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Exposition of the Sedes Doctrinae of the Lord's Supper.

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The words of institution of the Lord's Supper have, in the history of the Christian Church, been the subject of much controversy and dispute. Although it would appear that any one who peruses these words with an unbiased mind cannot fail to arrive at the one true intended meaning, nevertheless these words have been subjected to various interpretations, with the result that much scandal and dissension have thereby been perpetrated within the Church and that the minds of many Christians have been bewildered and confused. It strikes one as being rather strange that, in connection with these clear passages of Holy Writ, there has been such wanton deviation from the safe and sane rule of interpretation, *viz.*, that, in expounding Scripture, one must not depart from the plain, simple, common, and established meaning of the words in question unless there be sufficient grounds to warrant such departure. The reason for all such deviation in interpreting the words of institution of the Lord's Supper, however, lies in the fact that reason has ever been consulted as to the comprehensibility of the simple import of these words; and finding that the simple meaning of the words lies beyond the grasp of human reason, this meaning has been rejected, and the words have been interpreted according to the dictates of reason. Reason, however, does not furnish sufficient grounds for departing from the aforementioned rule; Scripture itself must make the deviation imperative. And thus, in seeming keeping with this requirement and in a vain endeavor to give a human fabrication the appearance of a Scriptural doctrine, other passages of Holy Writ have erroneously been regarded as the seat of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper. As the Baptists have sought to give their false doctrine of Baptism Scriptural support from Rom. 10, 14: "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" just so the Reformed church-bodies

BOOK REVIEW.

Lutheran School Journal. An Educational Monthly. Published by the
Ev. Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States. \$1.50 per
annum in advance. December, 1925. (Concordia Publishing House,
St. Louis, Mo.)

The December, 1925, issue of the *School Journal* is a Jubilee Number. This *Journal* — until a few years ago known as *Schulblatt* — has been issued for a period of sixty years. It is edited by an editorial committee of the Faculty of Concordia Teachers' College, River Forest, Ill., and is devoted to the interests of the Christian education of children, particularly that given by the parochial school. There is no doubt that much of the sound Lutheranism which is found in the members of our churches is due to the Christian education which many of them have received in our Christian schools. We desire to improve this opportunity not only to encourage our pastors to subscribe for, and read, our *School Journal*, — that our teachers do so is self-evident, — but also to encourage them to recommend this *School Journal* to the more intelligent members of their churches, especially to the members of their school boards. FRITZ.

Sabbatarianism and Immersionism. By *O. Boettcher*. Tract No. 98.
22 pages. 10 cts.; dozen, 96 cts., and postage. (Concordia Pub-
lishing House, St. Louis, Mo.)

We cannot give this tract a better recommendation for general distribution than that given it by Professor Graebner in an "Introduction" printed on the reverse side of the title-page. Professor Graebner says: "This tract was written by one who in his ministry has had many a hard conflict with Sabbatarian and Immersionist proselyters and who has learned by experience the best methods of meeting their arguments. In the summer of 1924 I heard Rev. Boettcher instruct a younger brother in the line of argument serviceable for dispelling the fog of uncertainty and doubt which sectarians are frequently able to raise in the minds of Lu-

theran Christians regarding these two doctrines, the Sabbath and Baptism. So lucid and simple was the exposition of the Scriptural argument as presented by Rev. Boettcher on this occasion, and so well versed in the opposing view did he show himself to be, that I later requested him to contribute a series of articles to the *Lutheran Witness*. The articles appeared in the fall of 1924 and in the spring of 1925 and are herewith reprinted with only slight changes. To those brethren in the ministry who have been fortunate enough to escape Sabbatarian and Immersionist propaganda in their congregations the need of such a tract as this may not be at once apparent. To those who have been exposed to the proselyting activity of Baptists, Seventh-day Adventists, Disciples (Christian Church, Campbellites), Pentecostals, Holy Rollers, and other sectarians, Rev. Boettcher's tract will be very welcome indeed." FRITZ.

Russellism. By *Karl Linsenmann*. Tract No. 100. 16 pages. 10 cts.; dozen, 96 cts., and postage. (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.)

Wherever our pastors have occasion to enlighten any one on Russellism, or where a whole community is troubled by this religious sect, Pastor Linsenmann's tract will serve a good purpose. FRITZ.

Which Church Shall I Join? By *Martin S. Sommer*. Tract No. 99. 15 pages. 3 cts.; per dozen, 30 cts.; 100, \$2.00, and postage. (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.)

This tract may be used by pastors in their mission-work and when instructing adult classes. The right and simple answer is given to a question which some might think to be a perplexing one. FRITZ.

Word Pictures of Bible Events. By *Wm. Moenkemoeller*. 95 pages.

On the basis of the Bible record the author offers thirty-five meditations from the Creation to the death of Moses, covering the contents of Genesis. The meditations are good aids to private Bible-study. DAU.

Das Buch des Lebens. Von *Ernst Eckhardt*. 47 pages. 25 cts. (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.)

This is a practical treatise on the meaning and scope of the texts in which the term "book of life" occurs in Scripture. DAU.

The Relation between Science and Theology. By *C. Stuart Gager*. 87 pages, 5×8. \$1.00. (The Open Court Publishing Co., Chicago, Ill.)

The final paragraph of this book characterizes the book itself. The author says: "Finally, to whatever extent we seek for guidance from others in matters of both knowledge and faith, let us never lose sight of the wisdom of leaving it to the theologians to find out where we are going to, but to the evolutionists to find out where we came from." This is rather poor advice, for if the Bible—from which the theologian ought to take his theology—is not reliable when it tells us where we came from, how can we trust it when it tells us where we are going to? In reference to the latter the author says: "Just as science has made wonderful progress on the basis of working hypotheses, so may one progress in a satisfying religious life by accepting immortality as a working hypothesis—

by accepting it as *true* until it is disproved." Again he says: "Thus the teaching of the resurrection of the material bodies of men, as affirmed in the Apostles' Creed, contrary to the teaching of St. Paul, is believed to be the teaching of Scriptures by many who are also ignorant that the so-called Apostles' Creed was not formulated for several centuries after the death of all the apostles." In a footnote the author quotes Paul's words: "So also is the resurrection of the dead. . . . It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.' 1 Cor. 15, 42, 44." Why is it that the fact is overlooked that the distinction which the apostle makes is that between a natural body and a spiritual body, but that in each case he speaks of a *body*? In other words, the apostle teaches in these very words a *bodily* resurrection. The false interpretation given to Paul's words reminds us of what Peter said. Referring to Paul's epistles, he wrote: "In which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." 2 Pet. 3, 16. To pit science against the revealed Word of God is starting with the wrong premises. When studying the world, men may, because of insufficient observation and knowledge on their part, in their findings see a conflict with the clear statements of the Bible; but *real* science, that is, knowledge based upon actual facts and not upon mere hypotheses, does not conflict with revealed religion. Revealed religion is a definite and fixed quantity, giving us unchangeable truths, while science, in the sense of human investigation, is not. As to spiritual things, science, as the term is commonly used, cannot give us reliable information; for what the human mind can know in the spiritual realm, beyond mere natural religion, it can know only on the basis of what God has revealed in His Word. All so-called scientific research in the world could never have correctly answered the question, "What must I do to be saved?" It is for this reason that the Bible is the only religious book which to this question gives the answer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Why the findings of "science" have been different at different times, and why they are not absolutely reliable, the author of the book which is being reviewed himself states when he says: "Moreover, the ability to observe and describe accurately was only gradually acquired by the human race. Early accounts of natural phenomena are filled, not only with inaccurate, but with bizarre and even positively misleading and untruthful accounts of what purports to have been observed — the Scythian lamb, for example, goose-barnacles, and other imagined realities of early 'science.' It took men centuries to learn that they must sharply distinguish between what really did occur, and what they thought would or ought to occur — or what they wished to occur." Over against this it must be said that in the Bible we have God's absolute truth, which does not and cannot change in the course of years and therefore is absolutely reliable. Even "science" itself has helped to confirm this, as when, for instance, certain statements of the Bible which formerly were said not to be historically true have by recent excavations been substantiated. In his book *Modernism*, Bloore, in an appendix, calls attention to some of the critical blunders of science. He says: "These have been exposed from many sources in recent years, and volumes have been written giving in detail the many confirmations of Scriptures which have come through the patient

labor of many hands." He then proceeds to give a few samples, as, for instance: "The Hittites mentioned in Scripture were once an object of critical ridicule. There was no confirmation from other sources of such a people or empire. The Bible must be wrong. But recent discoveries have proved their existence as a nation of considerable prominence, and the Scriptural references to them have been confirmed." "The critics were accustomed to ridicule Daniel as unhistorical because of reference to Belshazzar and certain official titles which he mentions, but discovered tablets and monumental inscriptions have proved their correctness."

Summa summarum, we shall do well if we stick to our good old Bible; it has never disappointed us and never will; it is God's own everlasting truth. Says Jesus: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." Matt. 24, 35. FRITZ.

The Church-Year. Studies in the Introits, Collects, Epistles, and Gospels. By *Paul Zeller Strodach*. 265 pages, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8$. \$2.00. (The United Lutheran Publication House, Philadelphia, Pa.) Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

In announcing this book, the publishers say: "Dr. Paul Z. Strodach, lover of his subject and equipped by much study and by membership in the committee that prepared the Common Service Book, has done something unique in this volume. In the light of the life of Christ and of the Church he has described, week by week and event by event, the church-year. The result is a manual for devotion, an interpretation of the lessons in relation to the reason for their selection, and rare information about liturgical customs." The author says: "The purpose of the year was to foster devotion; to give expression to the Church's worship; to serve to instruct, not to govern or enslave. It must be Christocentric as much when it recalls His birth or resurrection as when the Church is born or one of His followers seals his faith with his blood. It is to be not only the Church's year, but her Lord's year. Considered in this light, the church-year has a definite purpose in view and is logical and harmonious in structure." Pastors will do well to purchase this book and carefully read and study that particular portion which refers to the Sunday or festival for which they are preparing their sermon. Our congregations ought to have more knowledge of the purpose of the pericopes, introits, collects, etc., of the church-year than the mere superficial knowledge which the average church-member has, if he has any at all. On the basis of this book, pastors could in their sermons and in special lectures point out many an interesting and important fact, which would make both for a more intelligent and for a more profitable use of the beautiful liturgy used in our Lutheran Church.

FRITZ.

The Family. A Study Book for Groups and Individuals. Prepared by the Committee on Moral and Social Welfare of the United Lutheran Church. 83 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$. 40 cts. (The United Lutheran Publication House, Philadelphia, Pa.) Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

The increasingly sad condition of the Church of our country and the resultant breaking down of morality and civilization are largely due to the fact that the purpose, the duties, the responsibilities, and the importance

of the basic social unit, the family, or the home, are by an increasingly large number of people not understood, not appreciated, and not acted upon. The purpose of the book called *The Family* can be learned from such quotations as these: "The strength of the nation depends upon the moral character of those who compose its families. The homes of our land will always determine what the future of the country is to be. The integrity of the family is absolutely essential to the security of the State." "If we would strengthen the Church, we must strengthen the home and its teaching. The Christian family is the most potent factor in the redemptive forces of the human race. The virtues which spring up in Christian homes are the healing balm of civilization. Every Christian home is the focus of light and warmth for the social whole. The family must be exalted as the most effective unit in the development of a newer and better Christian civilization." Three chapters in the book are devoted to the discussion of Divorce, Causes of Divorce, and Marriage and Divorce Laws. It is in this connection that the author says: "The fetish of our time is legislative enactment. It is considered that men should be more moral, more temperate; immediately a party arises in the State, clamoring for a law to legalize its theories. . . . You can make men hypocrites by prohibitory laws; you cannot make them moral." The author also speaks of the changed conditions of the times in which we are living and of their bearing upon the life of the family. The book is well written and is provocative of thought on a subject which deserves much more attention than it receives.

FRITZ.

The Christ-Child. A Christmas cantata for soprano, alto, and tenor, solos, chorus, and organ. Music by *J. F. Ohl*. 52 pages. 60 cts.; dozen, \$6.00. (The United Lutheran Publication House, Philadelphia, Pa.)

This is an easy Christmas cantata which choirmasters might well keep in mind, sending for a sample copy before the holiday season again arrives.

FRITZ.

Studies in the Life of the Early Church. By *F. J. Foakes-Jackson*. 263 pages. (George H. Doran Co., New York.)

The twenty-five chapters of this book by the Professor of Christian Institutions in Union Theological Seminary cover the period of primitive Christianity to the accession of Constantine. It traces the origin of dogmas and institutions still recognized in the Christian Church. It will render good service to a person wanting to review the first three centuries of the Christian Church.

DAU.

Science as Revelation. By *John M. Watson*. 303 pages. (The Macmillan Co., New York.)

The arrangement of the contents of this book remind one of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, in which the reader gets a fine picture of fourteenth-century England from the talks of the pilgrims belonging to various social strata and pursuits. The author's main aim is to show that nature is a "dependable revelation of the divine way and will." He introduces representatives of the various departments of natural science ("The Astronomer Speaks," "The Physicist Speaks," "The Chemist Speaks," etc.), ten groups in all, and makes them tell what their science has revealed to

them concerning God. Bearing in mind Rom. 1, 19, 20, one is compelled to say that a study of this kind can be reverently pursued, and with a distinct profit to the believing soul. Numerous attempts of this kind have been made by devout Christians, as, for instance, in our circles by the late Rev. Weseloh in his *Herrlichkeit Gottes in der Natur*. Such studies have not taken men away from the written revelation of God in the Bible and its distinctive authority. But the book before us aims at making all revelation of God conformable to that which is conveyed by nature. The author is looking forward to a New Religion of Universal Truth, which will be a symphony of truth, in which the voices of mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology, psychology, as well as the spiritual truths of ethics and religion taught by Jesus of Nazareth, will be blended in a grand harmony. It is to be feared that there will be a jarring discord if a member of this orchestra should try to play the *andante maestoso* from 1 Cor. 2, 14. Evolution is accorded a large influence in the New Religion portrayed in this book.

DAU.

The World's Great Religious Poetry. Edited by *Caroline Miles Hill*, Ph. D. 836 pages, 8¼×5½. Cloth, \$2.50. (Macmillan Co., New York.) Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

According to the announcement of the publishers, this book contains a "collection of religious poems covering the entire range of ancient and modern literature." The contents have been arranged under twelve general heads, *viz.*, Inspiration, The Search after God, The Existence and Idea of God, Faith, God in Nature, Prayers, Worship, Comfort in Sorrow, Conduct of Life, Death and Immortality, The Nature of the Future Life. There are 836 closely filled pages, including the Introduction, Table of Contents, and Index of Titles and Authors.

This anthology makes no pretense at being Christian and is therefore rightly named religious — in its widest sense. However, a very large number of the best Christian poems of all ages is included. While one misses some old favorites, one finds other lesser known gems by way of compensation; to mention just one, the English translation of Clement's hymn, of which "Shepherd of Tender Youth" in our hymn-book is a metrical paraphrase. The collection will serve as a splendid reference work. Many poems are made available which would otherwise be difficult to obtain. Naturally, in a collection of this nature it strikes one as odd to find our gems of Christian poetry in such strange company as Omar Khayyam, Brahma, Buddha, Seneca, etc., and yet there is this value in it, that in the contrast the serenity and majesty of that which is truly Christian stands out prominently.

The compiler seems to have been happy in her selection of English translations. This is particularly true of Luther's "Ein' feste Burg" and Gerhardt's "Befehl du deine Wege."

Sometimes her selections have not been the best. "To wander through the aisles of this great cathedral of music and song" and to find a piece like Carl Sandburg's diatribe, "To a Contemporary Bunkshooter," is like walking through a real cathedral and stumbling upon a pile of refuse which a negligent janitor failed to remove.

W. G. P.