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The Lutheran Church and Unionism.

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This summer a notable discussion of the subject of unionism was embodied in several articles published in the *American Lutheran Survey*, the writer being the editor of that journal, Dr. W. H. Greever. The articles in question had, for the greater part, been delivered in the form of lectures at a pastors' summer school and were printed in the *Survey* at the request of those who had heard them. The author treats the general subject: "The Lutheran Church in America," the articles having these headings, respectively, "The Inner Life of the Lutheran Church in America"; "The Inner Relationship between Lutheran Bodies in America"; "External Relationships of the Lutheran Church in America"; "The Promotion of the Lutheran Church in America." The statements we have reference to are found in the second and in the third article. Dr. Greever's remarks are characterized by candor and frankness and should be productive of much good. Believing that what he says on unionism is an important contribution to the debate on this matter, we shall submit copious quotations from his articles. He says, p. 463: "From this study we conclude further that the chief obstacles at present to Lutheran unity, union, fellowship, and partnership in this country are in two *matters of practise*, which involve doctrines and principles concerning which there is agreement in formal confession. We do not overlook the obstacles of personal prejudices and deplorable obstinacies nor the weighty obstacle of the difference between the legalistic and the evangelical spirit in dealing with these two matters of practise, but we still insist that these two matters in themselves are the chief obstacles to better Lutheran inner relationships. We will speak plainly here, but we desire to give no offense through what we shall say. These two things are *Unionism* and *Secret Societies*.

"*Unionism*: This question will be more fully discussed in the

BOOK REVIEW.

Synodalbericht der 33. regelmaessigen Versammlung der Ev.-Luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, versammelt im Jahre 1926, vom 9. bis zum 18. Juni, zu St. Louis, Mo. \$1.25. (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.)

Thanks to the unselfish industry of the secretaries, who are busy men apart from preparing for print the minutes of a large and long convention, the official report of the recent Delegate Synod of our church-body has now appeared, only a few months after the close of the large, historical gathering. It is a book of 344 pages, giving information on all the various phases of Synod's activities, and should be especially valuable these days when concerted efforts are being made to wipe out our synodical debts. After reviewing, with the aid of this report, the great work our body is doing here and abroad, one cannot but feel that the three words affixed at the close are eminently appropriate — *Soli Deo Gloria!* A.

Does the Bible Contradict Itself? By *Prof. W. Arndt*. V and 142 pages, 5×7½. \$1.00. (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.)

There are those who try to find fault with the Bible, and fault-finding requires neither great learning nor special skill; any one can do it. There are those, however, who, when reading their Bible, find that there *appear to be* some discrepancies which the average reader cannot always readily harmonize. To both classes of people Professor Arndt has rendered a valuable service by showing that the Bible does not contradict itself, but that all *seeming* discrepancies can be harmonized or satisfactorily explained. In an introductory chapter, Professor Arndt points out the principles which must be kept in mind when passing judgment upon the so-called discrepancies of the Bible. One of these is the spirit of fairness. The enemies of the Bible, and sometimes its friends, do not approach the Bible with even the same degree of fairness which they apply when judging other writings. Our Christian people will do well to purchase and study Professor Arndt's book in order to be fortified against any attacks which are made against the Bible or to dispel any doubts which may arise in their own minds. After all, the Bible is the inspired Word of God; no one has ever proved that it is not, while the evidences that it is are overwhelmingly many.

FRTZ.

The Reformation and Its Blessed Fruits. Book II: *Fruits of the Reformation*. By *M. L. Gotsch*. Single copies, 5 cts.; dozen, 50 cts. (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.)

Ministers and teachers will find this pamphlet of sixteen pages a splendid aid in presenting the vast material pertaining to the history of the Reformation to their audiences and pupils in an orderly, systematic manner.

A.

Festival Program for Reformation Day. 5 cts.; 100, \$1.50. (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.)

This is a beautiful program, containing the complete order of service for Reformation Day. The respective hymns are given complete. The publishers say: "It is the intention that congregations order this program in quantities sufficient to supply all those who may be in attendance upon the Reformation services."—Concordia Publishing House has likewise issued a card bearing *Luther's coat-of-arms in colors*. Congregations may have a text of their own choice printed on these cards. Prices will be quoted by the publishers.

A.

One Hundred and Fifty Years Ago, or, How Lutherans Helped Win Liberty. By *John Wm. Richards*. 133 pages. 50 cts. (Lutheran Book Concern, Columbus O.) Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

Into his refreshing tale of two Lutheran immigrants the author weaves German and Lutheran heroes, whose exploits and eager enthusiasm for the cause of liberty are matters of history. It is a delightful story which the writer tells, though as the reader reviews those ancient times, so replete with opportunities for preaching the Gospel in its purity, he regrets that these early Lutheran immigrants did not always remember the precious-

ness of the heritage bequeathed to them. Old Gloria Dei — an Episcopal chapel to-day! There is tragedy in that, especially as one recalls to mind the reasons for this change.

MUELLER.

Before Marriage. By *Mrs. Adolphe Hoffman*. 36 pages, 4×6¼. 50 cts. (The Vir Publishing Company, 200 N. 15th St., Philadelphia, Pa.) Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

This booklet contains some good advice how to remain pure both before and after marriage.

FRTZ.

Grace and Personality. By *John Oman*. Introduction by *Nolan R. Best*. 318 pages, 6×9. \$2.50. (The Macmillan Company, New York.)

Mr. John Oman is a noted British author and teacher, whose books, especially *The Problem of Faith and Freedom*, *The Church and the Divine Order*, and *The Book of Revelation*, have been well received. In this book he treats the doctrine of grace in its manifold relations to the will of man, to repentance, faith, justification, and sanctification, and while avoiding the strict Calvinistic view, which sees in divine grace nothing else than a display of God's sovereignty, and the even more fatal Pelagianistic error, which goes to the opposite extreme, he points out in terms which are in accordance with the liberal theology which he represents how the antinomy between God's sovereignty and man's free will may be solved. The solution, however, is philosophical only and ends in depriving the terms "grace," "sin," "reconciliation," "justification," etc., of their whole Scriptural content. He defines God's grace as the gracious relationship between the divine Father and the human child, but fails to accept the *satisfactio vicaria*, without which such a "gracious relationship" is impossible. Reconciliation to God is "primarily reconciliation to our lives by seeking in them only His ends." (p. 126.) Redemption is properly "redemption from the vanity and vexation of the world" or from selfishness. (p. 116 f.) "Faith in Christ is not primarily as He meets us either in Scripture or in doctrine, but as He meets us in life. . . . As we treat Him when we meet Him in flesh and blood in our brother, as we recognize the power of His meekness, purity, truth, holiness, amid the actual claims of pleasure and wealth and outward dignity, so is our living faith in Him." (p. 153.) A theology which interprets the vital thoughts of the Gospel in the way these quotations show is no longer Christian or Scriptural, but has utterly departed from the truth of God's Word and become the theology of the carnal heart, whose central doctrine is salvation by ethical conduct.

MUELLER.

Personality and Reality. A Proof of the Real Existence of a Supreme Self in the Universe. By *J. E. Turner, Ph. D.* 190 pages, 5½×7½. \$1.50. (The Macmillan Company, New York.)

In this book Dr. Turner, Reader in Philosophy in the University of Liverpool and a noted writer on various subjects of philosophy, attempts to demonstrate the real existence of a Supreme Being by data which modern physical science offers, his treatment being based on the analysis of the nature of mind and of matter, in the light of modern psychology

and physics. He accepts unreservedly the facts of Materialism and the principle of Evolution and constructs out of this principle a syllogism, which, in his opinion, proves the existence of a Supreme Self. Whether this Self should be regarded as divine and called "God," is a question with which the author is not concerned. His argumentation from Evolution is as follows: "The essential character of all mechanism is 'an inherent and indispensable fixity of organization.' This fixity of mechanical construction absolutely precludes all possibility of its own spontaneous evolution; nevertheless the physical universe actually exhibits an uninterrupted evolution, which appears, so far as its highest products are concerned, to have no conceivable limits. The final conclusion implies, therefore, the real existence of a dominant mind, whose essential characteristic is the antithesis of fixity—that is 'an inherent and inexhaustible plasticity.'" Such an argument has value, of course, only for those who accept the principle of Evolution; those who do not must of necessity regard it as involving a *petitio principii*, which renders the whole conclusion worthless.

MUELLER.

Science, Religion, and Reality. Edited by *Joseph Needham*. 389 pages, 6×9½. \$2.50. (The Macmillan Company, New York.) Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

This is a remarkable book for two reasons: First, it treats, in a comparatively narrow compass, the most vital questions of the day, namely, those relating to science and religion and their mutual relation which at present occupy the attention of hundreds of scholars throughout the world. Secondly, the essays are written by men who may be regarded as authorities, men like Arthur James, the Earl of Balfour, John W. Oman, William Brown, Clement C. J. Webb, Wm. R. Inge, etc. Besides the Introduction and Conclusion, the volume contains eight treatises on various phases of religion and science, which embody the latest results of scholarly research. The subjects treated are: Magic, Science, and Religion, by B. Malinowski; Historical Relations of Religion and Science, by Charles Singer; Science and Religion in the Nineteenth Century, by Antonio Aliotta; The Domain of Physical Science, by Arthur S. Eddington; Mechanistic Biology and the Religious Consciousness, by Joseph Needham; The Sphere of Religion, by John W. Oman; Religion and Psychology, by Wm. Brown; Science, Christianity, and Modern Civilization, by Clement C. J. Webb. The essays are written in a lucid style and present no difficulties even to a reader not acquainted with the scientific vocabulary of to-day, since every attempt has been made to render the thought intelligible. The treatises are quite exhaustive, and while not agreeing at all with the authors in their conclusions, the reader, we are sure, will acknowledge his indebtedness to them for having presented to him so much scientific information of the highest value in so excellent a way. To students of the subjects treated in this volume we recommend it most cordially as a most serviceable manual, setting forth the most modern conclusions on topics that are now of far greater importance than ever before. The mechanical equipment of the book corresponds to the value of its contents, and the publishers are to be congratulated on producing so fine a book at so low a cost.

MUELLER.