

Concordia Theological Monthly



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ARCHIVES

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.

INTRODUCTION TO THEOLOGY. By John Christian Wenger. Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1954. 418 pages. \$4.00.

Dr. J. C. Wenger is professor of theology and philosophy at Goshen College Biblical Seminary, Goshen, Ind., and a noted writer on the history and doctrine of the Mennonite denomination. His greatest work is perhaps the *Doctrines of the Mennonites*, which appeared in 1950. He describes his *Introduction to Theology* as an "interpretation of Scripture, written to strengthen a childlike faith in Christ." It is to introduce students of theology and general students of the Bible to the "doctrinal content of Scripture as understood in the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition." As such it has a very definite value, especially as the author, a student at the Universities of Basle, Chicago, and Zurich (Th.D.), operates from the wider purview of undeniable scholarship. He regards Dr. Francis Pieper as "the outstanding theologian of the strictest Lutheran body in America, the Missouri Synod," and mentions both his *Christliche Dogmatik* and the English translation, *Christian Dogmatics*, as well as the reviewer's *Christian Dogmatics*. Dr. Wenger lists practically all works on Christian doctrine produced within the Lutheran and Reformed denominations. His constructive criticism of Barthian and Lundensian theology proves thorough study of these trends. While he rejects Modernism, he also repudiates Fundamentalism, though he admits that the Fundamentalist theologians, despite their limitations, "stand closer to the great reformers, such as Luther and Calvin, than do the "modernists and semi-modernists with their undue preoccupation with philosophy and its categories." He writes: "The theology which is needed today is one which stresses a simple childlike faith in Christ and His Word, one which warms the heart as well as satisfies the understanding" (p.14). He recognizes "the Bible as the Word of God, as the final authority in faith and life" (p.14) and says of it: "While the Bible is not an end in itself, yet it is all inspired of God and profitable for doctrine and teaching" (p.14). All this is presented in the *Prolegomena*, which contain very important and timely material on present-day theology. The dogmatic material proper is set forth under the following heads: God as Creator, God as Revealer, God as Redeemer, God as Sanctifier, and God as All in all. Under the last head he discusses the "Hereafter," the "Return of Jesus," and "Millennial Theories," with which he is not in sympathy, as he accepts Article XVIII of the Dordrecht Confession of Faith of the Mennonite Church, which, like the Apostles'

Creed, recognizes only one second coming of Christ, His coming to judge the ungodly and to receive all believers in Christ into everlasting glory. Among the appendixes, the Dordrecht Confession of Faith, adopted in 1632 by the Dutch Mennonite Conference, is perhaps the most important, since it is still the pre-eminent Mennonite faith pattern, corresponding somewhat to our Augsburg Confession. The Shorter Catechism of the Mennonites, adopted in 1690, is likewise given in full. For students of comparative symbolics Wenger's *Introduction to Theology* is of special value as it offers many quotations from Menno Simons. J. T. MUELLER

GUIDE TO THE CHRISTIAN FAITH: AN INTRODUCTION TO CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE. By William A. Spurrier. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952. xii and 242 pages. Cloth. \$2.50.

The Professor of Christian Ethics and Christian Doctrine at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn., seeks in this book to furnish information about the central Christian doctrines to those persons who occupy the "middle ground" between the readers of "theological books" and "popular religious books." His criterion for centrality is the degree of attention the dogmas concerned have received in the writings and creeds of the Church. Applying this criterion, he comes up with the doctrines of man, sin, God, Christ, the Resurrection and the Atonement, the question of eternal life, the Christian interpretation of history, and the doctrine of salvation. Three chapters — on the beliefs and purpose of theology, on reason and faith, and on revelation — form a kind of preface to the discussion of the doctrines listed. An appendix on current views of the doctrine of Christ, another on anti-Semitism ("Who killed Jesus?"), and a bibliography for the advanced reader who wants to dig deeper complete the book. The author defines his personal position as "in harmony with the central beliefs of the majority of Christians throughout the Church's history," expressed in contemporary words, concepts, and analogies and "liberal" in details and application. The result is a very readable and adult introduction to neo-orthodoxy. ARTHUR CARL PIEPKORN

TEACHING LITTLE AMALEE JANE: How the Small Child Learns the Way. By Allan Hart Jahsmann. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1954. 117 pages. Paper. 35 cents.

"Just what I needed!" "For a long time I have been looking for something like this!" "It meets a need keenly felt by me!" "Its study in Teacher Training Class has resulted in better planned and more effective teaching and training of young children in my church." Comments such as these will generally result from the use of this latest and improved addition to the Concordia Series of Sunday School Teacher Training courses. Well written and organized, this illustrated booklet offers carefully selected but comprehensive materials in a manner that is eminently practical, to the point, and effective. It discusses in eight chapters, or

lessons, the questions and problems related to the psychology, objectives, instructional materials, and methods of teaching small children. At the close of each chapter it offers not only Review Questions and Exercises for the teacher, but also Activities for Learning by Experience. Test sheets and a teacher's manual are available. We recommend it highly.

A. G. MERKENS

PICTURES OF THE WAY: SOME PRINCIPLES OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE PRESENTED LARGELY THROUGH ILLUSTRATIONS. By Harold Floreen. Rock Island: Augustana Book Concern, 1952. viii and 167 pages. Cloth. \$2.00.

A young clergyman of the Augustana Lutheran Church—he was ordained in 1946—here offers nineteen simple, direct and persuasive meditations designed to refurbish Christians' appreciation of Christianity as being not merely "a set of religious teachings of which there are a great many different interpretations," but as "the Way," seen as "a thing of power, separated from compromise and unbelief." The author has had a great deal to do with Christian youth conferences and this experience obviously informs his presentation. His illustrations reflect his careful study of the Biblical biographies upon which he draws heavily. Serious young Christians, and older ones as well, will read this volume gladly and with profit.

ARTHUR CARL PIEPKORN

UNDERSTANDING THE JAPANESE MIND. By James Clark Moloney. New York: Philosophical Library, 1954. 252 pages. Cloth. \$3.50.

Dr. Moloney has made a thoroughgoing study of Japanese psychoanalysis, showing that ordinary concepts of psychoanalysis have undergone great changes after being imported to Japan and shaped to the forms of Japanese culture. Thus there is more arbitrary conformity. The author has "tried to explain and to cover in this book, that . . . certain peculiarities . . . fit [the Japanese] as a nation into the psychiatric formula known as the 'repetition compulsion.'" Thus, for instance, the Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, took place on the very same day that Townsend Harris forced an audience with the Shogun, December 7, 1857. Many pages are devoted to long quotations from Japanese writings. Foreign knowledge of all kinds is to be "incorporated, processed, and assimilated—as food is assimilated by the body after it is eaten."

E. C. ZIMMERMANN

BOOKS RECEIVED

From Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich.:

Ellicott's Commentary on the Whole Bible: A Verse by Verse Explanation. Edited by Charles John Ellicott. Volume I: Genesis to Numbers, 576 pages. Vol. II: Deuteronomy to 2 Samuel, 511 pages. 1954. Cloth. \$5.95 each. These are respectively the fourth and fifth volumes, and the first two on the Old Testament, to appear in the 1954 reprinting of

A Bible Commentary for English Readers, edited in the last century by Bishop Ellicott. The authors of the commentaries in these two volumes are: Genesis, Dean R. Payne Smith; Exodus, the Rev. George Rawlinson; Leviticus, the Rev. C. J. Ginsburg; Numbers, the Rev. C. J. Elliott; Deuteronomy and Joshua, the Rev. C. H. Waller; Judges, Dean F. W. Farrar; Ruth, the Rev. R. Sinkler; 1 Samuel, Dean H. D. M. Spence; 2 Samuel, Prof. F. Gardiner.

From Friendship Press, New York:

The Cross Is Lifted. By Chandran Devanesen, illus. by Frank Wesley. 68 pages. Cloth, \$1.50; paper, \$1.00.

From Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.:

The Religious Bodies of America. By F. E. Mayer. 1954. xiii and 587 pages. Cloth. \$8.50.

Concordia Nursery Program Packet No. 30-635. By Lois and Allan Jahsmann. Revised edition. 1954. Miscellaneous materials in a filing envelope. 75 cents. A complete set of materials for church-home cooperation in the Christian nurture of children from birth to age four.

The Musical Heritage of the Church. Edited by Theodore Hoelty-Nickel. 1954. 129 pages. Paper. \$2.25.

Why Family Worship. 1954. 5 pages. Paper. \$1.50 per 100.

From Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich.:

What Rome Teaches. By Edward J. Tanis. 1954. 56 pages. Paper. 60 cents.

From Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minn.:

Who Shall Be God? By Alvin N. Rogness. 1954. 183 pages. Cloth. \$2.50.

From Philosophical Library, New York:

The Nature of Christian Worship. By J. Alan Kay. 1954. 115 pages. Cloth. \$2.50.

From Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids, Mich.:

The Holy Spirit, His Gifts and Power. By John Owen; edited and abridged by George Burder. 1954. 356 pages. Cloth. \$3.95. John Owen (1616—1683) was a contemporary of John Bunyan and a distinguished Puritan preacher and expositor. His *Discourse on the Holy Spirit*, of which the present title is a photolithoprinted abridgement, was highly esteemed, John Newton calling it "an *epitome*, if not the *masterpiece* of his writings." The editor has added an appendix which contains extracts from other writings of Owen on the work of the Holy Spirit in prayer and on His operations as Comforter.