

# THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY.

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## Foreword.

Another year of grace has dawned. In preparing for another round of service, the THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY is well aware that its course, including, as it does, unfaltering opposition to unionism and doctrinal indifference in general, will not be more popular in the future than it has been in the past. A generation which has produced the Lausanne Conference and is developing much enthusiasm in praising it will not be kindly disposed toward severe critics of this gathering. But evidently a religious journal must have higher ideals than those indicated by the word popularity. It is a truism that the public is best served when it is given, not what it likes, but what it needs. Can it be adequately told in a few words to what extent the Christian world to-day needs the admonition to extricate itself from the net of unionism? Those who have eyes to see cannot fail to notice that the appalling ignorance in religious matters which we observe in the youth of our land and which has often been commented upon by editors and educators, is largely due to these efforts at bringing into alliance various church-bodies whose doctrines are not in agreement, the result being a wide-spread disregard of doctrinal distinctions and differences and, finally, of Christian doctrine in general. The Romanists with more or less merriment dwell on what they call the collapse of Protestantism, finding their justification for this bold term in the inability of the average young Protestant to give an intelligent account of the religion which he professes to hold. It is to be feared that there is a result of all this doctrinal indifference born of unionism which is more lamentable and dreadful than anything hitherto alluded to — the substitution of trust in one's own good deeds for faith in Jesus Christ. Where doctrinal matters are relegated to the background, study of what is essential in the Scriptures easily ceases; and where this sad state of affairs obtains, Christ and His salvation are readily dropped from view. May God grant His grace to the readers and editors of the THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY that they, without becoming bigoted or fanatical, may remain firm in their opposition to all endeavors which tend to bring about a communion of light with darkness!

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## BOOK REVIEW.

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**Touring with God.** Devotions for Christian Pilgrims. Selected and arranged by *Theo. Graebner*. 192 pages,  $4\frac{1}{4} \times 6\frac{1}{4}$ . \$1.75. (Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.)

This book is something entirely new. The compiler, Professor Graebner, says in his introductory remarks: "The modern tourist has many a *vademecum* suitable for pocket, grip, or hand-bag, which supplies guidance and

direction both for motor tours and for trips by rail. The railroad folder and the hotel guide and, more recently, the Road Guide or Blue Book for motorists are deemed indispensable. Few of us fail to supply ourselves with these and similar aids for enjoyable, safe, and intelligent travel as we start on a tour. . . . But there has to my knowledge been little or no provision of an analogous kind for satisfying the needs of the spirit when we leave the home with its daily devotions and when we separate ourselves for a season from the sanctuary at which we are accustomed to worship on the Lord's Day. To many a Christian the motor trip, the railroad journey, the tour abroad, have meant a temporary severance of spiritual relations, which is apt, as the days of travel lengthen, to become almost complete. True, the Testament and Psalms have not been wanting in the equipment of those resolved to take God with them on a sightseeing or pleasure trip or on journeys for the restoration of the health, and if the present little manual is to be viewed as a substitute for that greatest of all companions and guides, God's Word, it were better it had never been written. But in supplying this help for those who desire to tour with God, I have given the major portion of it to extracts from that best of all books—selections from the Old and New Testaments, suitable for reading on various occasions during a tour, whether on land or sea, in good and evil days. A number of prayers and selected portions of sacred poetry have been added in order to give opportunity for utterance of those thoughts which the contemplation of nature, and the experiences of travel generally, stir up in the heart of a Christian." The book is neatly and durably bound and is put up in a cloth-board carton with a clasp. Thirty-two blank pages of strong paper are found in the rear of the book, on which may be added additional devotional matter or contemplations on the wonders of God found in nature or personal experiences which one has had on his tour.

FRTZ.

**Proceedings of the Thirty-Second Convention of the Iowa District of the Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, held at Charter Oak, Iowa, August 24—30, 1927.** 25 cts., postpaid; in lots of ten or more, 20 cts. a copy, postpaid. Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo., or from Rev. A. H. Semmann, Sec., 128 Vine St., Waterloo, Iowa.

Two excellent doctrinal papers are offered here, one German, the other English. Rev. F. Kreutz, Sr., furnished the German paper on *Die Heimat im Licht*," and Rev. N. P. Uhlig the English one on "The Christian's Home on Earth."

MUELLER.

**Fuel for the Fire.** Choice illustrations covering a wide range of Bible truths. By *C. B. Gohdes, Litt. D.* Compiled and edited by *J. H. Peters.* 341 pages; cloth; \$2.00. Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

This is a most useful book, which, we are sure, pastors, speakers, and teachers in our midst will welcome. The title is somewhat misleading; it does not suggest the contents of the book. *Fuel for the Fire* consists of a large number of illustrations on subjects which occur again and again in sermons and devotional addresses, as also in the Christian instruction of the young. The book covers about three dozen subjects, such as Affliction,

Baptism, Conversion, Death, Faith, Love, Missions, Peace, Repentance, Resurrection, Sanctification, Sin, Sunday, etc. It contains striking illustrations for all festivals of the church-year and quotes a large number of men, usually learned and prominent, who have spoken favorably of the Christian religion. Not all illustrations have the same value; but we are certain that no pastor or speaker who purchases the book will be disappointed when looking for suitable material with which to illustrate the truths which he desires to inculcate. The name of Dr. Gohdes is well known in Lutheran circles; both as a writer and a speaker he ranks high among Lutheran divines. We heartily recommend this book to our fellow-workers in the Lord's vineyard.

MUELLER.

**Penn's Lutheran Forerunners and Friends.** By *Pastor John William Richards*. 342 pages. 75 cts. (The Lutheran Book Concern, Columbus.) Order from Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

This volume is a companion story to the author's previous book, *How Lutherans Helped Win Liberty*. It bears the explanatory title, "Two Hundred and Fifty Years Ago," which has reference to the probable celebration, in 1931, of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, recommended by Chief Justice Moschzisker. The writer tells the true story of the beginnings of the Lutheran Church in this country in narrative form, using several fictitious characters, whose lives he portrays. While it is somewhat difficult to narrate historic events in this way, the reader will find it easier to coordinate and remember the historic facts. The author has done his work very well and presents to his readers a most interesting story, each fact of which is based upon thorough historical research. To help the reader in impressing on his memory the various persons and events, he has prefixed a detailed statement of Lutheran dates and chronology, which, so far as the reviewer knows, is not found in any other book. The technical execution is excellent, and we are surprised that the Lutheran Book Concern can furnish this fine book at 75 cts. a copy, retail. It is just the thing to present to your boy or girl for a Christmas-gift.

MUELLER.

**Providence, Prayer, and Power.** Studies in the Philosophy, Psychology, and Dynamics of the Christian Religion. By *Wilbur Fisk Tillett*. Cloth; 338 pages; \$3.00. (Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn.)

Dr. W. F. Tillett, the author of this volume, is Dean Emeritus of the Theological Faculty and Professor of Christian Doctrine in Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn. He is the author of quite a number of well-received books, and with respect to his doctrinal position he is a Fundamentalist. The volume before us is written in a reverent spirit and purposes to give the reader a comprehensive view of the Christian doctrine of prayer. The subject is certainly an important one, especially since Modernism has practically eliminated prayer. Nevertheless, we cannot endorse this work unreservedly. It offers so many details that the student easily overlooks the essential points. But this is not its serious fault. While the writer pretends to stand on Scriptural ground, he does not at all times offer true Scriptural doctrine. The very subtitle, "Studies in the Philosophy, Psychology, and Dynamics of the Christian Religion," in-

dicates that the author, and not Scripture, is going to do most of the instructing. He weaves his "lessons" out of his own experience and that of other Christians and makes the Bible serve as a hat-rack for his speculations. As he does not recognize the Word of God as the means of grace, prayer itself becomes the most potent means of grace. Endeavoring to reconcile divine providence with human freedom, he advocates Arminianism (p. 65). Not satisfied with the simple Scriptural terms, he philosophizes theologically, and the result is often a jumble of words, which the reader does not understand. For instance: "Prayer is the expression of man's inmost need, *as a social being that is incomplete until he fulfils himself in another*" (p. 197). Quite frequently the author speaks as if he did not believe in the personality and deity of the Holy Ghost, *e. g.*, p. 316. Had the writer presented, in clear and simple terms, without "philosophy" and "psychology" and "dynamics," the Scriptural doctrine on "Providence, Prayer, and Power," what an excellent work this able and experienced teacher might have given to the Christian reader! As it is, the work is very unsatisfactory in spite of the many beautiful thoughts which it contains.

MUELLER.

The *Verlag des Schriftenvereins (E. Klaerner) Zwickau, Sachsen*, has sent us: 1. *Verhandlungen der 49. Jahresversammlung der Synode der Ev.-Luth. Freikirche in Sachsen u. a. St. 1927*. Price, 50 cts. Here authoritative information is given on the Synod of our brethren in Germany and the work they are doing. The essay submitted by *Dr. Nickel* treated of "The Church and Church-fellowship" and is printed in full. — 2. *Die Stellung der Ev.-Luth. Freikirche in Sachsen u. a. St. zu der kirchlichen Bewegung in Bochum-Hamme*. By *Dr. Geo. Mezger*. Price, 15 cts. In Hamme, a suburb of Bochum in Westphalia, a great number of people left the state church and sought affiliation with our brethren. The latter have been severely criticized for not refusing to have anything to do with the dissatisfied Lutherans at Hamme. *Dr. Mezger* ably and objectively tells what the controversy was about and shows how utterly groundless the charge of proselytizing is, raised against him and his coworkers. — Order through Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

**Christ-Child or Santa Claus?** A Christmas play for one male and five female characters. By *Amelia C. Krug*. 25 cts. (Antigo Publishing House, Antigo, Wis.)

**Christmas Cheer.** A Christmas play in two acts for four males and five females. By *Amelia C. Krug*. 30 cts. (Antigo Publishing House, Antigo, Wis.)

Both of these Christmas plays are intended to do away with the imaginary bewhiskered Santa Claus and to put Christ into the homes and the hearts of the people. The second one especially is very touching; it teaches a beautiful Christmas lesson of trust in the Savior, who is our only Helper in all the needs of both body and soul.

FRITZ.