

THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY.

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Foreword.

As the new year is approaching, it is proper that the THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY should for a moment halt in its regular work and consider the whence and whither of its course. In speaking of its past, it will be remembered that the THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY is a continuation of the *Theological Quarterly*, which was founded in 1897 and changed into a monthly in 1920. We may justly say, then, that our journal now is thirty years old and that this is certainly a fitting occasion for a glimpse backward and forward. No one will take it amiss when we say that our periodical has had an illustrious past. While from the very start the whole faculty of Concordia Seminary has been responsible for its contents, its first editor-in-chief was that eminently gifted and learned scholar Dr. A. L. Graebner, who, almost single-handed, wrote the first volumes, the first four embracing 512 pages each, and whose articles embodied many of the results of his exhaustive researches. When toward the end of 1903 illness took the editorial pen out of his hands, Dr. F. Bente, for over a year, in addition to his other duties, attended to the management of the *Quarterly*, whose volumes at that time were 256 pages strong. In 1905 Dr. W. H. T. Dau became a member of the faculty of Concordia Seminary, and having been called as English professor of dogmatics, he, as a matter of course, was entrusted with the editorship of the *Quarterly*. These paragraphs are intended, in a way, as a tribute to the splendid services which Dr. Dau rendered the Lutheran Church as editor of this journal. Immediately when his articles began to appear, it was seen that in him the Church possessed a writer of rare fascination and skill, and throughout Synod commendation of the excellent workmanship exhibited in his literary productions could be heard. His style was not only correct, it was usually highly beautiful and ornate. What was most praiseworthy was, of course, that, as had been the case with his predecessors, the *norma normans* of all Dr. Dau's writing was the Bible and the *norma normata* the Confessions of the Lutheran

Church. There was no compromising with modern error, no striving to please the multitude. The guidance of the Word of God was followed in the presentation and evaluation of past and present religious phenomena, whether friend and foe liked it or not. The range of Dr. Dau's interests was wide, and whether one was interested in exegetical, doctrinal, historical, or practical subjects, one was sure to find in the *Quarterly*, later MONTHLY, something appealing. As was to be expected in a pupil of Luther and Walther, the grand themes of redemption and justification were always in the foreground, and it is significant that the first article which Dr. Dau wrote for the *Quarterly* after he had become its editor-in-chief was a study of the concept of grace. For twenty-one years this man of God was in charge of the *Quarterly* — MONTHLY — and wielded a pen that was as graceful as it was prolific, numberless articles, book reviews, and other items being produced by him. We have no doubt that many of his essays published in this periodical will prove to be of enduring value and will often be referred to by theologians. When Dr. Dau, in the spring of 1926, accepted the call to the presidency of Valparaiso University and relinquished his position both at Concordia Seminary and on the staff of the MONTHLY, all who were interested in the MONTHLY felt that in him this journal was losing a very brilliant and faithful editor-in-chief. The gratitude and good wishes of his former colleagues go out to him as he is now serving the great Head of the Church in administering the affairs of the important Lutheran educational venture at Valparaiso. May his labors as university president be richly blessed!

The aim of the *Quarterly* — MONTHLY — has been to set forth in a style and terminology suitable for theologians the great truths of the Scriptures and to defend them against the respective errors. Whatever it brought in the line of book reviews or discussions of current religious events was all subordinated to that chief aim. The grand purpose lying behind it all was, of course, the spread of the Gospel. Abundant testimony is available that it helped its readers, the clergy, in the discharge of their glorious duties, strengthened their hands in the defense of the teachings of the Lutheran Church, and promoted greater insight into the marvelous mysteries revealed in God's Word. As we are thinking of the future, the editors have no other program to offer than that which was followed during the past thirty years. Exposition of Biblical teaching and the defense of that teaching is always to be the *raison d'être* of this periodical. It will continue

to discuss new religious publications and movements, but with no other design than that of assisting its readers in bringing Christ and His Gospel to sinners. Our journal has no scientific ax to grind. It is not the organ of any particular school of philosophy or theological speculation. While its character is such that it presupposes its readers to be theologically trained, its ultimate aim is altogether practical — the salvation of immortal souls.

When, in keeping with the resolution of the Delegate Synod of 1896, the *Theological Quarterly* was launched, English work in our church-body was still in its infancy. Outside of what was then the English Synod of Missouri, the use of English in the pulpits of our Church was a great rarity. Ministers who possessed some facility in writing and delivering English sermons were looked upon as men of exceptional accomplishments. *Tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur cum illis*. The exception has become the rule. English is fast transplanting German, and soon the man of distinction will be he who still preaches sermons which display correct and idiomatic German diction. Thirty years ago a subsidiary, but very definite aim of the *Quarterly* was to help acquaint its readers with correct English terminology in the discussion of theological subjects. This aim, it is safe to say, no longer looms large in the consciousness of the editors of, and contributors to, the THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY, since English is spoken in practically all the homes of the members of Synod, and our young ministers, on the whole, are ready and skilful in its use, both in their pulpit work and otherwise. But the grand purpose to which the *Quarterly* owed its origin remains, namely, to aid the cause of revealed truth by discussions which will be profitable and instructive to the clergy and assist them in their blessed work. May the great Head of the Church continue to grant this periodical a share, and be it merely a humble one, in the great work of building His holy temple here on earth!
