study, say annually, one good book on homiletics. *The making of the sermon sketch and the delivery of the sermon* ought to be given special attention. He who has not yet learned to make his own sermon sketch and has not adopted the conversational method of delivery has yet much to learn before he can be classified among the good preachers. The study of such books as *The Making of the Sermon* by Pattison, *The Work of Preaching* by Hoyt, *The Theory of Preaching* by Phelps, *The Preparation and the Delivery of the Sermon* by Broadus, *Public Speaking* by Kirkpatrick, and especially homiletical works by Lutheran authors, will be a valuable help. The Apology of the Augsburg Confession well says: "*Tenentur enim auditoria utilibus et perspicuis concionibus,*" "Audiences are held by useful and clear sermons." (*Trigl.*, p. 400, 50.) FRITZ.

Which Version, Authorized or Revised? By *Philip Mauro.* Cloth, 119 pages. \$1.25. (Hamilton Brothers' Scripture Truth Depot, 120 Tremont St., Boston, Mass.)

This is an interesting monograph on a question that for various reasons deserves the attention of our pastors. The author shows that instead of a Revised Version the Revision Committee (both English and American) brought forth a New Version, having made 36,000 changes in the text of the Authorized Version. These changes were based upon a new Greek text, elaborated by Westcott and Hort in conformity with the Textus Sinaiticus and the Textus Vaticanus, which, as the author believes, are not superior, but rather inferior and badly corrupted texts. Using so imperfect a text, the revisers were forced to depart from the Authorized Version, based on the Textus Receptus, which represents an older text, far superior to those of Tischendorf and of the Vatican. The differences between the Revised Versions and the Authorized Version the writer points

out at great length at the end of his book — differences that affect vital doctrinal points, such as the omission of the last twelve verses of Mark, the perversion of the angelic message (Luke 2, 14), the change "He who was manifested in the flesh," instead of "God was manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. 3, 16), etc. In the "Conclusion" the writer states that almost unanimously modern versions have been rejected, while the Authorized Version is steadily gaining ground, and that as regards the work of translation, style, and composition the advantage is so greatly with the Old Version that it would be little short of a calamity were it to be supplanted by the Revised Version.

MUELLER.

Brief Mention.

Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo., has issued a most interesting and inspiring account, written by the veteran missionary, *Rev. F. W. Herzberger*, of the St. Louis Lutheran City Mission Society during a quarter of a century: **Twenty-five Rich Harvest Years.**

The Sotarian Publishing Company, 105 Florida St., Buffalo, N. Y., issues in a ninth enlarged edition the one hundred and twenty-fifth thousand of its **Christmas Song Book**, containing 73 gems of song and melody for use in the home and at the Children's Christmas service at church. The same company calls attention to its **Bible Catechism Studies for Lutheran Sunday-schools** and its **Simple Book of Instruction in the Bible Stories, the Bible Verses, and the Small Catechism** by *Adolf T. Hanser*. The distinguishing feature of both these publications is the combination of a Bible story with a lesson from the Catechism, a method that has proved efficient to many pastors in their instruction of children and adult catechumens.

DAU.

Concordia-Kalender, edited by Mr. and Mrs. (G. A. and E. A.) *Fleischer*, 105—9 N. Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill., has made its appearance again, filled with good, instructive reading-matter.

The brethren in Finland who have severed their connection with the state church have started their own publication house, *Lutherilainen Kirjaja Taidekauppa*, at Haemeenlinna (Swedish name of the town Tavastehuus). They announce the publication, in pamphlet form, of articles by *Rev. A. H. Koskenniemi*, of Aabo, which appeared in their organ *Paimen*. These articles are a translation of warnings against false prophets from Luther's Church Postil.

The Lutheran Literary Board of Burlington, Iowa, has issued **A Compendium of Christian Doctrine** by *Rev. Foster U. Gift, D. D.*, which "contains the substance of what is used in lecture form in the classes of the Training-school of the Lutheran Deaconess Motherhouse of Baltimore."

From the La Follette-Wheeler Campaign Headquarters at Hotel Morrison, Chicago, Ill., has come **The Facts: La Follette-Wheeler Campaign Text-book.**

On the occasion of its twenty-fifth anniversary the pastor, *Rev. V. Brugge*, has issued a brief illustrated **History of Christ Ev. Luth. Church of Gordonville, Mo.**

DAU.