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A P R I L

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BOOK REVIEW

All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 South Jefferson Avenue, St. Louis 18, Missouri.

GOD REMEMBERS. A Study of the Book of Zechariah. By Charles L. Feinberg. Van Kampen Press, Wheaton, Ill. 1950. 283 pages. $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{7}{8}$. \$3.00.

A commentary on the book of Zechariah, which Luther called "Der Ausbund der Propheten," is indeed welcome.

It is also gratifying to note that "the author maintains throughout the orthodox, traditional viewpoint of the Bible" (p. vii). This is borne out in his isagogical as well as in his exegetical approach. He does not agree with the critical division of the authorship of the book; he insists that "this Angel of Jehovah is none other than the preincarnate Christ" (p. 29).

An additional interesting feature of the book is the fact that it is written by a Jewish author who has espoused Christianity and is now professor of Old Testament in Los Angeles Bible Theological Seminary.

Disappointing is the writer's avowed viewpoint of prophecy as stated frankly in the preface: "His interpretation of Holy Writ is the premillennial and dispensational" (p. vii). If the book of Zechariah is the "Apocalypse of the Old Testament," then this aberration will not enter merely as an occasional marginal reference, but must effect the core of the meaning of the book, and it does.

WALTER R. ROEHRS

DIE CHRISTLICHE WAHRHEIT. Von Paul Althaus. Two volumes, 892 pages, 6×9 . Second edition, 1949. C. Bertelmann Verlag, Guetersloh. Preis H1. D. M. 27.

It has been suggested that Althaus' two-volume dogmatics be translated into English and be used as a textbook in Lutheran theological seminaries. By and large Althaus conforms to the pattern which most Lutheran dogmaticians observe in organizing their material. An especially excellent feature is Althaus' critical evaluation of all significant trends in the history of dogma, particularly the contemporary theology of Roman dogmaticians, of liberal theologians, and of the dialecticians. There are no references to American theologians, except to Paul Tillich and Otto Piper, who were established in Germany prior to their transfer to America. Althaus' presentation is gripping and challenging. His frequent use of striking eqigrams, his mastery of the German language, and above all the accumulated wealth of dogmatical material make the reading and study of Althaus a real delight.

But in many sections — in fact, basically all through the two volumes

— there is frequently more problematics than dogmatics. This is evident particularly in the first volume of 350 pages devoted exclusively to Prolegomena. Althaus states that the purpose of dogmatics is to establish and unfold the Christian truth in its relevance for today. To do this the dogmatician must examine God's revelation as it reaches us today in the Apostolic witness and through the Church. (I, 19.) This reviewer understands Althaus to say that the task of dogmatics is to examine the "christliche Wahrheit," the body of truth which is handed down in the Biblical witness, exegesis, church history, and history of dogma, and ultimately in the contemporary Church's proclamation. The second task of dogmatics is to determine what in this tradition is essential and constructive and what is variable and transient. This approach to dogmatics would place Althaus more definitely into the Schleiermacher-Frank tradition than he probably realizes. Schleiermacher sought religious truth in the individual's experience of God; Frank in the confessional statements of the Church, especially the Lutheran Confessions; Althaus in the Scriptures and in the current proclamation in line with the fine-sounding phrase "Man muss auf die Brueder hoeren."

In the first volume (almost 300 pages) Althaus discusses the essence of revelation and faith. He states: The Church dares to witness concerning God because God has witnessed and still witnesses concerning Himself; the Church dares to speak of God because God has spoken and still speaks (p. 25). This encounter between God and man is revelation, both as *Ur-offenbarung* and *Heilsoffenbarung*. Althaus devotes considerable space to *Ur-offenbarung*, i. e., the natural knowledge of God, and comes to grips with the many modern aberrations among Roman Catholics from Thomas Aquinas to M. Schmaus, from the orthodox Lutherans to the modern era, and especially with the Herrmann-Barth-Bultmann tradition. We found Althaus' critique of Barth's virtual denial of the natural knowledge very helpful, especially the contention that Barth's position leads to a hopeless mingling of Law and Gospel (pp. 68 ff.). Althaus, as one would expect from his orientation, operates very largely with the findings of Comparative Religions, but he utilizes this material in such a way that the natural man's realization of his responsibility to the "unknown God" is clearly emphasized and that in this experience of *Deus absconditus* the natural man is filled with anxiety (*Angst*). Althaus states that man has an inkling of the high purpose for which he was created and is filled with nostalgia (*Heimweh*) for it. But his nostalgia is no guarantee that he will return home (p. 85). The natural knowledge of God is the revelation of the unrevealed God. "Es ist ein rätselhaft-doppeltes Antlitz, das Gott uns zuehrt. Was will er zuletzt mit uns? Er macht uns lebendig und tötet uns. Er gibt uns die hohen Normen der Wahrheit, Gerechtigkeit, Gemeinschaft, Schönheit ins Herz und lässt uns hungern und dürsten nach ihrer Verwirklichung ohne Erfüllung. Er berührt uns mit seinem Leben und

schließt uns von Ihm aus. Er wirft uns das Heimweh in die Seele und hält uns die Heimat verschlossen. Er adelt uns durch Gebot und Berufung — und lässt uns doch an ihnen unrettbar schuldig werden und seinem Gerichte verfallen. *Quid Deus velit erga nos?* Mit dieser offenen Frage hat Luther die Grenze und Not der 'natürlichen' Erkenntnis Gottes bestimmt." (P. 110 f.) Only one question: To what extent have elements of the Christian revelation influenced Althaus in his description of the *Ur-Offenbarung*, and how much is mere conjecture? Here, as in every phase of Christian doctrine, it is important that the dogmatician remain within the clear revelation of God.

Althaus presents *Heilsoffenbarung* under the following four headings: The message to Israel as preparatory for the Gospel; God's redemptive act in Christ; Holy Scripture as the witness to, and bearer of, the revelation; the Church's appropriation of the Gospel in its Confessions and dogmatical treatises. Althaus defines the Gospel as Christ's divinely established authority (*Vollmacht*) to redeem men from their basic trouble. Under the aspect of *Ur-offenbarung*, man's basic problem is the paradox of his existence; a constant *Haben und Entbehren*, freedom and bondage, man's lordship and slavery, the desire for the ethically good and the constant failure to meet it, the unstilled hunger for the true life, a hunger which God has kindled but does not satisfy. This is man's real problem, his *Daseinsnot*. According to Althaus, man's problem is not hamartiological, not sin-centered, as though sin were the cause, the root, and the basis of our *Daseinsnot* and the conquest of sin therefore the end of our problems. That is too simple in the light of *Ur-offenbarung*, i. e., the revelation of human paradoxes. Christ must free us not primarily from our sin, but from the paradoxes of and in our very existence. The Gospel is therefore the message that Christ has received authority (*Vollmacht*) to free us from our entire *Daseinsnot*, by solving and thus removing the paradoxes of our existence. God is reconciled, inasmuch as He no longer confronts me in paradoxes and no longer appears as "two-faced" (manifesting both wrath and love), but comes in love only. In His full authority Christ has led us into fellowship with the Father. We have full redemption, and the Kingdom of God has come. In Christ humanity enters the glory of the new and true life. Man no longer merely exists, now he lives. (Pp. 128 to 130.)

Here we find Althaus' formal and material principle. According to his formal principle, not Scripture, but the "Gospel" is the *principium cognoscendi*. Althaus sees in the Bible only one of the forms — though the most important — in which the Gospel comes to us. In discussing the Bible, Althaus makes many excellent statements, but vitiates these by making many concessions to Liberalism. "The Christmas story is not a myth; it is poetry and expresses symbolically the mystery of what occurred in the birth of Jesus. . . . The story of the malefactor, though a later legendary addition,

is essentially 'genuine,' [inasmuch as it expresses that] the dying Christ has the authority and the will to bestow salvation on the repentant sinner." (P. 151 f.)

Althaus summarizes his material principle in the thesis of Vol. II: God's activity with humanity is toward the restoration of the broken communion. He discusses the following points: 1) God's deity; 2) The world and man as God's creation; 3) Man's sin against God and God's judgment against man; 4) Jesus as the Redeemer and the beginning of the new creation (Jesus as Lord and Savior is found only in the Church, the means of grace, and faith); 5) Deliverance and consummation; 6) The Triune God. There is much, very much, thought-provoking material presented in the second volume. The section on sin is excellent, in fact, throughout the volume there is a continuous array of wonderful theological insights expressed in most gripping manner. Unfortunately Althaus departs from Scripture and Lutheran Orthodoxy in several basic Scriptural concepts, and this naturally affects the entire dogmatics, because, in our opinion, each of his major departures is due to a rationalistic or problematic interest. 1. He fails to distinguish sharply between God's wrath and His love. "God's active 'No' to the sinner never ceases to be a [saving] 'Yes.' The piercing sharpness of His judgment always remains the means of love to draw the sinner to Himself." (P. 489 ff.) 2. Is the failure to see the nature of the wrath of God probably the reason why Althaus will not take seriously the personal union of Christ? He is an ardent advocate of modern kenoticism and severely criticizes the Lutheran *genus maiestaticum*. But if man's reconciliation can be established in the manner as Althaus apparently believes, then Christ need not be truly theanthropic. True, the dogmatician must make Christ truly human — and Althaus does this effectively. (P. 240 ff.) But Christ never ceases to be true God, which the kenoticists deny. According to Althaus, God accepts Christ's work for us because Christ has the authority to restore us to communion with God (p. 256). 3. Althaus offers a splendid statement concerning the relation of objective and subjective justification (p. 414), but confuses the doctrine of justification by presenting it in Osiandrian terminology (p. 28). 4. His kenoticism and denial of the *genus maiestaticum* prevent him from accepting the Real Presence in the Lord's Supper (p. 384 ff.). 5. In accord with his universalistic theory, Althaus views the descent of Christ as symbolic of the theory that there is a second opportunity for those who died without having the Gospel preached to them (p. 216 ff., 507 ff.). He asks: "Das Gericht ist die letzte Entscheidung; wird es auch die letzte Scheidung zwischen solchen, die selig werden und solchen, die verloren gehen, bedeuten?" and manages to answer with a "Yes" and a "No" in the same sentence, but in such a way that the theory of universalism wins out (p. 487 ff.). Althaus' dogmatics is recommended for study to experienced theologians.

F. E. MAYER

THE FACE OF THE HEAVENLY MOTHER. By Josef Cardinal Mindszenty. Philosophical Library, New York, 1951. 150 pages, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$. \$3.00.

The author says many beautiful things about mothers in general, tells the story of St. Monica, the mother of St. Augustine, devotes sixty-two pages specifically to Mariology, and concludes with a chapter on Mother Church. He insists that the Church has never worshiped Mary, but merely pays her filial reverence (*cultus hyperduliae*). In view of his own presentation, however, it would be quite difficult to distinguish between the two. Since the Cardinal quotes Luther in favor of the immaculate conception of Mary and of invoking her, particularly as a part of preparation for death, I would suggest to him a further study of Luther's writings.

L. W. SPITZ

THE RELIGIONS OF MANKIND. By Edmund Davidson Soper. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York and Nashville. 1951. 253 pages, $6\frac{1}{4} \times 9\frac{1}{4}$. \$3.50.

This is the third edition, again thoroughly revised, of a text which has now served teachers and students of comparative religion for thirty years. The author has brought it up to date. The two years which he recently spent in India are reflected in the accurate description and analysis of the religions of that country.

He begins the first chapter with the statement: "Religion is as old as human nature and as ineradicable as the sense of right and wrong" (p. 13). Later he states: "There must have been a time when man had no religion but was developing into a religious being" (p. 20). One naturally concludes that there must have been a time when man possessed no human nature and that the acquisition of a human nature and of religion occurred at the same time. The author would probably not object to this conclusion. His treatment of the origin of religion is not as satisfactory as his description of the various religions in the world today. An authoritative discussion of the origin of religion or of the various religions cannot afford to overlook what Paul says Rom. 1:21-23.

Though the author says some very complimentary things about Christianity, he fails to show clearly that Christianity has from its very beginning been in a class by itself. It is only in the Bible that we find that faithful saying, worthy to be received of all men, women, and children, and not merely of us Christians—that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. The Christian religion is the religion of the grace of God through Christ Jesus. Nothing less, no matter how beautifully it may be said, will do.

L. W. SPITZ

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS WILL NOT BUDGE. By B. A. Maurer. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo., 1951. 104 pages, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{8}$. \$1.75 net.

In sixteen brief chapters the author, pastor of a large city congregation, offers a lucid interpretation of the Ten Commandments and shows their

relevancy to modern life. In describing the purposes of the Law he shows how it functions as a curb, or muzzle, a mirror, and a guide for the regenerated. The most important purpose of the Law, he holds, is its service as a schoolmaster to lead us to Christ. He says: "As an ordinary mirror reveals to us our physical appearance, with the spots, blemishes, smudges, so God's Law holds before our eyes a reflection of our true spiritual condition — our sin, our guilt, our doom, and therefore our desperate need of Christ the Savior." In an age of general lawlessness and calloused consciences it is needful to be reminded that the Ten Commandments will not budge. Pastor Maurer's book is a forceful reminder. L. W. SPITZ

ARCHIV FUER REFORMATIONSGESCHICHTE. An International Journal concerned with the history of the Reformation and its significance in world affairs. Published under the auspices of the Verein fuer Reformationsgeschichte and the American Society for Reformation Research. Vol 42, 1951, Number 1—2. Publisher: C. Bertelsmann, Guetersloh, Westf. — Semiannual, each issue consisting of 144 pages. One volume comprises two issues. Subscription price: 22DM or \$5.00 a year. For members of either society: 17.60 DM or \$4.00 a year.

All students of history welcome the revival of this old periodical. Originally it appeared in 1903. Since 1920 it was issued under the auspices of the "Verein fuer Reformationsgeschichte," publishing chiefly source material for the history of the German Reformation. In 1938 its scope was extended to the Reformation history of Western Europe, the Scandinavian lands, also reform movements in East and Southeast Europe and the non-Lutheran Protestant movements; the subtitle was added: "Forschungen zur Geschichte des Protestantismus und seiner Weltwirkungen." — By 1943 the war began to interfere with the publication of the magazine; a part of the material of Vol. 41 (1944) was already set in type when the publisher was arrested by the Gestapo. The material already in type was published as a fragment in 1948 with the title: "Jahrgang 41, 1948, Heft 112." — After the war the "Verein fuer Reformationsgeschichte" was reorganized and by close association with the newly organized "American Society for Reformation Research" extended on an international basis. One of the results is the revival of the old "*Archiv*," now in two languages, with editors on both sides of the Atlantic. The present Board of Editors: Gerhard Ritter, Professor of History, Freiburg University; Harold J. Grimm, Professor of History, the Ohio State University, Columbus; Roland H. Bainton, Professor of Church History, Yale University; Heinrich Bornkamm, Professor of Church History, Heidelberg University. — The promise for the future held out by this first number is, in the opinion of this reviewer, magnificent. The best substantiation of this opinion is perhaps the Table of Contents: Preliminary remarks of the editors on the future program. — Theologie und Sozialordnung bei Calvin, Erik Wolf, Freiburg. — The Querela Pacis of Erasmus, Classical and Christian Sources, Roland H. Bain-

ton, Yale. — Some Observations of Luther on Ancient Pre-Greek History, Karl H. Dannenfeldt, Elmira (N. Y.). — Melanchthons Naturrechtslehre, Clemens Bauer, Freiburg. — Georg Spalatins Bedeutung für die Reformation und die Organisation der lutherischen Landeskirche, Irmgard Hoesz, Jena. — Ergänzungen zum Briefwechsel des Justus Jonas, Walter Delius, Berlin. — Geistliches und weltliches Regiment in der schwedischen Reformation, Heinz-Horst Schrey, Tuebingen. — The Failure of Church Unification Efforts during the German Reformation (In memoriam Martini Bucer, † 27. Februar 1551), Hastings Eells, Ohio Wesleyan. — Zur Beurteilung der Utrechter Union, Arno Duch, Muenchen. — Biblizismus und natuerliche Theologie in der Gewissenslehre des englischen Puritanismus, Martin Schmidt, Berlin. — Schweden und Deutschland waehrend der synkretischen Streitigkeiten 1645—1660, Sven Goeransson, Uppsala. — Forschungsbericht, Robert Stupperich, Muenster. — Buchbesprechungen. — Zeitschriftenschau, Hermann Witte, Goettingen, und Erich Hassinger, Freiburg.

The services of the old "Verein fuer Reformationgeschichte" simply cannot be overestimated. The present undertaking deserves the best wishes and the strongest possible support of all friends of genuine history and especially Reformation history research.

THEO. HOYER

GOD'S BEST SECRETS. By Andrew Murray. Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich. Reprint. 374 pages, 5¼ × 7¾. \$2.50.

Dr. Andrew Murray (1828-1917) was a son of missionary parents of South Africa. He was educated in Scotland, but in early manhood returned to South Africa to serve as a pastor. The very evident ring of sincerity and consecration which permeates his 366 daily devotional meditations, one for each day of the year, was likely cultivated and strengthened by his work as a missionary. His meditations keep Christ in the center of the picture, though he puts great emphasis on the prayer life of the Christian throughout the many pages of his volume. Unfortunately he occasionally goes too far; thus, in his meditation for February 1, he speaks of prayer as a means of grace. We cannot agree either when he says in his meditation for February 17, based on Is. 27:12: "Oh, when will Christians learn the great truth that 'what God in heaven desires to do *needs prayer on earth as its indispensable condition*'?" There is perhaps no area in human life in which one can as easily go to extremes and exceed the bounds of truth as in the area of religion. Here, too, apply the words of St. Paul to the Philippians: "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand." (Phil. 4:5.)

WALTER E. BUSZIN

THE PRACTICE OF EVANGELISM. By Bryan Green. Scribner's, New York, 1951. 5½ × 8 in. 258 pp. \$3.00.

Bryan Green, an Anglican rector from Birmingham, has conducted many evangelistic missions in England, America, and other countries. Again in recent months his audiences on the Atlantic seaboard have been phenom-

enal. This book is remarkably comprehensive in its discussion of evangelistic method—mass and consultation, adult and children, group and individual. But most unique and welcome is its patient building on a theological foundation. Canon Green employs as his definition of evangelism that given by the Archbishop's Committee of Inquiry on the Evangelistic Work of the Church in 1918: "To evangelize is so to present Christ Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit that men shall come to put their trust in God through Him, to accept Him as their Savior, and serve Him as their King in the fellowship of His Church" (p. 6). The author believes that evangelism should work for conversion; that many within the church are not in the full sense of the term converted; that particularly the unchurched world suffers from an apathy toward God that makes evangelism in our time unusually difficult; and that a vigorous spiritual life in the individual Christian in his church is basic for the task of reaching out toward the unconverted. While known in America as an evangelist in metropolitan mass campaigns, Canon Green devotes most space in his book to the operations of the minister in his parish, his community, and his personal counseling with individuals. He dodges no questions, including the difficult ones about Baptism and Holy Communion, and remains humble in suggesting his own solutions. A recurrent theme of the book, and the subject of one of the appendices, is the consideration of training the laity for evangelistic work. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the National Lutheran Council have sought to re-emphasize evangelism in our time, and this contribution from overseas will prove genuinely helpful.

RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

LOGIC FOR LIVING. LECTURES OF 1921—22. By Henry Horace Williams.
 Edited by Jane Ross Hammer. Philosophical Library, New York,
 1951. 281 pages. \$3.75.

This book is a reconstruction by appreciative students of the classroom method employed by Henry Horace Williams, who for many years taught logic and philosophy at the University of North Carolina. Though covering a wide range of thought, the discussions suggest Mr. Williams' conscious and consistent efforts to apply logical analysis to current and relevant problems of life. The discussions are in places highly stimulating. The most lively impression which stays with the reader is that Mr. Williams must have been a kind of *Socrates redivivus* except that concealed pride is conspicuously absent in Mr. Williams' dealings with students.

PAUL M. BRETSCHER

A PHILOSOPHY OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION. By Edward John Carnell.
 Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1952.
 523 pages. \$6.00.

The author examines with remarkable detachedness and objectivity some of the most significant currents of modern thought which in some way or other compete with the Christian way of life. Following an analysis of

such very earthen philosophies as hedonism and materialism of the Communist brand, the author reviews critically such forms of thought which make a bid for the higher reaches of man and are therefore less easily recognizable as inadequate interpretations of the meaning and purpose of life. Throughout the chapters, he reveals a thorough acquaintance with modern thought patterns and metaphysical problems. At the same time he also gives evidence that he has clearly grasped the fundamentals of the Christian faith. He is to be congratulated on having ventured forth to meet some of the dragons of unbelief and skepticism, to have exposed their vulnerability, and to have slain them with the sword of the Spirit. We have one criticism: some chapters seem to us unnecessarily profuse and prolix. On second thought, perhaps philosophers need to be that way.

PAUL M. BRETSCHER

CONFUCIUS AND CHRIST. A Christian estimate of Confucius. By Leo Sherley-Price, Chaplain, Royal Navy. The Philosophical Library, New York, 1951. 248 pages. \$4.75.

The thesis of this book represents the erroneous view current since the second century that the religious and ethical thoughts of such pagan sages as Confucius, Zoroaster, Buddha, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and Zeno are to a large extent a *praeparatio evangelii*. Accordingly the purpose of this book is "Firstly, to present Confucius to the reader in such a way that he can make a fair estimate of the value and relevance of his teachings. And, secondly, to show that natural philosophy has a vital and important part to play in everyday life, but that all our aspirations towards truth and virtue are largely impotent and frustrated unless supported by a sound metaphysical foundation. This, in the Christian view, had been provided for us by Jesus Christ in His revelation of 'the inexhaustible mystery of the Being of God.'"

Though the theological views elsewhere expressed by the author, who appears to be a High Anglican, do not always comport with Scripture, he unequivocally confesses his faith in the God-Man Jesus Christ, who became incarnate and who by His obedience unto death brought about an atonement for all mankind. It is genuinely refreshing to note how often the author reverts to this most important doctrine of Scripture.

The writer discusses the following aspects of the teachings of Confucius: God in the philosophy of Confucius; the world of spirits and the cult of ancestors; the family and filial piety; the gentleman or *Chun-Tzu*; Virtue (*Jen*); the purpose of education; the doctrine of the mean; the use of music; right behavior (*Li*); the rectification of names.

The book is well written. The organization of the material enables one to gain perspective of the basic teachings of Confucius. Considering that it is possible to read and inwardly digest the 248 pages of this book within the span of two short hours, the price of the book seems outrageously high.

PAUL M. BRETSCHER