all are thoughtfully presented. The authors and the editor should be complimented on the fact that stylistic infelicities and typographical errors are virtually non-existent and praised for including relevant, clearly reproduced plates. Assuming that these high standards will be maintained in subsequent volumes, all college and university libraries should renew their standing orders for *Medievalia et Humanistica*.

ANNE JACOBSON SCHUTTE, *Lawrence University*

William M. Landeen. *Martin Luther's Religious Thought*. Mountain View, California; Oshawa, Ontario; Omaha, Nebraska: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1971. Pp. 218. \$1.95.

This book aims at introducing the general reader to the key doctrines of Luther's theology. After four initial chapters tracing Luther's intellectual and spiritual development up to his reformation discovery, Landeen traverses the traditional sequence of dogmatic *loci* from God to the Last Judgment. The impression one receives from this outline is confirmed by the actual text: we have here a product of orthodox Lutheran scholasticism in the manualist tradition. As can be expected, the author knows his sources thoroughly (though he does not evidence the same acquaintance with the more recent secondary literature), and one cannot but admire his assiduity in collecting passages for reference, demonstrating as it does a reverence for the "canonical" Luther-text that makes him heap one quotation on the other until the whole sweep of Luther's writings is covered. No matter whether a point is repeated over and over again, or the argument is obscured by the weight of direct quotes, the orthodox scholar has little concern for the attention-span of his reader, but keeps on quoting until he has "exhausted" both his sources and his reader. Still, so far so good: it is all right to let Luther speak for himself. Only, the problem is what Landeen does with his sources.

The scholastic method, as perfectly evidenced in Melanchthon's work, seeks *topoi* in the text of the great author (whose word itself therefore becomes an infallible authority down to the last detail) and interconnects them in a logical and consistent manner so as to form a comprehensive system. But it is precisely the hermeneutical presuppositions of the redactor, which can be grasped in his choice and sequence of *topoi* as well as in his way of correlating them, that characterize the peculiarity of the system and subtly modify the original, as, again, seen in Melanchthon. Now, Landeen tries to avoid doing violence to Luther's thought by carefully guarding his comments against becoming more than faithful paraphrases. And that's fine as far as it goes. This caution, however, prevents him from searching in Luther himself for coordinates, general principles or common denominators on the basis of which the whole sweep of his occasional writings can be systematically interpreted. The failure of this book is that Luther's own hermeneutics is not drawn out of his work and made the guideline for interpretation (be it the paradoxical dialectic of his thought, the theology of the cross, law and gospel, the *simul* of saint and sinner, or what have you). Consequently, the author is unable to assess the different weight of significance of the multiplicity of statements; because of lack of systematic incisiveness he cannot differentiate and be critical of his material. It is one thing to collect, quite another to select. Here, in

each chapter we find a juxtaposition of quotations with intermittent running commentary but little analysis and penetration. After one has journeyed through a few of the chapters one realizes that the trip is always the same, only each time touching different bases, and the reading becomes a chore. The comments of the author say very much the same as the quotations, only with less force and insight, and at times are interspersed with pious or polemical remarks (for instance the pejorative "Romanism").

At certain points in his commentary the author's adrenalin seems to rise, his style loses some of its labored, rather dry and wooden expression and becomes somewhat lively and emphatic, though never exciting or brilliant. It is the reviewer's impression that this happens in the sections on the word (Bible), church, predestination (election), Holy Spirit and sanctification. Hardly aware of recent research in Luther's hermeneutics, Landeen comes close to Lutheran *bibliolatry* in his emphasis on the infallibility of the inspired book; underrating the dialectic of visible and invisible, he arrives at a strongly institutional understanding of the church, which is more like Melancthon than Luther; overplaying Luther on predestination, he almost makes him appear as advocating a limited atonement; failing to recognize the implications of the dialectic between instantaneous and growing sanctification, he overemphasizes the teaching on the Holy Spirit. Seen together, it appears that it is Lutheran orthodox stresses that are laid on Luther, who perhaps is amenable to such a perspective, but certainly allows also other points of view.

With quite a number of excellent books on Luther's thought available in English (like Althaus, Bornkamm, Ritter, Pinomaa, and above all Ebeling, who supplies most of what we find missing in Landeen), this reviewer finds himself in a quandary as to the usefulness of this book, even for general readers. Is it an unintentional mistake that Landeen does not list the *translations* into English of these authors just mentioned? It seems clear that his publication does not figure favorably in such company. Perhaps there is some redeeming value in the nice printing and get-up of his book, but even this is overshadowed by a bibliography with more than the tolerable number of uncorrected errors.

MANFRED HOFFMAN, *Emory University*

Regin Prenter. *Luther's Theology of the Cross*. Facet Books, Historical Series (Reformation) 17, Charles S. Anderson, Editor. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971. Pp. 24. \$1.

This is not, as one might infer from the title, a historical study of Luther's theology of the cross. And quite rightly so, for it would indeed require an ingenious effort to improve upon the definitive work on this subject by Walter von Loewenich, *Luthers Theologia Crucis*, which, by the way, never has been translated into English – an incomprehensible shortcoming considering the flood of lesser products swamping the North American market. Rather, Prenter, who initially made his name by research in Luther's pneumatology, intends to show here the contemporary significance of Luther's theology of the cross as a dogmatic corrective against dangers on both sides.

After a brief description of Luther's theology of the cross in his lectures on *Hebrews* and his *Heidelberg Theses*, the systematician Prenter analyzes its theological structure and iden-