

# THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY.

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## Some Historical Facts Concerning Church Polity.

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### 1. Church Organization and Government in the Early Christian Church.

The church government of the early Christian Church was very simple. There was no need of elaborate constitutions, canons, rules of discipline, and the like, which are now considered so essential in many church-bodies. The word, "One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren," Matt. 23, 8, was sufficient for all purposes. In the scheme of government and discipline which Christ had designed for His Church, simplicity was to be the prime factor in obtaining and maintaining efficiency. He wanted to be the sole Head and Director of all the affairs of the congregation, and within the congregation there should be no distinction as to greater and smaller before Him; all should be equal.

This truth is in no way jeopardized by the fact that Christ Himself chose a certain number of men as His servants, or apostles, by immediate call. "The apostles were the special messengers of Christ, chosen and called and commissioned directly and immediately by the Master whom they were to serve as His missionaries to the nations." (*Theol. Quarterly*, VII, 18.) The direct, or immediate, call is described Matt. 10, 2; Mark 6, 7; Luke 10, 2. In accordance with this call the men who received it designate themselves as apostles of Jesus Christ. 1 Pet. 1, 1; 2, 1; Jas. 1, 1; 2 John 1; 3 John 1; Jude 1; Gal. 2, 9. Matthias was chosen by lot under the immediate guidance of God. Acts 1, 23—26. And as for Paul, he emphasizes no point more strongly than this, that he was selected by Christ for the work of his apostleship. Acts 9, 15; Rom. 1, 1; 1 Cor. 1, 1; 9, 1, 2; 2 Cor. 1, 1; 11, 1—12, 9; Gal. 1, 1; Eph. 1, 1; 3, 7, 8; Col. 1, 1; 1 Tim. 1, 1, 2, 7; 2 Tim. 1, 1; Titus 1, 1. These apostles of Christ were divinely inspired in the capacity of teachers of all men. John 14, 26; 15, 26, 27;

## BOOK REVIEW.

**The Idolatry of the Lodge.** Sermon preached in the Ev. Luth. Church of Our Redeemer, St. Louis, Mo., and published at request by *L. Buchheimer*. 10 pages. 6 cts. (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.)

This sermon on lodgery so pleased the members of the local Church of Our Redeemer that they requested Pastor Buchheimer to publish it and distribute it among its members. Concordia Publishing House, by publishing it as a tract widens its sphere of influence, and we hope that many brethren in the ministry will order it and distribute it in their congregations. Pastor Buchheimer attacks lodgery on only one point, its idolatry, but that point he makes so clear that any Christian open to conviction must see the sinfulness of lodge-membership. The sermon is divided into three parts: "1. Idolatry—what is it? 2. Where is it to be found among us? 3. How may we combat it?" A striking parallel is drawn between the idolatry of the Roman Catholic Church and that of the lodges, and it is pointed out that, since a Lutheran Christian cannot be a member of the Roman Catholic Church, he can much less hold membership in the lodge. As most of the graduates of our St. Louis Seminary are personally acquainted with Pastor Buchheimer, we need not multiply words in recommending this very serviceable tract.

MUELLER.

**Does the Teaching of Christian Science Agree with the Teaching of the Bible?** By *Rev. H. A. Heineke*. 57 pages. (Wartburg Publishing House, Chicago.)

The purpose of this excellent tract on the delusions of Christian Science is to show that neither its distinctive nor its incidental teachings may be reconciled with Scriptural truth. Denying the fundamental tenets of Christianity concerning God, the Holy Scriptures, the vicarious suffering and death of Jesus, the resurrection, the Day of Judgment, miracles, the existence of angels and devils, the Sacraments, it rests upon purely paganistic ground. The reasons why its antichristian tenets attract many "Christians" are because they attract the "natural man" and because many deluded sufferers simply try it "as a last resort to get well." The author very earnestly warns Christians against "trying Christian Science to get well" and states the reasons why such a step is not only displeasing to God, but also hurtful to the soul's salvation. To those looking for a new refutation of the pernicious cult of Christian Science we cordially recommend this tract.

MUELLER.

**The History of Religions.** By *E. Washburn Hopkins, Ph. D., LL. D.*, Professor of Sanskrit and Comparative Philology, Yale University. 596 pages; with Index, 624. \$1.50. (Macmillan Publishing Co., New York.)

In this book Dr. Hopkins covers a vast field. After discussing definitions of religions and the classifications of the faiths of mankind, he passes to the presentation of primitive religions as found in Africa, Polynesia, Japan, Central Asia, and North America, to the religions of Mexico, Central and South America, of the Celts, the Teutons, and of the Slavic peoples, closing his review with a discussion of Israelitism, Islam and Christianity. The book is packed with facts, an epitome and useful compendium for ready reference, which is both scientific and thoroughgoing, setting forth not only the origins and main tenets of the various religions, but giving also a brief history of doctrine. In his study of religions Dr. Hopkins did not discover the great line of demarcation, which Prof. F. Max Mueller so clearly pointed out — the distinction between the one religion of faith and the many heterodox and man-made religions of work. He states that no "religion is altogether heterodox," p. 11, and his opinion of the religion of Christ and Christianity is that of a modernistic agnostic, who has failed to understand the essence of Christianity and refuses to acknowledge its superiority and divine sublimity. The chapter discussing "The Religion of Christ and Christianity," between which the author makes a distinction, is full of glaring mistakes, caused by the writer's apathetic and modernistic viewpoint, and mars the pleasure of perusing this in so many respects admirable book.

MUELLER.

**Sermons for Days We Observe.** By *Frederick F. Shannon*, Minister of Central Church, Chicago. \$1.50. (Geo. H. Doran Co., New York.)

Here we have a collection of sermons which were preached on New Year's Day, Lincoln's Birthday, Thanksgiving Day, etc. There are eleven addresses in all. One funeral address has been inserted. The reader will soon perceive that Dr. Shannon has fine literary gifts. The book does not cut a bad figure when considered as a collection of essays. But to call these productions sermons is like a dagger's thrust for our homiletic sensibilities. The Scripture-texts usually are there, but they are not duly explained and applied. Dr. Shannon is not a preacher of great doctrines or Bible-truths, but an interesting entertainer, who satisfies our craving for the esthetic. Such Scripture-truths as he does offer usually do not refer to the heart of Christianity, the great doctrines of sin and grace, but are of a subordinate nature found far away from the paths of controversy.

A.

**The Christ of the Indian Road.** By *E. Stanley Jones*. \$1.00. (The Abingdon Press, New York and Cincinnati.)

The writer of this little volume is a Methodist missionary, who seems to have been remarkably successful in his work in India. What he insists on is that "Christ, not creeds, has to be preached to the heathen world if we wish to see it Christianized, and that Christians must be more saintly in their lives." The book is experiencing a tremendous sale, having run through eight editions since September, 1925. The title means,

"The Christ whom India needs and wants." Besides the author's antipathy to creeds, it is to be deplored that he does not sufficiently stress the work which Christ has done for us—objective redemption and justification. The book is not intended to give information on India, but may be considered a plea for presenting Christ, and not primarily Christian doctrine, to heathen people. To think that this distinction can be made is, of course, an illusion.

A.

**The Leaven of the Sadducees, or, Old and New Apostasies.** By *Ernest Gordon*. 263 pages, 5¼×8. \$1.50 net. (The Bible Institute Colportage Ass'n, 843—845 North Wells Street, Chicago, Ill.) Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.

This book has been called "a modern classic against Modernism," and "the greatest broadside against Liberalism that has been put out in this generation." It is a fearless book, and skilfully written, in choice, vigorous language, which makes fascinating reading. It proves beyond contradiction that Modernism is nothing else but the rankest outgrowth of Unitarianism, which, coming to the front a century ago, has gradually swept over the Churches and is now choking Christianity. It is a book, not of mere statements, but of direct evidences, reports, and data which for the average pastor are hard to find. It is also a thoroughly modern and up-to-date book, dealing with men and events of the day, a work based upon careful study, painstaking research, and firm convictions. We recommend it without reservation to our pastors as one of the most instructive volumes on the subject of the rise of Liberalism in our country. The book bound in paper costs only \$1.00.

MUELLER.

**The Daughter's Danger.** By *Mrs. Emma F. A. Drake, M. D.* 50 pages. 25 cts. (The Vir Publishing Co., 200 N. Fifteenth St., Philadelphia, Pa.) Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

This little book is advertised as a "prize paper to girls of sixteen and upwards." It points out the untold dangers that threaten a young girl to-day and warns them most seriously in language, plain, but chaste, against the perils that lurk in hundreds of unexpected places, where least of all a girl of sixteen would be inclined to suspect them. We recommend this earnest appeal for the preservation of virginal purity to those who have children of the age of sixteen and upwards. It reveals little of the sex question. That is something which a mother herself must tell her daughter under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

MUELLER.

**Hail to the New-born King!** A Christmas service of Scripture-reading, recitation, and song for Sunday-schools. 32 pages. 60 cts. per dozen. (Lutheran Book Concern, Columbus, O.)

It is still too hot to think of Christmas, but the heralds of the joyous Christ-festival, the Christmas programs for children, are reminding us that winter is coming. This new Christmas service has been practically arranged for both large and smaller Sunday-schools, allowing sufficient opportunity for the various classes to take part in the program, by song as well as by recitation. The entire program is dignified and solemn, as programs of this kind should be.

MUELLER.