

Concordia Theological Monthly



A P R I L

1 9 5 0

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.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT. By Edward J. Young. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich., 1949. 5¾ × 8¾, 414 pages. \$5.00.

During and since the war, Old Testament scholarship in general has shown a trend in the direction of a more positive approach to the meaning and value of the Old Testament. The contents of the Old Testament are again graced with the term "theology" after many years of discussing "the religion of Jahweh" or "the religion of the Hebrews." Thus: Baab, O. J., *The Theology of the Old Testament*, 1949; Eichrodt, W., *Theologie des Alten Testaments*, 3 vols., 1949. Other publications have stressed the authority of the Old Testament. Thus: Hebert, Arthur G., *The Authority of the Old Testament*, 1947.

However, the basic theory of the origin of the Old Testament has not changed. While a number of authors have shown more sanity, it is still basically the Eichorn-Graf-Wellhausen, etc., theory of the historical development of the Old Testament books that appears in Introductions with almost painful sameness. Thus: Weiser, A., *Einleitung in das A. T.*, 1949. This assumption also underlies the more constructive publications in the general field of Old Testament interpretation. A book may have a fine title such as *Das Christuszeugnis im A. T.*, W. Vischer, and contain such fine statements as: "The New Testament shows us who the Christ is, the Old Testament shows us what the Christ is," yet the author accepts *in toto* the J-E-D-P theory of the origin of the Pentateuch.

What a relief to find a new Introduction that is not under the spell of the so-called historicocritical school! It will be welcomed, especially since it is the first thorough discussion of its kind to appear in the English language for some time.

The reader is aware at once that the author is not going to deal fast and loose with Scripture truths. He begins to define his viewpoint in words such as these: "In approaching the Bible, therefore, we need to remember that it is sacred ground. We must approach it with humble hearts, ready to hear what the Lord says." (P. 10.) He continues to quote with approval Warfield's book *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*: "Revelation is but half revelation unless it be infallibly communicated; it is but half communicated unless it be infallibly recorded." While this statement may be interpreted as claiming infallibility for existing manuscripts of the Bible, the reader will not find the author supporting an origin of the Old

Testament books based on mechanical literalism. The Lutheran reader will also be happy to find that in the interpretation of the Old Testament Dr. Young does not resort to dispensationalism. One needs to think only of such books as Ezekiel and Daniel to see how often the Old Testament is made the point of departure for millennial aberrations.

The present volume "is the outgrowth of a series of forty articles on Old Testament Introduction which appeared 1947—1948 in the *Southern Presbyterian Journal*" (p. 10). It restricts itself to the field of Special Introduction. "I have said practically nothing about chronology and archaeology. . . . Textual remarks are for the most part omitted, for it seems to me that the question of the text is of such vast importance as to require a volume in itself" (p. 9). The author supplies the reader first with the pertinent material that we expect to find in an isagogical treatise: the author, time, purpose, etc. This is usually a succinct presentation. At times it is longer if the material warrants it. Thus the first 150 pages are devoted to the History of Higher Criticism of the Pentateuch. "It is probably the fullest summary of the subject in the English language" (jacket). Then he deals with the content in complete analyses of each book. He stresses this objective: "The immediate need of the Church is for a knowledge of the *contents* of the Sacred Scriptures" (p. 9 f.).

Dr. Young's book is not only conservative, it is also scholarly. He knows the objections raised to the conservative view of Scripture and meets them squarely. A part of his preparation for the chair of Old Testament was study in Europe and the Near East. He knows the American as well as the European literature. "I make no apology for including references to so many German works. The serious student cannot afford to neglect what is written in German." (P. 12.)

From the description given above the conclusion may be drawn that this book would interest only the specialist. However, it "is designed as a popular, understandable volume for the serious reader—a volume which gives an overall picture of the problems involved in the study of the Old Testament and one which points to faith-strengthening solutions. At the same time the author has so planned his material that the volume makes an ideal text for study in Bible schools, colleges and seminaries" (jacket). The reviewer has adopted it as one of the textbooks for his classes—a recommendation that speaks for itself.

A word should be added about the author. Dr. Edward J. Young holds the chair of Old Testament at Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia. In this position he succeeds his teacher Dr. Oswald T. Allis, whose book *The Five Books of Moses* has been required reading in the classes at Concordia Seminary for some time. During the past year Dr. Young has also published a commentary on Daniel, *The Prophecy of Daniel*. The caliber of the work in these two volumes indicates that Dr. Young's fame as a conservative Biblical scholar will spread widely. More books of this type are sorely needed. His *Introduction* will be a valuable asset to the theologian's library.

WALTER R. ROEHRS

NOTES ON THE MIRACLES OF OUR LORD. By Richard Chevenix Trench. Popular Edition. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1949. 298 pp., 5½×8. \$2.50.

Trench's book here advertised is rightly considered a classic, and one rejoices to see it appear in a new, even though only a "popular," edition. Trench was not only a good scholar, he had something far more precious than scholarship, he had found the Pearl of Great Price, he was a humble disciple of Jesus Christ. To him the Scriptures were divine, and as one reads one does not have to be afraid of being shocked by would-be learned criticisms of what the Apostles and Prophets have written. After six preliminary chapters on the nature and purpose of miracles, thirty-three chapters are submitted in which the individual miracles of Jesus from the turning of water into wine (John 2) to the miraculous draft of fishes related John 21 are treated. The language of Trench strikes one as somewhat quaint, though not unpleasantly so. My dissent was aroused by his attempt to find mystical or symbolical significances in the miracles where there is no Scripture warrant for it.

If the re-issuing of old theological classics will continue, and I hope it will, I should like to suggest that a note about the author and the first appearance of the respective work be added. The present volume takes for granted that the reader is fully acquainted with the life of Archbishop Trench, an assumption characterized more by optimism than a realistic appraisal of conditions.

W. ARNDT

LETTERS TO YOUNG CHURCHES. A Translation of the New Testament Epistles by J. B. Phillips, with an Introduction by C. S. Lewis. The Macmillan Company, New York. 1948. 224 pages, 6×9. \$2.75.

Another translation, and at this time not of the whole New Testament, but merely of the letters in it. Shall we give it a friendly reception? C. S. Lewis of *Screwtape Letters* fame, in his brief introduction, voices the thought: "We ought to welcome all new translations (when they are made by sound scholars)." I agree, adding merely the caution that the number must not be increased so as to assume the proportions of a flood, because in that case confusion would set in.

As the jacket informs us, the author of this work, the Rev. J. B. Phillips, was born in 1906 and educated in Cambridge, England. Since 1930 he has been a priest in the Church of England. His translation is different from most other modern versions in this, that he does not hesitate to paraphrase when the nature of a passage seems to suggest that procedure. Besides, he tries to present the thoughts of the holy writers in a style which moves along smoothly and can be read without difficulty. He himself states that "for close, meticulous study, existing modern versions should be consulted" (p. XI). Another special feature consists in the informative introductions which precede each letter. These introductions speak

briefly of the author, the date and place of writing, the destination, and give an outline of the contents. The readability which the author strove for, I believe, he has achieved. One is carried forward without effort and might almost fancy to be reading a modern document. As to the translation itself, I do not think that the author everywhere caught the real meaning of the sacred text. Rom. 1:4, f. i., is not correctly rendered in the words, "patently marked out as the Son of God by the power of that Spirit of holiness which raised Him to life again from the dead." The meaning is: "Patently marked out, in keeping with His being divine, as powerful Son of God by being raised from the dead." Similar instances where the meaning of the original was not fully apprehended by the translator could easily be submitted. But as far as I can determine, the New Testament teachings, generally speaking, are brought out clearly, and the work can be used to good advantage by all Bible students. Of the introductions, the one on Second Peter is the only one which is negative in the view taken of the genuineness of the Letter in question. Besides, it opens with the incorrect statement: "This is the only letter of the New Testament whose authenticity has been disputed." That is not an adequate report on what church history tells us on the distinction made in the third and fourth centuries between *homologoumena* and *antilegomena*.

W. ARNDT

THE CHURCH THROUGH THE AGES. The Story of God's Grace to Mankind from the Creation to the Present Day. By S. J. Roth and Wm. A. Kramer. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo. 1949. 587 pages, 5½×8. \$2.50.

Here is a text for which Lutheran schools have long been waiting. It presents the history of God's people in their world setting from the dawn of creation to the present time. Its thirty chapters are divided into three sections, of which the first section relates the history of God's people in the Old Testament, the second the history of the New Testament Church up to the Reformation, and the third that of Protestantism, particularly of the Lutheran Church, to the present day, with due emphasis given to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The book is so arranged that the material may be covered in three quarters of nine weeks each, with a lesson a day, in Grades Six to Eight. The three grades may be taught as one class in schools where one teacher is responsible for a number of grades. Helpful teaching aids are added under the title of "Talking It Over."

The book meets the high standards of the publisher. It is printed on good paper in clear type and—an important requirement in schoolbooks—is well bound. It is profusely illustrated and throughout shows the experienced hand of its authors, who are thoroughly familiar with teaching techniques. Parents will enjoy reading this interesting book with their children.

L. W. SPITZ

THE GLORY OF CHRIST. By John Owen. Edited, and with a biographical sketch of the author, by Wilbur M. Smith. Moody Press, Chicago. 1949. 285 pages, 5½×8½. \$3.00.

This is the last work of John Owen, the great Puritan divine. Of him the editor says: "John Owen, after years of laboring for and meditating upon Christ, now in the year of his death, gives us here, as it were, the fruit of these years of living in Christ and of Christ living in him." Owen was at one time or another dean of Christ Church, Oxford, vice-chancellor of Oxford University, and chaplain to Lord Cromwell. In spite of his busy life as a preacher and administrator, he produced some of the most massive theological works of his time, the second half of the seventeenth century.

The design of the book, says the author, "is to declare some part of that glory of our Lord Jesus Christ which is revealed in the Scripture and proposed as the principle object of our faith, love, delight, and admiration." John Owen was a disciple of John Calvin and does not deny his theological heritage. One can only wish, however, that all disciples of Calvin today would share his profound love for Jesus and reverent awe in the presence of His glory.

L. W. SPITZ

CHRISTIANITY AND AMERICAN EDUCATION. By Edwin H. Rian. The Naylor Company, San Antonio, Tex., 1949. 6×8½, ix and 268 pages. \$3.00.

One of the better books in religious education published in recent years, *Christianity and American Education* pictures Protestant education in the United States as it is today, and because of its clear-cut delineation it is a must for the Christian educator and pastor. In order to give a perspective to such a portrayal, the author sketches the history of the public school system down to our present times, pointing out the various philosophies which have had their influence upon our schools. It is the author's thesis, and he makes a good cause for it, that the underlying philosophy of public education today is naturalism. This anti-Christian philosophy pervades the textbooks and the teacher-training schools and has shown its effects in the realm of morals, literature, society, and truth.

After devoting a section to the development of Roman Catholic schools in this country, he points out that its strength lies not so much in its size and scope as in the fact that it has a clearly defined philosophy of education which is an answer to the "challenge of modern, naturalistic education and is carrying out the full meaning of that answer with every force at its command" (p. 179).

In the third section the author investigates the question, What is Protestantism doing to meet the threat of a naturalistic public education? Before he presents his answer, he examines what various Protestant groups are doing at present. The first to be considered is the educational system of

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. In his evaluation he has put his finger upon a weak spot by emphasizing the fact that our Synod has not formulated a comprehensive and integrated philosophy of education. The strength of our schools lies not in its numbers, but in the fact that every teacher and administrator must be a believer in Christianity.

Protestants aware of the challenge have tried to meet the educational needs in various ways, particularly through the Sunday school and the released-time classes. Rian rejects these substitutes as inadequate for real integrated Christian education. In turn he proposes a system of schools from the kindergarten to the university. He realizes that such a program is ambitious because the Protestant Church would have to become convinced of the importance of religious education. "The present state of affairs reflects either ignorance or a conviction that maybe Christianity is only a good way of life and thought, and that other ways are equally true and eventually lead to God" (p. 229).

As a definite proposal, the author believes that the first step would be the establishment of a Protestant university. While some may plead for a number of universities, one established along Calvinistic, another according to Lutheran, and another according to Arminian lines, the present emergency does not allow for three universities, but only for one. The author concedes that Protestant education will never attain its goal unless it is undergirded by a Christian philosophy of education.

One may not agree with some proposals of Rian, but he has succeeded in reflecting the present status of American education and the challenge with which Protestantism is faced in America. It is also clear that Protestantism has lost its leadership by default.

Edwin H. Rian is now vice-president of Trinity University, San Antonio, Texas. A graduate of Princeton, he has studied as a Princeton fellow at Berlin and Marburg universities. He is a member of the Presbyterian Church.

ARTHUR C. REPP

PASTORAL CARE OF THE SICK. By J. C. Heuch. Translated from the Norwegian by J. Melvin Moe. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minn. 146 pp., 8×5¾. \$1.50.

In these days of steadily increasing literature on the various phases of pastoral counseling, literature which so often lacks the Christian approach, it is refreshing, indeed, to read a volume which is at once soundly and vigorously Lutheran. In six well-done chapters the author addresses himself to the many problems with which a pastor is faced in the sickroom to supply him with the special insight, skill, and technique needed for this most important work of the Christian ministry. Here is a book that can be used with great profit.

OTTO E. SOHN