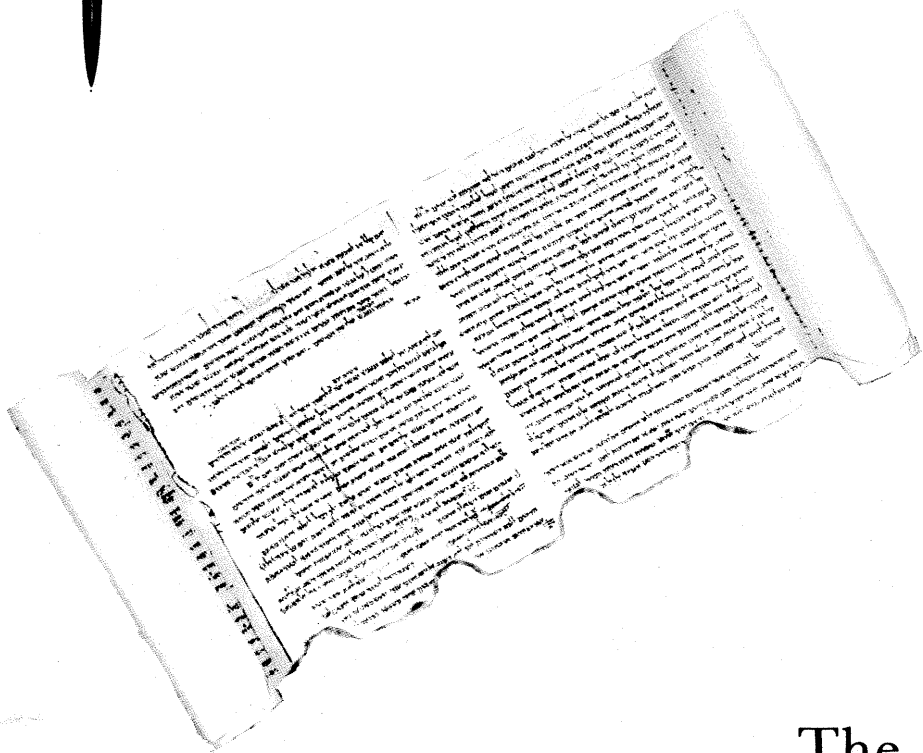




Volume VI, No. 1

September, 1965



The

Lutheran

Synod

Quarterly

INDEX OF CONTENTS

THE LUTHERAN WORLD TODAY

Dr. Hermann Sasse

ERRANT on "INERRANCY"

Prof. Glenn E. Reichwald

BOOK REVIEWS

Volume VI, No. 1

September, 1965

LUTHERAN SYNOD QUARTERLY

Theological Journal of the
Evangelical Lutheran Synod

Edited by the Theological Faculty of
Bethany Lutheran Seminary,
Mankato, Minnesota

Managing Editor:

M. H. Otto
Bethany Lutheran Seminary
734 Marsh St.,
Mankato, Minn. 56001

Subscription price \$3.00 per annum payable to:

LUTHERAN SYNOD QUARTERLY
Bethany Lutheran Seminary
734 Marsh Street,
Mankato, Minnesota 56001

THE LUTHERAN WORLD TODAY

In July, 1868, there was a Lutheran Conference in Hannover at which representatives of the last Lutheran faculties--at that time these were Erlangen, Leipzig, Rostock and Dorpat--were present. Leaders of the churches, like Harless, the leader of the Bavarian church, Petrie of Hannover and Kliefoth of Mecklenburg were there. Assembled were a number of pastors and theologians from all parts of Germany in whose hearts was present the one burning question: "What can we do to preserve the Lutheran Church as church?"

The situation was this: In 1866 provinces like Hannover and Schleswig-Holstein had been incorporated into Prussia. The attempt was made on the part of the church of Prussia to bring these Lutheran bodies into the Prussian Union, but the resistance was so strong, and Bismarck was so afraid of creating ill feelings, that at that time they did not bring these churches as provinces into the Prussian Union. But the danger was there; this was a time of unionism, just as we experience it today. Church Union, and especially union in the National Church of Germany, was the great slogan of the time. The theological argument of the Prussian theologians was always, "Why can't you Lutherans be in the Prussian Union? Article Seven of the Augsburg Confession demands that the Gospel is preached in its purity and the Sacrament administered according to the institution of Christ. No one prevents you from doing this; please enter with us." The Prussian church tolerated Lutheran Pastors. They wanted to have among them the God seekers of that time, even some Lutherans. The Prussian Union has always emphasized, "We also want to have some Lutherans;" they must not be too Lutheran, but there should be some Lutherans.

So Kliefoth gave his famous paper on that question; "Does the Seventh Article of the Augsburg

Confession demand that church government is bound to the confession of the Lutheran Church?" This, of course, had to be answered in the positive, and he did so. He showed that you cannot maintain the pure preaching of the Gospel and the pure administration of the sacraments unless you have a church government which sees to it that this is being done, which puts the pastors in the right places and which sees to it that they stick to their doctrine. They decided on the basis of this and some other essays to found a federation. And so, the Allgemeine Evangelisch-Lutherische Konferenz came into existence. There were people from Scandinavia present, and at once they took up connections with America. In America the General Council had just been formed. This is the beginning of the Lutheran ecumenicism, so to speak.

In the year 1867, the Anglicans had held their first Lambeth Conference. In the following year Lutherans in Germany and Scandinavia and America (Krauth and his friends in the General Council) formed this first great work of bringing together the Lutherans of the world with the intention of preserving the Lutheran church as church. Harless, who was one of the leading churchmen in those years, had formulated this several times. He once wrote to Bismarck, after the victories of 1870 and when the new German Reich was being formed, asking that the new German constitution should confirm, as all previous constitutions, the peace of Augsburg and the peace of Westphalia and thus secure the rights of the churches of the Reformation in Germany. Bismarck did not answer. At that time statesmen would not stoop to answer the letter of a churchman. In this letter Harless said that if this was not done, the danger would be that Lutheranism would cease to exist as church and would be tolerated only as a school of thought within the union churches. To prevent this these men formed the Allgemeine Evangelisch-Lutherische Konferenz. Luthardt, professor at Leipzig, was entrusted with a new church paper

which was then started, die Allgemeine Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchenzeitung. This organization existed till recent times and was then transformed into the First World Convention. But you cannot understand this without knowing its history. Many decades of faithful confession and faithful fight for the Lutheran church were necessary. It was a fight which tried to preserve the great achievement of the Lutheran awakening of the nineteenth century. In the beginning of the nineteenth century Lutheranism as church was dead. Rationalism was prevailing and there were remnants of Pietism. But, there were no confessional Lutherans and only slowly, since 1817, did the Lutheran revival begin with the Jubilee of the Reformation and the Jubilee of the Augsburg Confession in 1830.

At the same time, all over Europe, the idea of the church was awakening; for instance, in England the Oxford movement in 1833; in the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands and Switzerland the formation of the first free churches which wanted to be independent from a state which threatened the doctrine of the church. In Scotland in 1843 a great disruption came when parliament in London decided against a law which would give the churches of Scotland their old rights, the right of the parishes to have a decisive vote in appointing the pastors. This was rejected by the British Parliament. The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland was just in session and when the news from London came the majority said: "you must accept it in the interest of keeping the church for the Scottish people." The minority said, "we can't: this is against the confession of the church." And so, forty per cent, almost 500 pastors of the Church of Scotland, left the church, left the general assembly, left their manses, left everything. And in a year's time five hundred new churches had been built in Scotland. This is the great story of the Free Kirk of Scotland, which with reunion with the mother church has since died. Now, we have the same thing in Germany; only the free

churches are small. But here in America your churches, all your churches, live by the heritage of this great awakening of the Lutheran church.

Remember also the situation of the General Synod, around 1820, '21 and '22, when it was established. Lutheranism in America in the Eastern states was what we would call unionistic, very weak and influenced by Pietism. Halle had sent the preachers. Halle had trained many preachers; and it was this Lutheran awakening in Germany which then helped the Lutheran church in America to develop as a Lutheran church. The migrations of the Prussians to Buffalo, of the Saxons to Missouri and the corresponding migration to Australia, all this helped to build the Lutheran church in these parts of the world and made the Lutheran Churches of America confessing churches. Whatever the weaknesses may have been, say of the General Council---if you today read the books by Krauth and others you find that these were Lutherans. The Missouri Synod, too, is a fruit of the Lutheran awakening on the soil of the United States. The fruit, the seed from Germany, has produced these churches in the middle west.

I mention this only to remind you of the fact that the Lutheran church for generations has been fighting for its existence. In Germany, as you know, it was this Evangelisch-Lutherische Konferenz and the Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchenzeitung around which the Lutherans gathered. What has remained of Lutherism in the Lutheran Landeskirchen in Germany is due to these endeavors. The Lutheran Church in Germany has fought for its existence for generations. When after the First World War the great re-organization was necessary, the question again arose; "a church for the German protestants in the national interest." The Lutherans objected that it was not possible. Instead, they were satisfied in 1922 with establishing the Deutsche Evangelische Kirchenbund; the old Konferenz was then transformed into a federation of the evangelical churches.

Now, such a federation was necessary and cannot be objected to if the aims are limited according to the confessions. In Germany, for instance, one of the great problems was Luther's Bible. The principle of Luther's Bible translation was that this translation must always be improved and must remain what it was intended to be--a true translation. During his whole life time Luther worked on improvements. He had his own Bible commission, you know, and it was against his will that later the Bible text was reprinted without revisions. Revisions are necessary. For example, passages like the comma Johanneum must not appear in a Lutheran Bible. For me, it is one of the strangest things in my life that I came from Germany, from the land of the Luther Bible, to the English speaking world where they used an un-Lutheran Bible, where Malachi is followed by Matthew. A Lutheran Bible contains the Apocrypha, in smaller print. A Lutheran Bible must correct mistakes and there are obvious mistakes. Take, for instance, the passage in Ephesians 5, "Christ loved the church and cleansed it by the water with the word." The King James says "of water by the word"--Calvinism! Revisions were made since the end of the century, but the text used in the churches has remained. Would it not have been a task for the Lutheran churches in the English speaking world to create a Lutheran Bible translation? We have not done this, so we use the English versions which we have. But I mention this only as a case where cooperation between Lutheran churches is possible. In Germany, this had to be done with the union churches, so the Deutsche Evangelische Kirchen-Alsace and the Eisenach Konferenz saw to it that this was done. And this has to be done, just as in Brazil; when the Protestant churches had to have a new Bible translation in Portuguese, they all cooperated, from the Baptists to the Missourians. This is possible and is not only cooperation in externals, because the Bible is God's Word and it is least co-operatio circa sacra to speak with the church canonist of previous times.

In Germany, the Kirchenbund was transformed, in 1933, into the Deutsche Evangelische Kirche. This was done at the request of Adolf Hitler, and when a national synod met at Wittenberg all delegates found on their desks an article in Theologische Blätter in which they were strictly warned against making such a union. We were living in a dictatorship, but we knew that this millenium would come to an end, and we prepared for the day when the thousand years of Hitler would be over. The German Bishops decided, "Yes, this should be continued," although, and this must not be forgotten, Hitler's Deutsche Evangelische Kirche was confirmed by Karl Barth and the Church of Barmen. "Yes, we want the Deutsche Evangelische Kirche!" They wanted a union. Now, I cannot here describe the fight that was going on. But the effect was that in 1945, when the war was over, the constitution for a united Lutheran Church was ready---a constitution for the Reformed Church of Germany and a constitution for the united Lutheran Church in Germany. These three should form a federal council, but each church should be a confessional church. This was not carried out. The main reason was that the politicians in the church listened to the politicians of the world. "For the sake of the unity of the Germany people, we need one church, not three." Logic would have required to include also the Roman Catholic church then---but logic is not the strength of church politicians. The main culprit was Otto Dibelius who said, "Germany is now divided; we must have then at least one Evangelical church." Well, you can have that also if the church is organized according to confessional lines. The Catholics also had to suffer this. But this is politics, and in the last analysis it is nationalism and the leadership of secular politicians in the church which has prevented in Germany a solution of the question, "how can the Lutheran Church be preserved as church?"

The Evangelical Church in Germany is really church, though it calls itself, in the constitution, "federation." But it is not a real and genuine federation.

We have in the field of church administration the same development that we have in the world. Here in the United States, you have a union of states; but Minnesota has given up certain rights as a sovereign state for the benefit of the federation. We find the same thing in the British commonwealth or in the commonwealth of Australia. The states are no longer real states; they have retained certain rights, but the leadership and the decisions and the great political decisions are made by the central government. This was, perhaps, unavoidable in building up the political world. All new states are built up in this way, Brazil, or the Soviet Union--a union of the soviet republics. This political structure was brought into the church. We have churches which consist of nominal churches, but are more than federations. As a matter of fact, the EKID is the Protestant church in Germany. It is not a federation; you can resign from a federation, but you cannot resign from a state or church. Bavaria, for instance, might decide to remain a Lutheran church and not recognize a synod of the EKID; if Bavaria would decide that she would no longer grant to the EKID the right to confirm the election of a bishop, they could not do this. Therefore, we have the great de facto union of 1948. 1948 is the year in which the Lutheran Church in the territorial church, in the Landeskirche, ceased to exist as church. Of course, there are certain remnants, but they are also in the Prussian church. There are many faithful Lutheran pastors in the church of the Prussian union, but Lutheranism is their personal opinion and no one knows who their successor will be. This is a tragedy in Germany. The Lutheran Church, as Harless had predicted, has ceased to exist as church, and Lutheranism is a school of thought, more or less influential here or there within the vast union church.

This same development has been going on in all Europe. Take the church of Sweden, for instance. The church of Sweden was in fellowship, in communion, with the church of England. Now, we as Luth-

erans know that intercommunion, pulpit and altar fellowship, is church fellowship. So, there was church union between England and Sweden. Recently, they have extended this to Scotland. The Moderator of the Church of Scotland, with his church council, appeared in Sweden for a whole week where he negotiated with the bishops of Sweden. The meeting began with a great Högmesse where the arbiter of Upsala officiated and the Scottish guests received Holy Communion. At the end the Scottish Moderator celebrated the Lord's Supper according to the Scottish Rite and all the bishops of the Church of Sweden took part. This is church union. The Scandinavian churches are de facto union churches.

In Holland we have a comparatively small Lutheran Church. This Lutheran Church has practiced altar and pulpit fellowship with the Reformed church, the state church, the official established Reformed Church. This was not, of course, with the Dutch free church, the great Reformed Church from which Berkouwer comes, the largest of the free churches of Europe. All Lutherans are now admitted to the Lord's table in the Reformed churches and vice versa. This practice they have solemnly justified by accepting a set of theses which were drawn up under the influence of Karl Barth, with his cooperation, by a committee in Germany. The Lutherans ask the Reformed whether they can still oppose Calvin's view of heaven, of the reality of the body of Christ doubtful. There is no positive solution to these questions. In Holland, the Lutheran Church is living in union with the Reformed Church. The same is going on in France, and it is to such a degree that a real full union between the Reformed and Lutherans should seriously be considered (the free church excepted).

This is the development in Europe. In the last analysis the deeper reason for this is the weakness of the Lutheran faith. In these territorial churches the Lutheran faith has become weak. The pastors? How should these people know what the

Lutheran doctrine is? Think of the theological faculties in Germany today; they have no objections to going from Erlangen to Zurich or from Zurich to Göttingen. They switch from one to the other. In Mainz they have a new university with a Protestant faculty. They call men from the Lutheran Church; they call men from the Reformed Church; this does not matter, and no professor is interested. The church of the Palatinate, one of the member churches of the EKID, as established solemnly, in the most solemn form, has altar and pulpit fellowship with the United Church of Christ in the United States. This goes back to relations with the old Evangelical Synod. It was a solemn occasion in Speyre when there appeared there the delegation from the United Church of Christ ---Evangelical, Reformed and Congregationalist,--- and it was solemnly established. It was the same way with the Congregational union of England and Wales. Yes, this is the situation in large parts of the world. The Lutheran Church as church has ceased to exist in the old sense. This is why you are in fellowship with the last free churches, and this is why you support them and pray for them.

This is a great problem for all Lutheran churches in America too, for now the American Lutheran churches are confronted with the same problem. In Germany, they have made the so called Arnoldshain theses on the Lords Supper, based on the assumption that Bucer was the real reformer and that his doctrine is the closest to the New Testament. It is based on a new understanding of the Wittenberg Concord, which in my opinion is Historically untenable and contradicts that which Luther himself and the Lutherans always have held of the Wittenberg Concord. The Wittenberg Concord is not a compromise. But in it Bucer and the cities of Salz, West Germany, accepted the Lutheran doctrine in lenient form. The only concession Luther made was that he did not speak of the manducatio impiorum but indignorum because the latter was a biblical term. Now there is in the Lutheran Church in America a set of theses on the Lord's Supper which corresponds to the theses of

Arnoldshain; this is an official document, at least I have been assured that it is. Practically, it gives up the Lutheran doctrine of the bodily presence in Luther's sense. It is one of these formulas of compromise. So, the doctrine which is significant for the Lutheran Church is here abandoned. How they will reconcile this with the adherence to the Lutheran confessions, I do not know. The adherence to the Lutheran confessions today in the various churches is formulated in such a way that only the Augsburg Confession is the real confession and the others are of minor value. Actually, the Formula of Concord is going out as a binding confession.

The question now is, what will happen in the Lutheran Church? What will happen with the Lutheran Church in the great eccumenical movement? In Lausanne in 1927 the Eastern Orthodox members made a solemn declaration in which they explained what for them is extra controversiam and what they cannot negotiate, namely, the doctrine of the church. And at the meetings of the World Council of Churches at Evanston and New Delhi the Eastern Orthodox always restated their standpoint. Their theologians are allowed to take part in discussions, but the theologians of the Eastern church are technically laymen and they are not allowed to make any new negotiations on doctrine. They can only advise what the true doctrine of their church is. The Eastern church is not prepared for any negotiations, even if their delegates are taking part--they are taking part as witnesses. The Lutheran Church at Lausanne, as did Soderbloom, signed a declaration of the Lutherans at the same time saying what for them was extra controversiam.

The attitude of the Lutheran Church towards the eccumenical movement is determined in our confession by the Smalcald Articles. In the first part are the articles we have in common with Rome and on which at present it is not necessary to speak because they are not in contention. Then comes the very broad-minded third part where the articles on which they

can speak with reasonable theologians, covering almost all articles---the sacraments, the doctrine of sin, repentance, with the exception of the one article which is the article of the second part, namely the article of the standing and falling church; the sola fide; on this we cannot negotiate. This is what the Lutheran Church in the ecumenical movement should have told the other churches: "Yes, we are prepared for dialogue where it is necessary, but these are the conditions: the articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae is extra controversiam, and we can only discuss with such people who accept with us the great ecumenical creeds, of the ancient church, the Apostles' and Nicene creeds. This is our heritage and on the basis of that we could work together.

But we Lutherans have ceased to confess in the ecumenical movement. Almost all churches of the Lutheran World Federation are members of the World Council of Churches. (I think all of them, now when our church in Australia is going out. We have never been and never wanted to be members of the World Council of Churches. We do not belong to the National Council of the Churches in Australia. We are in the Lutheran World Federation, but always with the proviso that if you demand this from us, that we join the World Council, that is out). Among the aims of the Lutheran World Federation was, from the very beginning, participation in the ecumenical movements. The LWF came into existence, as you know, in 1947. It was the continuation of the Lutheran World Convention. But you must be clear about the differences between the Old World Convention and the World Council of Churches. I was active in the Old World Convention for years, and I know its limitations. I know why Missouri was not a member and I approve of this. But there was one thing about the old Lutheran World Convention---its aim was as was that of the Allgemeine Evangelisch-Lutherisch Konferenz, to preserve the Lutheran Church in the world. This is the reason why their members were almost entirely confessional Lutherans in their

various churches. It is liberalism which makes the difference between the Lutheran World Federation and the old Lutheran World Convention. I think of old President Knubel, and in Germany Bishop Ihmels, and Sarnoff in Australia; they wanted to preserve the Lutheran Church. This was the aim of the Lutheran World Convention. Is it still the aim of the Lutheran World Federation? Among the aims of the Lutheran World Federation is this: to foster participation and interest in the eccumenical movements. No one knows exactly what it means, but it is taken for granted that member churches participate in the World Council of Churches.

This is the great question for the Lutheran World Federation which our church has asked, and it is not getting a satisfactory answer. We cannot get a satisfactory answer, because there are so many churches in the Lutheran World Federation which are de facto not Lutheran. You see, the church of Pomerania, for instance, is under Bishop Kuhmel, who was originally a Reformed pastor and who as a disciple of Karl Holl regards Calvin as the greatest of the disciples of Luther. He can be in the Lutheran World Federation, though his church is a member of the Church of the Union and refuses to give up its humanism. And so it is with other churches; there are five or six definite union churches which are members of the Lutheran World Federation.

Look also at the church in Brazil. This was originally a German church of German settlers. They were influenced from Neuendetteslau, but it was also a union church with Lutheran elements. Now they have declared themselves to be Lutheran. The word Luther now means what formerly was called "evangelical." A Lutheran is a man who is not a definite Calvinist; that is the definition today. This is our problem.

Here in America I met a young German pastor who is here for graduate studies, and we spoke about this situation. In St. Louis, I met people from the

Lutheran Church in Brazil, the daughter church of Missouri, and so I got a picture from both sides. The man from the union church told me quite frankly, "We are a German church; our pastors, our people don't even want to preach Portuguese because they want to go back to Germany later. We get our professors from the seminary from wherever a man applies. If a man from Germany, whatever his convictions, wants to teach Old or New Testament here in Brazil, he is welcome." But there are adherents of Bultmann and so on. No one asks: is there no doctrinal discipline?

Now, if I look at this, then the question arises whether or not the Lutheran churches are going the way of all Protestant churches. Think of the Presbyterians--the Presbyterian church still exists, but I have only to remind you of the state of things in the United Presbyterian Church here in this country. The last time that I attended a Presbyterian service in this country was in 1962 in the First Presbyterian Church of Springfield. There on the Pulpit stood the Rabbi of the Synagogue in full regalia---who tried later to shake hands with me. A good deal of the Presbyterians have been swallowed up in the great union churches, for instance in Canada, with the result that the real Presbyterians are on the outside of the union.

In Australia there is a union going on between the Presbyterians, Methodists, and Congregationalists. The Congregationalists are, of course, a disappearing church everywhere; the Methodists are very eager for this union; the conservative Presbyterians will not join but will instead come together in some way with the Dutch Reformed, the orthodox church. Just as here in America the Southern Presbyterian church, the conservative Presbyterian church, will come together in some way the Christian Reformed Church. This will be one of the effects of the new confession which is to replace the Westminster Confession. In Australia the Methodist church is disappearing just as in Canada

the Methodist church has disappeared. Why the Methodist church did not join with the United Church of Christ no one knows. The Methodists have a strange reluctance when it comes to the fulfillment of the union promises. They have a strong feeling of their own mission and their own character. But in Australia they will go out of existence, and they will go out of existence in New Zealand. They are no longer in South India and they will cease to exist in other parts of India.

In other words, the great Protestant denominations are disappearing. This is to a certain degree true even of the Anglicans. No one today can define what the Anglican Church is, not even the Archbishop of Canterbury. They have no common confession and no common doctrine; not even the Nicene Creed is regarded by them all as their confession, because, some say, we don't know whether we should accept the eastern or western form, with or without the filioque. The book of Common Prayer, which once was the bond of unity of the Anglicans, has in various parts of the Anglican world undergone such changes that it is no longer a bond of unity. Even the Old Catholic Churches are in fellowship with Canterbury. And the position of Anglican provinces in mission fields in the younger churches is quite clear. The Anglican Church has decided that in case unions are necessary in Africa or, of course, in South India, then these provinces will be dismissed and will have to go to their own union churches. In other words, the Anglican Church is also going out of existence as Anglican Church.

The strange thing is that the great Protestant churches are disappearing one after another. In the next century, there will be no Presbyterian Church, or remnants only; no Methodist church, no Congregational church; the Disciples of Christ will disappear. These old denominations will be replaced by great union churches, union churches which are based on different locally determined bases. In Australia, for example, the uniting church will consist of Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and will have fellowship with Church of South India. The same

church in New Zealand will comprise the Disciples of Christ, which brings in the question of baptism.

On the Indian sub-continent one can see types of the new unions. One type is the union of South India. The Church of South India is not recognized by all Anglican churches. They are now negotiating with the Lutherans in South India and even some (not all) Missourians seem to be inclined to join. There is a possibility that the Lutheran Church in South India will disappear in the great national, half-Reformed church of South India. In Ceylon there is a different type of union. You see, there is not only a competition of the confessional churches; there is a competition between the union churches--"My union is better than your union!" the union of Ceylon is much better than the union of South India, because there is a re-ordination. Of course, they don't call it re-ordination; they don't know exactly what it is; it is the rite without a name. But it will be closer to Anglicanism. In North India, the Reformed churches are prepared to negotiate with the Baptists. In the Baptist church there is a crisis going on. On the one hand Baptists are becoming more and more conservative and conscious of their own heritage. The Baptist Church is perhaps the strongest church in opposition to the World Council of Churches at the present time, stronger than many Lutherans. And on the other hand, there are Baptists who now are prepared to accept the formulas which are, for instance, suggested for North India. There you have a choice between infant baptism and what they call "believer's baptism." (By the way, there is in Germany at least one church in which parents have the choice between infant baptism and adult baptism--this is the church of Wuerttemberg, a so-called Lutheran church. They base this on the Quod Pueri sint baptizandi -- children are to be baptized -- of Article IX of the Augsburg Confession. They have forgotten not only their Latin but also their confessions.)

One must ask the question then "What will be the future structure of Christendom?" Great union

churches are being built on national interest with the church of each country making its own confession and having its own fellowship. But in such great union churches there is no longer any confession. The Church of South India already has a second or third confession. The uniting Church of Australia, which has not yet come into existence, already has a second. You cannot always know what you will believe next year--wherever the Holy Spirit may lead you--this is Karl Barth's concept of confessions. When he was asked for an opinion, by the Reformed World Alliance (the churches holding the Presbyterian system), whether he recommended a new confession, he said "no, in the Reformed Church, there can be only confessions by local limitation, never a common confession like the Augsburg Confession." He hates the Augsburg Confession as a bond of the old church. And only what he calls the pius quaternus--not to say too much for the time being; this is our confession; it may be replaced next year by another confession--can be held.

This is the end of doctrine in the Protestant world. This is a strange thing that you find every approach among Anglicans, Methodists and Lutherans. That wonderful idea expressed in Helsinki by one of the main speakers (you can literally hear the same from Anglican assemblies and Methodists). The church (the confessional churches) have to follow the example of their Lord who humbled himself and was obedient unto death. In Helsinki the speaker quoted Philippians 2 several times. "This brings us back to the analogy between Christ and the church. The Apostle says that he who took the form of a servant became obedient unto death; therefore, God highly exalted him. Must not the Lutheran church, in this hour, as it seeks the form of a servant, be profoundly aware that the institutional structures must be prepared to die? Only as we and other churches are obedient unto death will God highly exalt us and manifest to the world, the servant, the one Holy Catholic Apostolic church. To the Philipian church and to us, Paul says, 'have this mind in

you!' Maybe this is what Christ is telling the Lutheran Church today.' Now almost literally the same thing I have heard in a sermon by the President General of the Methodist church in Australasia. "We must give up our own life." He mentioned also Philippians 2 as the Anglicans always do, and then, he had the text from I Corinthians where the grain of wheat must die and that God will give him a new body.

Everywhere you hear the admonition to commit holy suicide. There in the World Council of churches they stand like boys on the springboard, all ready to spring into the water; and everyone is hesitant to take the first step. It is not a very light thing to commit suicide; you never know where you awake after your suicide, whether in the heaven of the una sancta, or in the hell of what one Professor calls "Eccumenical Babel."

This is the problem for us and all this happens at the time of the Second Vatican Council. It is a pity that our Lutheran theologians and churches have not taken pains to criticize thoroughly the eccumenical ideas of the Anglicans, for instance, the impossible "Lambeth quadrilateral" which sounds as if it were sufficient to agree on the Bible, on the Nicene and Apostles' creeds, on the two sacraments and the Historic Episcopate. But they have never taken pains to ask, from whence does this terrible idea come that if all the people of the Protestant churches are in one body then suddenly the world will become Christian? None of the church fathers, none of the reformers, neither Calvin nor Luther in their explanation of John 17 f., ever had this exegesis. This is the product of modern chiliasm in Pietistic movements of the 18th and 19th centuries. So this is the great charge to us and all our churches. How far our churches in America will be able to reconsider their situation before it is too late we don't know.

Of course, there are churches that do not want to gamble this way. And it is my deep conviction that Missouri belongs to these churches. There are men in Missouri who are definitely under the influence of these liberal ideas. But they are in the minority. One of the tragic consequences of the breakdown of the Synodical Conference could be that Missouri is being driven to the left. In my opinion, and this a sincere opinion, there are indeed some people who are under the influence of these ecumenical ideas, but the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod as such, the majority of its pastors and of its students, does not want to give up the Lutheran Church. This is a great hope, and let us hope and pray that God will keep them.

It is a serious question to us all. To us people in Australia, to you people here in the conservative churches which once belonged together in the Synodical Conference. Why have we not been able to convince our fellow Lutherans of the necessity of sticking to the confessions? Why was our witness so weak? Perhaps we have (all of us) lived in a certain isolation and we have, perhaps, in our individual church bodies, not always realized what was going on in the whole of Christendom. You must not think that your churches and your young theologians are safe from these attacks of unions. This is a disease which can suddenly come up in any church. The only way I can see that we can preserve our heritage is that we, with great seriousness, try to re-think our confessions, re-think the whole of our theology. You see, the weakness of the American churches was always that they had a good traditional theology inherited from the Fathers and thought that it was enough if faithful pastors and professors passed this on to the next generation. This must preserve the church. But the experience of churches is that a confession is not a heritage which you can simply hand on as you hand on a book. You must, each generation again must, acquire this possession. You in America have always been free to confess; no one prevented you from doing this. But this has had the effect that,

to speak after the manner of Franklin Fry, "We took that for granted." We take many things for granted that can no longer be taken for granted.

Now, if I may sum up what I have to say it is this! You brethren, have a tremendous task in American Lutheranism. From your witness, from your faithful testimony, may depend what becomes of the Lutheran Church in America, or the other Lutheran churches, do not ever forget that there is a common destiny. This is what Rome has learned and it has brought about the change in Rome. Rome always thought, "Oh, let the Protestant churches go to the dogs; we shall take over." They know now that if the Protestant church breaks down in Sweden or in England, this does not mean that the people will become Catholics. There are other alternatives. They know that. We should also see this common destiny which connects us with the churches in the Lutheran World Federation. We cannot be one with them. But we cannot forget that it is the same heritage from which we come that is their heritage. And should we not, then, be able to give more convincing witness of what it means to be a faithful, confessing Lutheran church? You must always keep in mind, especially you young theologians, that this is not a look into the past, but a look into the future. It is not a preservation of the 19th century, but it is a looking forward to the church of the 20th century, where we have to answer the question, whether we shall be able as Lutherans to do what the eccumenical task of the Lutheran church is. It is expressed in the old Pentecost hymn, "O Heil' ger Geist, kehre bei uns ein....Dass wir in Glaubenseinigkeit auch können alle Christenheit dein wahres Zuegnis lehren!" "That we in unity of faith may be able to teach all Christendom thy true witness;" all Christians--the Catholics, the Reformed, the Methodists, and our separated brethren in the Lutheran World Federation.

The above was a lecture delivered by Dr. Hermann Sasse on March 8, 1965, on the afternoon of the day when he spoke on the IMPACT OF BULTMANNISM ON AMERICAN LUTHERANISM at a free conference in Mankato, Minnesota. This latter lecture referred to appeared in the June Lutheran Synod Quarterly, copies of which are still available.

ERRANT ON "INERRANCY"

The September, 1965, issue of the Concordia Theological Monthly contains an article by Dr. Arthur C. Piepkorn, entitled "What Does 'Inerrancy' Mean?" It is a most important article, for it brings into print in an official journal of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod a theological viewpoint which has not been officially presented until this time. That this view has been presented as a "private opinion" held by some in the past is not being overlooked, but now it is officially presented without critical comment. By the publication of this article one must therefore assume that the views presented now have some official standing.

This judgement is reinforced by the words of Dr. Theodore Nickel, as reported in the October 10, 1965 issue of The Lutheran Reporter. In an article entitled "'Professors Are Not Promoting New Theology,' Dr. Nickel says," Dr. Nickel states that the position now held by some of the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, differs only in method and not in substance from the historical doctrinal position of his church body.

When one reads this article by Dr. Arthur C. Piepkorn, he cannot agree with Dr. Nickel. Dr. Piepkorn in his three-part article, shows very clearly that there is a very wide gulf between himself and the historical doctrinal position of his synod. A very brief summary with comments follows.

Dr. Piepkorn begins his article by claiming that "the term 'inerrancy' does not correspond to any vocable of the Holy Scriptures." (p. 577). He then continues into the first part of his essay, where he attempts to show how the term "inerrancy" found its way into Lutheran theology. His key statement is: Early Lutheran orthodoxy affirms the correctness and adequacy of the Sacred Scriptures for the things which must be known and believed for a Christian to be saved and to lead a godly life." (p. 577) Only in the middle and late 17th century does he see the concept of factual inerrancy of Scripture appearing in Lutheran theology. To him it is a logical development, this being that since the Holy Scriptures are a product of the Holy Spirit, then any error would be unworthy of Him. Dr. Piepkorn does not accept this, saying: "Again it is not unreasonable to assume that God, the Author of a perfect redemption, would have given a revelation that meets Quenstedt's criticism, but the assumption must be tested by the facts." (579)

Dr. Piepkorn continues his efforts by tracing the history of the word "inerrancy" through classical and theological literature. From this he states: "It is appropriate to a person or a hypostatization, to the author of a book, but not to a book as a book." (p. 580) Hence when one speaks of the Scriptures Dr. Piepkorn is satisfied that the best that can be said is that they are "'not wandering away' from the truth." (p.580) Anything more than this is a "tendency toward deification of the written revelation of God." (p. 580)

In Part II Dr. Piepkorn proceeds further down his path of thought. While he again readily grants that it is possible to make certain inferences, since "the Holy Spirit of truth is the principal Author of the prophetic and apostolic writings," the question is whether or not "such an inference is rational or strictly theological." (p. 582) In considering this question he feels that he can "refrain from enter-

ing upon the question of the inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures," being content simply to recognize "both their divine and human authorship." (p. 583) In stressing the human side of the Scriptures he points out two facts. The canon "represents merely a moderately common consensus." (p. 583) He also points to the many problems of Scripture in chronology, the synoptic problem, etc., all of which lead him to conclude:

The fact is that the truth of the Sacred Scriptures is something to be evaluated in terms of their own criteria and of the qualities which they themselves exhibit. These qualities do not -- speaking generally -- include great precision in formulation, stenographic fidelity in reporting exact words, prosaic literalism in interpretation, bibliographically accurate citations of author and title, comprehensive documentation, carefully synchronized chronologies, a modern historiographic sense, harmonistically consistent adjustment of sources to one another, and meticulously exact description of attendant historical, physical, and other scientific details. (p. 588)

At the same time he would "quite properly shy away from 'contradictions,' 'errors,' and 'mistakes.' Yet such euphemisms as 'paradoxes,' 'discrepancies,' 'disagreements,' and 'variations' are hardly better." (p. 588)

Dr. Piepkorn then presents his conclusions in Part III. He affirms: "It does not seem to this writer that we are serving the best interests of the church when either we continue formally to reaffirm the inerrancy of the Sacred Scriptures or even continue to employ the term." (p. 588) In fact, he considers the term to be theologically irrelevant. (p. 589) His reason? "Our better information in the field of textual history makes many of the naive oversimplifications of the 16th and 17th centuries untenable." (p. 590) Abandoning the inerrancy of Scriptures solves many problems for Dr. Piepkorn, for

then all of the problems of Scripture are "accidental to the divine revelation," but they are not part of the "substance." (p. 591) While some might raise the question of serious differences of opinion in this, he sees any such differences as only isagogical and hermeneutical. (p. 592)

Oddly enough, Dr. Piepkorn urges caution in the presentation of his opinions to the general public.

We must take care not to deny [his emphasis] the inerrancy of the Sacred Scriptures both for pastoral reasons and because the initial affirmation of the freedom of the Sacred Scriptures from error was designed to reinforce and to affirm in other words the doctrine that the Sacred Scriptures have the Holy Spirit as their principal Author and that they are the truthful word of the God of Truth to men. (p. 593)

But in the end the best that it is possible to say of the Scriptures is that they are "true and dependable." (p. 593)

How is one to react to this article? Certainly there is an emotional reaction. There is a feeling of sadness, for the article by Dr. Piepkorn is a chasm in the downhill decline of The Concordia Theological Monthly. One could point to any number of past articles in the same journal addressed to the arguments which Dr. Piepkorn makes use of. One could invoke the excellent book Scripture Cannot be Broken by the sainted Dr. Theodore Engelder, which blunts the point of every argument used by Dr. Piepkorn for his views.

But one must also make certain specific objections to the content and to the line of thought followed in the article.

It would seem that Dr. Piepkorn's entire approach

is supposedly based on the modern scientific method. This shows itself when he rejects very quickly the claims of inerrancy for Scripture by the 17th century Lutheran dogmaticians as logical, but not theological. He wants the facts to speak for themselves. (p. 579) Yet his logic is also faulty. First of all, one does not place himself and his own reason above the Scriptures, II Corinthians 10:5. Secondly, even if one were to grant the right to use the so-called scientific method with Scripture as Dr. Piepkorn claims to do, one should begin with the Scriptures statements concerning itself. The first step in the study of any person or document in history is to listen to what that person has to say of himself -- before forming any judgements -- and then to examine the claims in the light of facts and history. Dr. Piepkorn seems to assume the impossibility of inerrancy and then proceeds to prove the case which he has already accepted.

Certainly the words of our Savior in John 10:35 spoken over one of the so-called trivia of Scripture stand in opposition to such assertions, as do many other passages of Scripture.

Dr. Piepkorn states that the matter of inerrancy has nothing to do with the inspiration of Scriptures. What should rather have been stated that the doctrine of the inerrancy has nothing in common with his doctrine of the inspiration of the Scriptures, for Dr. Piepkorn does have a doctrine of inspiration in Scripture, but not of plenary, verbal inspiration. As can be seen in the article and from the quotations above, inspiration to him is a subjective matter, applying only to the authors of the books, but not to the book itself. The influence of the Holy Spirit in inspiration is nowhere defined, but it seems to be little more than the general providence of God which moves all men. At least it is not something very specific, as in II Peter 1:20-21. His doctrine of inspiration would seem to be that of neo-orthodoxy.

To say that inerrancy is a late development in the theology of the Lutheran Church is to ignore the theological context of the times. When the Reformation began in the early 16th century, the question was not concerning the quality of the Scriptures, but rather of authority in the church. Hence inerrancy was not an issue. But soon the rationalism that raised its head in the 17th and 18th centuries placed severe pressures upon orthodoxy from new directions. Furthermore, it is always dangerous from a scholarly viewpoint to say bluntly that a certain pattern of thought must be dated at such and such a time. It is certainly dangerous from a theological viewpoint, for it is the same as assertion that there was no Christian doctrine of the Trinity until the formal formulations were made in the church councils. While the word "inerrancy" may not occur in Scripture, the doctrinal content summed up in that word is certainly present. Nor can the position of the earliest Reformer Luther be separated in this point from the later dogmaticians, for, in spite of all attempts to make Luther into the first Lutheran neo-orthodox theologian, his words are too clear for such misrepresentation.

When one retreats away from the concept of inerrancy, then one has only one theological fortress left -- and it is built of sand -- subjective certainty, which ultimately rests on one's own feelings, e. g. Schleiermacher. Yet this is all that is left for one when the Scriptures become the subjective writings of men, who have recorded their honest, but imperfect, opinions, values, and misconceptions, which in turn must be filtered by the reader's own logic and value judgments. Such a revelation of God retreats from man into a fog of uncertain words.

One must also assume that Dr. Piepkorn assumes that there are errors of fact in the Scriptures. Perhaps one could make an even stronger statement in the light of Dr. Piepkorn's criticism of the claim that the Bible's being free from error is only a

logical deduction. (p. 593) In raising questions against the inerrancy of Scriptures Dr. Piepkorn makes use of such moth-eaten arguments that the autographs no longer exist and so any such question is no longer relevant. Furthermore, Dr. Piepkorn makes use of the problems in Scripture -- and we are quick to admit that they exist, but not that they cannot be dealt with effectively -- to disprove to his satisfaction the factual certainty of the Scriptures. But he nowhere makes any attempt to come to grips with them or point out that these problems have been dealt with.

Dr. Piepkorn is also guilty of an arbitrary division in the value of materials in the Scripture. One cannot say that the Scriptures are reliable in matters of faith and yet say that there is the possibility of factual error in the Scriptures. Such an approach, as was stated above, makes theology into something purely subjective, rationalistic, and uncertain. "Thus saith the Lord" disappears. Dr. Piepkorn is quick to assert that the Sacrament of the Altar, the Sacrament of Holy Baptism, and the virgin birth do not fall into this uncertain theological limbo, (p. 588) though he admits they are questioned today. But he nowhere states, except on his own authority, that they are specifically excluded from being subjectively judged by the readers of Scripture. One wonders how he can make this assertion, for some have gone only a little further down the same road he has, or considerably further. The difference is only one of quantity, not quality.

One also wonders why Dr. Piepkorn asserts that the inerrancy of the Scriptures must not be denied for "pastoral reasons." (p. 593) He seems to think that it would be upsetting to people and cause them to go one step further and reject the Scriptures as God's Word to men. He prefers, he states, to refuse to answer "yes" or "no" to the question. It would seem from what has been said that his "no" is much louder than his "yes." To conceal one's theological views

as being theologically indigestible for the larger circle of Christians is to adopt an almost Gnostic approach to Christian truth. The trumpet must give a certain sound, I Corinthians 14:8, and the Christian teacher must be ready to give a definite answer, I Peter 3:15.

Perhaps the writer of this brief review has been guilty of reading too much into Dr. Piepkorn's article on inerrancy. But he has the feeling that all of the above is true -- unfortunately. Readers would do well to form their own opinions by reading Dr. Piepkorn's article for themselves, thus forming their own judgments.

Glenn E. Reichwald

Note:

The December issue of the Lutheran Synod Quarterly will present an important and well-documented paper by Pres. B.W. Teigen on "The Religious and Philosophic foundations of Public Education."

(Editor)

BOOK REVIEW

A. Berkeley Michelsen, Interpreting The Bible. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Willaim B. Eerdmans, 1963, xiv and 425pp., \$5.95.

"Since the close of World War II there has been a rapidly growing interest in the theological science of hermeneutics." So states the author of this book in the opening line of his preface (p. vii); and his statement is absolutely true. Every year sees the publication of a number of new books in the field of hermeneutics, a field of theology which was almost entirely forgotten and neglected in the first 40 years of this century.

Nor is it difficult to determine why this is so. Since World War I the world has been in a state of theological confusion and upheaval which can be compared to the period of the Reformation in the 16th century in modern times. Old theologies which scholars had assumed were impregnable have collapsed completely; and in their places a whole host of new theologies and theological schools have appeared, vying with one another for recognition and supremacy.

Theologically, we live in an exciting world; but it is also a world of darkest doubt and confusion compounded. To a large extent Christian men and women - and particularly Christian scholars and teachers outside of the conservative tradition - no longer know what to believe, or why. On all sides Protestant, Lutheran, Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox scholars are feverishly re-examining their theological positions, systems and presuppositions, endeavoring to assess their validity in this rapidly-changing world. At the same time these same scholars are eagerly examining the new theologies which have appeared, wondering if these will prove any more satisfactory than the old.

And as they do so the question must inevitably arise -- Why all these differences? - especially when all confessedly are using the same book, the Bible, as their source? The difference lies, as all agree, in the different interpretations given to these Scriptures. And behind these, in turn, lie the varying systems and principles of hermeneutics. And thus we can understand this great new interest in hermeneutics.

In this burgeoning new field of hermeneutic literature this book, Interpreting the Bible, by Dr. A. Berkeley Michelsen, is one of the best we have read. Dr. Michelsen is Professor of Bible and Theology in the Graduate School of Wheaton College, Wheaton Illinois, a school operated by the fundamentalist

groups of various Reformed churches. The reader is left in no doubt regarding where Prof. Michelsen stands on all the current theological issues. He is clearly a conservative scholar, by which we mean a man of conservative convictions and scholarly attitudes; and for both these reasons the appearance of a book such as this at this time is most welcome.

One is impressed not only with the author's scholarship, but also by the fact that he is an able and lucid writer, presenting his material in a fresh and interesting way. He defines his purpose in the Preface as follows: "The purpose of this book is (i) to show that the student of the Bible must have the proper method of interpretation to get at the full meaning of the Bible; (ii) to discuss the many elements of such interpretation; and thus (iii) to guide the serious scholar into a correct understanding of the Scriptures." (p. viii).

By and large we feel that the author has done a good job in fulfilling his stated aims and objectives. In the Introduction he discusses briefly but adequately the source of the interpreter's principles, lessons from the past (a brief history of hermeneutic science), crucial issues, and the Bible as a unique book, in which he affirms the full verbal inspiration of the Scriptures.

Dr. Michelsen's section on General Hermeneutics is excellent and should be read by every preacher and student of theology. It covers the matters of context, language, history and culture, and shows the importance of these matters to the Biblical interpreter.

The third section on Special Hermeneutics makes up over half the book and deals with such specific topics as short figures of speech, opaque figures of speech, extended figures of speech, typology, symbols and symbolical actions, prophecy, descriptive language of creation and climax, poetry, doctrinal teachings and devotion and conduct. In this

section the conservative Lutheran reader will wonder just how far Dr. Michelsen would push the matter of descriptive (figurative) language in creation, since he does not really express himself clearly on the matter of the "historicity" of Genesis 1-2.

He then appends a short Conclusion in which he discusses the matter of distortion through artificial assumptions and the need for balance through care and practice in the art of hermeneutics.

It should be noted that the book has an excellent and extensive bibliography, covering the entire field of hermeneutics; plus three indices - authors, subjects and Scriptures.

Dr. Mickelsen's treatment of Martin Luther and his significance and contributions in the history of hermeneutics is somewhat more complete and accurate than many of the other more recent books in hermeneutics produced in Reformed circles. All in all, he devotes about one page to Luther, the same amount of space given to John Calvin. We felt that his historical survey was by far the least complete part of the book. And we felt that even in such a brief discussion as this Prof. Mickelsen did not do full justice to the great reformer of Wittenburg, who was probably the greatest exegete and interpreter of the Bible in modern times. Luther's impact in the area of hermeneutics was much, much greater than any of the Reformed writers seem to realize or admit. For the Lutheran reader or preacher this is one major defect of the book.

On the other hand, we Lutherans have no real grounds on which to enter any complaints in this matter, for it is a sad fact that of all the new books dealing with hermeneutics which have been published in the last twenty years not a single one has come from a Lutheran pen - much less from the pen of a conservative Lutheran! Have we become so disinterested in such a fundamental discipline as

hermeneutics? Or so inarticulate that we cannot express ourselves? Shame on us!

Until such time as a good Lutheran textbook of hermeneutics appears on the market this is probably the best book in the field. Our preachers would do well to read it and give some renewed attention to the vital matter of Bible interpretation. The book is nicely put up in a good cloth cover, good readable print (although not too large), and not a single typographical error that came to the attention of this reviewer. The price is not exorbitant - \$5.95.

Julian G. Anderson

Gerhard Kittel, ed. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Vol. II. Translated by Geoffery W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964, 955 pp., \$20.50.

The second volume of Kittel's Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament joins volume one in English. The second includes all of the words from delta through eta. While these volumes are not commentaries in the strict sense of the term, they do add considerably to theological knowledge and understanding. One must marvel at the ability of Dr. Bromiley in making available in good English this wealth of New Testament material.

Glenn E. Reichwald

The Amplified Old Testament: Genesis to Esther. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1964, 1398 pp., \$4.95.

This handy-sized translation of the Old Testament offers an expanded English text to bring out the thoughts and concepts of the original Hebrew. While

this may seem to be a bit clumsy at first, the reader readily appreciated the presentation in a short time. Genesis 1:1 is: "In the beginning God (prepared, formed fashioned,) and created the heavens and the earth." Genesis 49:10 is: "The scepter or leadership shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet until Shiloh [the Messiah, the Peaceful One] comes to Whom it belongs..." The translation seems conservative and certainly helps the reader to know the Old Testament better. At the same time the reviewer regrets, e.g., the note after Deuteronomy 34:7, which verse comments on Moses' excellent health at the time of his death, the note seeming to imply a contradiction with Deuteronomy 31:2, which verse comments that Moses would not continue as leader of Israel into into the promised land.

Glenn E. Reichwald

Charles S. Mueller. The Strategy of Evangelism. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965, 96 pp., \$1.25.

Everyone is in favor of mission work in the local congregation, but the information on the "how" of mission work is sadly lacking. This book very adequately fills the need by its practical and theological suggestions.

Glenn E. Reichwald

Thomas Coates. The Prophets for Today. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965, 115 pp., \$2.00.

This book contains 62 generally striking devotions on Old Testament texts, which leave an impression on the reader.

Glenn E. Reichwald