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Good Works.

Translated from Dr. E. Preuss's *Die Rechtfertigung*, Part IX.

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(Concluded.)

This is the simple sense of Jas. 2, 14—16. So also the Fathers have always understood it. All other interpretations either clearly violate God's Word, or they are refuted by the clear words of the texts. For example, some say that James contradicts Paul.¹⁾ If that were true, God's curse would rest upon him, for Gal. 1, 8. 9 we read: "But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." The fact is, however, that James did not preach another gospel than Paul. For he taught regeneration by the Word (1, 18) and that we apprehend salvation, *i. e.*, justification, by receiving, *i. e.*, believing, the Word (1, 21).²⁾ It would indeed be well to remember what St. Augustine said in reply to those who declared that the Old and the New Testament contradicted each other. He says, if that were admitted, some might be so insane as to assert that also the New Testament contradicted itself. For just as the former critics place Moses in opposition to John, so the latter might easily make the simple believe that John and Paul are in conflict with each other. However, just as the pure and genuine Christian faith confesses that Paul and John are in harmony, so it also confesses that John and Moses agree with each other.³⁾

1) De Wette, *Kommentar zu Jakobus*, 239.

2) Here James teaches, first, that the Word of God saves; secondly, that this saving Word must be accepted, *i. e.*, believed; thirdly, that it is not sufficient to have received it once [in Holy Baptism] as a noble graft. One must believe it continually.

3) *Nam si esset alius, cujus item dementissimus furor ipsum Novum Testamentum sibi contrarium apud imperitos conaretur ostendere, quid aliud ageret, nisi quemadmodum isti Moysen et Johannem, ita illi Paulum et Johannem tanquam inimicos rixantesque proponeret? Sicut autem sincerissima et verissima fides commendat Pauli Johannisque concordiam, sic Moysi et Johannis pacem intuens . . . amplectitur.* (Augustinus, *Sermones*, Classis I, Serm. I, § 5.)

BOOK REVIEW.

Holy Communion. A Handbook for Lutheran Communicants. By *Pastor Johannes Becker*. Cloth, 85 cts.; leather binding, \$1.50; de luxe edition, \$2.50. (Wartburg Publishing House, Chicago, Ill.)

The object of this publication is to give to the young people of the Lutheran Church an English substitute for the *Kommunionbuch*, which was so highly valued for its assistance in preparing for Holy Communion. The author has succeeded in bringing together a great deal of material in a very short compass. He has three main parts, in eighteen chapters: presentation of Lutheran doctrine; the preparation; the celebration, of which the first part is the longest. It struck the reviewer as very strange that the venerable author should use John 6, 53—58 as a proof-text for the Lord's Supper. The author writes that he does not wish to stress the point, since he understands the text of the *manducatio spiritualis* first of all; but he feels that a reference to the Eucharist is implied. To this we cannot agree, but we nevertheless believe that pastors may get much material out of this offering. The necessary explanations are easily added.

K.

I Believe in Man. By *Judge Leon McCord*. \$1.50. (Harper & Brothers, 1929.)

The rather striking title of this book hardly gives an indication of its contents. In forty short chapters the author sets forth, in epigrammatic form, some outstanding points in ethics, largely from the standpoint of the Christian social worker. The background, as might be expected, is partly inadequate and partly erroneous; for the author belongs to the number of those unfortunate people who wish to discard creeds. (See chap. XXV.) Nevertheless there is so much of common sense in the book that the discriminating pastor may well read the entire exposition with profit, adapting it as the needs of his own pastoral work require.

K.

The Cherubim of Glory. By *N. Rasmussen*. 139 pages, 4½×7. \$1.25. (The Book Concern, Columbus, O.)

The author undertakes to defend the proposition that the cherubim as well as the seraphim are not angels, but are "symbols representing an epitome of the entire living creation." The author's discussion, while ingenious in its marshaling of exegetical proof for his contention, fails to explain the connection of the cherubim with those events in secular and religious history in which they occur in the Biblical record. We still prefer the interpretation which makes them bearers and mediators of divine wrath as well as signs of God's gracious and salutary presence among His people. That God is "enthroned above the cherubim" should mean "that all earthly creatures are at His disposal" looks like a far-fetched conception compared with the traditional view.

G.

Christianity's Contribution to Civilization. By *Charles David Eldridge, Ph. D.* 415 pages. 6×9. \$3.00. (Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn.) Order from Concordia Publishing House.

"Godliness is profitable unto all things," and Christianity is godliness. The blessings that have come to the world through the Christian religion is the particular burden of this book. The author conceives of it as an

"interpretation of Christianity as the greatest spiritual, moral, and social impetus the world have ever known." In six longer parts divided into twenty-five chapters, he discusses the benefits which the world owes to the message of Christ. Christianity has mitigated the horrors of slavery; it has conquered the social evils; civilized barbarian tribes; made eminent contributions to painting, sculpture, and architecture; to music; to education; to literature; to social ideals and values; to the brotherhood of man; to democracy, etc. Through the Reformation and Protestantism it has benefited equally Europe and the United States. All this the learned author demonstrates and proves in his most interesting and instructive book, which to read is a prolonged pleasure. He treats the matter with warmth and vigor, in chapters which are well planned and well constructed, at frequent intervals rising to great eloquence and beauty in picturing the blessings which the Gospel has brought to mankind. It is a popular apologetic, which both the learned and the common Christian of average intelligence will be glad to study. Of course, the Lutheran Christian will not subscribe to all its statements. What the author says of Luther's "intolerant spirit" (p.71) is not in accord with the Reformer's declarations, in which he opposes persecution of heretics with sword and fire. Again, when the author asserts that Luther "had no place for the doctrine of the separation of Church and State" (p.71), he ventures a statement which contradicts Luther's own words. Or, no Lutheran can see in the development of secret societies (p.385) a blessing of Christianity. They sprang from the deistic and antichristian spirit of an atheistic age, but not from Christianity. So, too, what the author says of the general brotherhood of man must be taken with a grain of salt. Christianity knows only of one brotherhood, namely, that of true believers in Christ. The fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man are in Christ only. Thus it is evident that the book must be read with care; yet, on the whole and apart from these failings, it is a book that will be studied with much pleasure and profit. Books like these are necessary to remind an unbelieving and ungrateful generation of what it owes to Christianity, which it so shamefully despises.

MUELLER.

The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit. By *H. Wheeler Robinson, M. A., D. D.*, Principal of Regent's Park College (England). \$3.00. (Harper & Brothers, Publishers, 1928.)

Pentecost and the Holy Spirit. By *J. B. Hunley*, Pastor, Central Christian Church, Walla Walla, Wash. \$2.00. (Fleming H. Revell Co., Publishers, 1928.)

Dr. Robinson would not care to study Dr. Hunley's book. He says: "The Protestant appeal to the Scriptures as a text-book of doctrine again did frequent violence to exegesis, and much of it reads strangely enough to us to-day. . . . Does not this [that the revelation of the Bible comes wholly through human media] make impossible the confident appeal to the Scriptures as affording an infallible direction of faith and conduct?" Dr. Hunley does just this—he appeals to the Scriptures as his text-book. He is not ashamed to make the statement which Dr. Robinson would find strange reading: "Therefore were the fathers wise in putting forth the motto: 'Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; and where the Scriptures

are silent, we are silent.'” Accordingly Dr. Hunley would derive no pleasure and very little profit from studying a book which proclaims the principle that the authority of the Bible is found in “the inner content of the revelation instead of its literary expression and record.”

Dr. Robinson bases his theology, not on the Bible (“the doctrine of verbal inspiration is not simply untenable; it is irrelevant”), but on experience and philosophy. “Christian experience is the only true basis of a doctrine of the Spirit. . . . The arguments of Basil of Caesarea and of Gregory of Nazianus from the work to the person of the Holy Spirit are based on the authority of Scripture rather than on the direct appeal to experience.” And the “experience” with which Dr. Robinson deals is bound up with philosophy. He demands that even the doctrine of the Trinity be subjected to the philosophical conceptions of the present age. “How are we to conceive the divine personality? The question takes us to the very center of philosophy at the present time, for it is around the conception of personality that there is the keenest debate. Here is our highest category, our chief hope of an ultimate interpretation of experience. If this is true for philosophy, it must also be true, sooner or later, for theology. . . . The aim of the book is theological *construction*, which accounts for the prominence given to the philosophical issues.” Now, what are the findings of the theology of experience? We are now not concerned with its fundamental aberration. It is a monstrous aberration when these men set down the principle: “Nor do we mean by ‘experience’ anything less than the whole experience of the human race, so far as it has shared in the Christian consciousness,” and then presume to present to us their individual findings as authoritative. Our business just now is to set down some particular doctrines taught by them on the basis of experience as interpreted by philosophy. As to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, the book, say the publishers, “argues from what we know of the spirit of man to what we may believe of the Spirit of God.” This is its teaching: “The Spirit is conceived as the projected presence and activity of Christ Himself with His Church, and this explains the personalization of the conception. . . . If the Lord gave personality to the Spirit, the Spirit gave ubiquity to the Lord. . . . Men would not go on striving to achieve in the Christian life unless they believed in the real presence of God—which means the Holy Spirit—working in and through their human striving, yet always greater and other than it. . . . By this name—‘the Holy Spirit’—we denote the whole activity of the divine in relation to the human personality as mediated through Christ.” Is this clear to the Christian consciousness of the human race? What, then, of the Trinity? Dr. Robinson repudiates Unitarianism. What does he teach? “For the artificial separation of the ‘Persons’ of the Trinity there is, as we have seen, no ground in the actual experience of the Christian. . . . It has often been pointed out that in the great pioneers of Christian experience, Augustine, Luther, and Schleiermacher, ‘the religious interpretation of doctrine allows the diversity to withdraw behind the unity. . . . A ‘social’ Trinity taken seriously is pluralistic and destroys the unity of God, but our experience of Spirit does suggest a unity differentiated, though not individualized, in which there is the coexistence of that which our thinking cannot combine ontologically.” As to Christ, He shares the Father’s

nature, but is subordinate to Him. We are not to take refuge, further, in a hasty dualism, beneath the shelter of Chalcedon, and "the human life of Jesus of Nazareth shows us how a *human personality* may be integrated into the divine, whilst retaining *its own individuality* and characteristics." (Italics our own.) As to the "many rival theories of atonement, "the author will not take a decided stand. "In some way" the divine personality takes on itself the sins of the human; along either path, the Protestant or the medieval, Catholic conception of the atonement and justification, "there is a vital discovery of the divine nature as gracious," and thus our personal life may rest securely in His. In fact, there is truth in all other religions. And this statement receives its interpretation by the other statement that "the true uniqueness of Christianity goes back to her Founder's proud humility, the Spirit in which He stood before Pilate." "Faith belongs to all the higher religions." "Its ethical content in Christian experience is not as something believed so much as something achieved." "In Him the divine grace made a new appeal to human freedom." "The Spirit of God cannot be confined to the Christian Church." "There is a real kinship between the human spirit and the divine." And so forth. We are not surprised that the *Western Christian Advocate* heartily endorses the book, but we are surprised to find the *Watchman-Examiner* stating that "in the main we find ourselves in complete agreement with the author."

Turning to Dr. Hunley's book (which is "dedicated to the movement for the celebration, in 1930, of the 1900th anniversary of the First Pentecost of the Church"), we enter a different atmosphere. It is useless to discuss the question which of the two books is the more scholarly. If scholarship means depth of thought expended on philosophical issues, Dr. Robinson's book is a most scholarly work. Dr. Hunley applies himself to the study of the teachings of the Bible. That would be Christian scholarship. And Bible scholars expend as much thought as the students of the problems of philosophy and experience. It is not a matter for discussion which is the more profitable. Scripture is profitable for doctrine, and what Dr. Hunley writes, in exposition of Scripture, on the person and the supreme importance of the work of the Holy Spirit cannot be read without profit. The same applies to what he writes on the deity of Christ, on the atonement, on the "spiritual vandalism" committed by the deniers of the Virgin Birth, etc. He repudiates instantaneous sanctification and sinless perfection and the Judaizing teaching on Sunday observance. However, he does not always succeed in keeping silence where Scripture is silent and in speaking only that, and all that, which Scripture speaks. He cannot bring himself to utter the word Real Presence. And so with the common Reformed errors. Then, he is not speaking where Scripture speaks when he defines "the image of God" as "the ability to think, to feel, to purpose, to create, to be self-conscious," and as to the view that "the statement 'the earth was waste and void' is an intimation of a former ruin," he is ready, in spite of his good rule, to leave the matter open. One is pleased to find the statement that in the seventh chapter of Romans, Paul is describing the operation of the law of sin and of death in the carnal nature of the child of God. The majority of modern exegetes persist in having Paul describe his experience in his unconverted

state. But one is dumbfounded when reading further on: "The seventh chapter presents the state of the Christian, illustrated in Paul, who is fighting his battle against a carnal nature in his own strength, minus the help of the Holy Spirit." And when our author asserts that "the Incarnation was a necessity," "that God could not 'reveal His moral perfection but in the life of a perfect manhood,' that 'the Word became flesh' that we might behold the moral character of the God," he is not speaking where Scripture speaks, but is indulging in speculation.—True to the principle of the Campbellites, the book carries as its motto a quotation from the Unitarian James Martineau: ". . . those who find it more congenial to pass behind the whole field of theological divergency and linger near the common springs of all human piety and hope may perhaps be preparing some first lines of a true *eirenikon*." Is Dr. Hunley ready, after all, to bear with the theological divergencies of Dr. Robinson? E.

Princes of the Christian Pulpit and Pastorate. Second series. By *Harry Clay Howard*, Professor of Homiletics and Pastoral Theology, Emory University. 448 pages. Cloth, with gilt lettering. \$2.50. (Cokesbury Press, Nashville, Tenn.) Order from Concordia Publishing House.

Themes for Vital Preaching for the Gospel Ministry. Compiled and edited by *Rev. Carl Betz* and *Rev. Paul Krutzky*. 245 pages. \$2.00. (Doubleday, Doran & Co., New York.) Order from Concordia Publishing House.

The Six Miracles of Calvary. By *W. R. Nicholson, D. D.* 35 cts. (Bible Institute Colportage Association, Chicago.)

The output of special books to aid the pastor in his work is to-day immense, but it must also be said that much of the material is of little value to the pastor, as neither in form nor in contents it is adapted to his needs. The reviewer is convinced that the three volumes mentioned here do not belong into the category of useless books, though the reader must exercise critical judgment in their use.

Princes of the Christian Pulpit and Pastorate is the second volume of a series of biographies of preachers who have attained to fame. The representative pulpit orators are: Bernard of Clairvaux, Martin Luther, Richard Baxter, Thomas Chalmers, J. H. Newman, H. W. Beecher, H. P. Liddon, R. W. Dale, H. P. Hughes, C. B. Galloway, Francis Paget, and J. M. Buckley. The biographical sketches are extremely interesting and, in the main, accurate. Their value for the practical preacher lies in the fact that they point out to him the principles which account for the outstanding success of these men in the pulpit. Each of the men treated belongs in a class by himself; each lived in a different atmosphere; each had his distinctive doctrinal views and his struggles and difficulties to overcome. But their success, as far as it was attained, lay largely in their devotion to their tasks and their capacity for untiring efforts. To-day eminent opportunities open themselves to the Lutheran preacher who knows how to present the old Gospel-message in a winning manner to the American public. His preparation for the monumental task lies not in the imitation of men who became successful in the pulpit, or in the modification of the

pure Gospel, or in the substitution of subjects in place of the saving redemption themes, or in the catering to the tastes of men who have itching ears. Loyal to God's Word and the high ideals of His Church, he must present the ancient golden truths in their God-given purity, yet in a manner which best suits his personality and character and with constant attention to the one great goal of winning souls. Only God Himself can make such preachers through His Word; yet while Scripture remains the only source on which to base the faith and from which to draw perpetual inspiration, the lessons which lie in the successful lives of eminent men will enrich their own work. Biographies are always instructive; the Christian preacher will do well to study the lives of great preachers and eminent pulpit orators. Dr. Howard is professor of Homiletics, and the biographical sketches which he offers for study grew out of his work in the classroom; this accounts largely for the fact that they are both practical and scholarly.

Themes for Vital Preaching for the Gospel Ministry contains one hundred outlines and five hundred texts and themes. It is a work of real merit, prepared by two Lutheran ministers. The outlines follow the church-year, and a brief preface explains the meaning of each festive season. Special texts are supplied, though the Gospel-lessons used in our churches furnish the foundation of the outlines. The outlines themselves are simple and practical and of the type that are used by Lutheran pastors. May the book find many readers and students, especially in those circles where themes and texts are chosen quite at random! To our fellow-pastors we would recommend this book as worthy of careful study. They will find in it many themes and outlines which they may well use.

The Six Miracles of Calvary are apologetic Lenten addresses preached by Bishop Nicholson of the Reformed Episcopal Church, in which he, in a simple and straightforward manner, interprets the meaning of the Savior's great Passion. They are thoroughly devout and testify of the writer's sincerity of faith in the atoning work of Christ. To the believing Christian it is a source of deep gratification that such sermons are still circulated in circles where Modernism is rapidly spreading its destructive falsehoods.

MUELLER.

The Text of Revelation. A Revised Theory. By *John Oman*. (Cambridge University Press. American Agents: Macmillan Company, New York.)

This is a weird book. One of the most truthful sentences written by the author is the following: "The work has been more like the solving of a Chinese puzzle than orthodox higher criticism." Dr. Oman thinks that the text of Revelation as we have it needs rearrangement. He maintains that he has found the key for this rearrangement. Taking Gebhardt's text of Revelation, he finds that the book can be divided into a number of sections of equal length, each one amounting to thirty-three lines in this edition. To be sure, there are some unevennesses, but ingenuity has suggested a method of applying the shears or glue, just as the case may be. Dr. Oman has done some violent jumbling. For instance, Section XI of his text is made up of chap. 15, 5, 6; 16, 2—16, and 8, 6—11. To all appearances, he has built a house without a foundation.

A.