

Book Reviews

THE ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT. *Jonathan Barnes*. 98 pp. THE ARGUMENT FROM DESIGN. *Thomas McPherson*. 78 pp. RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE. *T. R. Miles*. 66 pp. THE CONCEPT OF WORSHIP. *Ninian Smart*. 77 pp. NEW STUDIES IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION. Macmillan. £1.95 each.

Jonathan Barnes' *The Ontological Argument* is a condensed, closely reasoned piece taking in not only classic statements of the argument in Descartes and St. Anselm, but also much of the modern discussion, from Frege to Karl Barth. The author steps surefootedly through complicated logical matters such as whether there are existential propositions that are logically necessary, the sense in which existence can function as a logical predicate. He faults the argument not on the traditional (since Kant) ground that 'existence is not a predicate' but on the grounds that there is no reason to believe a presupposition of the argument's first premiss, that there is just one thing than which nothing greater can be imagined. This monograph is not going to be suitable for anyone unacquainted with modern logic. It provides further evidence for the view that the ontological argument is important not only for its religious significance, but as a logical crux.

The Argument from Design proceeds in a more leisurely, eighteenth century manner, befitting a discussion of Hume and Archdeacon Paley. The treatment is simpler and more straightforward than *The Ontological Argument*, because the argument from design is simpler. Indeed, one gets the impression that Professor McPherson has to spin his material out to make a monograph. He takes the reader through the usual moves—the different senses of 'design', the status of the argument as an analogical argument, the nature of empirical arguments for God's existence. Apart from discussion of recent work by Swinburne and Taylor there is nothing to set this discussion of the argument apart from a dozen others.

Professor Smart writes with erudition and clarity about worship. But it is not clear what the multitude of examples, the phenomenology, the careful distinctions, all add up to. Is there a philosophical problem, or set of problems, about worship? What are they? What are the arguments that are deployed in this area? Are they sound arguments? Professor Smart answers none of these questions, but the book will undoubtedly be of value to anyone interested in comparative religion.

In sharp contrast to Professor Smart's treatment of worship, Professor Miles focusses on one problem: he challenges the idea that taking religious belief seriously involves the need to refute materialism. In a few pages Miles undoubtedly succeeds in raising a number of interesting and important questions about the status of religious experience. His chief claim is that the distinctions between nature and supernature and between material and spiritual involve meaningless distinctions. With the demise of these distinctions goes any idea that there might be some objective 'source' of religious experience, and any such thing as religious truth. He relies heavily on Ryle for his approach to the mind, and his negative arguments against the distinctions he dislikes smack rather strongly of logical positivism. Apart from the fact that Professor Miles thinks that dispensing with any 'objective' source of religious experience avoids certain difficulties it is not clear what, if one agreed that the distinction between nature and supernature was purely classificatory, would *require* the 'subjectivism' in religion that Miles favours.

PAUL HELM

EX ORBE RELIGIONUM: STUDIA GEO WIDENGREN OBLATA, PART 2
STUDIES IN THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS XXII. Brill, Leiden. 464 pp.
120 guilders.

Most of us know Geo Widengren as an Old Testament scholar, but his wide interest in the field of religion is reflected in the great variety of papers that are offered in this *estschrift* in honour of his 65th birthday. They are in English, German, French, and one in Italian.

I have not seen Volume 1, but it is listed as covering Near Eastern, Jewish, Christian, Greek, Roman, and Gnostic studies. Volume 2 includes sectionalised groups of papers on Hindu, Buddhist, Iranian, Islamic, European, and illiterate cultures, and what are grouped as Phaenomenologica and Psychology.

The wide field and the variety of languages make it unlikely that any single individual will purchase the book, but it is well worth consulting in a library under any general heading in which one is interested. Articles vary in length and weight. An informative curiosity is Segelberg on funeral inscriptions incorporating the request 'God/Christ/Mary help his soul'. Parrinder writes on mysticism, with special reference to Huxley and Zaehner. Keilbach in German discusses parapsychology and religious experience; the findings of the former are of concern to religion but not needed to establish it.

Students of Islamics will find historical interpretative papers, including one on the Koran and Biblical History by J. Bowman. There are two on myth, including a study by Van Baaren on its adaptation to changing situations. Presumably Old Testament papers come in Volume 1, but there are two in German; a linguistic treatment of God as Creator by Eilers, and one on Shamanism in the Old Testament by Goldammer.

J. STAFFORD WRIGHT

ENTERING THE PATH OF ENLIGHTENMENT: THE *Bodhicaryavatara*
OF THE BUDDHIST POET SANTIDEVA. *Translation and Guide by Marion L. Matics.* Allen & Unwin. 318 pp. £4.50.

When the West first began to study Buddhism, it turned to Theravāda Buddhism, that form of the Buddhist teaching which belonged to its southern

expansion in such countries as Ceylon and Burma. The introduction of Zen Buddhism, largely through the writings of D. T. Suzuki, was influential in arousing interest in northern Buddhism, commonly called Mahāyāna (the 'Great Vehicle') because of its universalistic and more comprehensive teaching. These forms of Buddhism originated in India, reaching their height about the 8th century A.D., when this document was composed, but were developed in Tibet, China and Japan.

The Guide (which prefaces the translation of Sāntideva's poem) seeks to introduce the kernel of Mahāyāna teaching, but the compression of this section means at times that it is over-simple for those knowledgeable in Buddhism and somewhat over-complex for any approaching Buddhist studies for the first time.

It is pointed out that the Bodhisattva (the Buddha designate) serves as an ideal. He is the Saviour-figure, the embodiment of *compassion* which serves as one of the pillars of the system. The other pillar is *wisdom*, and it is to *wisdom* that the enlightenment experience seeks to aspire. The poet was an exponent of the 'Middle Way' teaching in Mahāyāna Buddhism, and he is concerned to expound the moral, devotional and mental techniques which will transform his readers into Bodhisattvas. He expresses both his thankfulness for the possibility of enlightenment and also his awareness of those sins and inadequacies which block the path to it. There could, however, be no progress towards enlightenment, were there not the initial impulse. Here *imitation* is important, for it is the example of the Bodhisattvas that inspires others. They are the community of witness and experience—a community which expresses the bliss of attainment.

There are six perfections along the path to enlightenment—mindfulness and awareness, patience, strength, contemplation and intuitive wisdom. This wisdom lies towards the end of the road and reflects that understanding which is not dependent upon conceptualising and which accepts the relativism of all our concepts and our attempts to express them. It regards as false all attempts at an absolute definition. The poem is marked by an enthusiastic rapture which speaks of an attitude of worship, and no observer of Mahāyāna Buddhism can fail to acknowledge this element of devotion and ecstasy.

RAYMOND HAMMER

EXODUS: NEW CENTURY BIBLE. *J. P. Hyatt*. Oliphants. 351 pp. £4.50.

The most powerful single force in the history of mankind was the rise of the nation of Israel. From it stemmed Judaism, Islam and Christianity, and from them in turn stemmed the modern scientific movement and communism, influences which now dominate the lives of most of the human race. Such a colossal effect demands a colossal cause. The Book of Exodus purports to describe that cause. The ultimate test of a commentary on this book is its measure of success in making us feel that we have entered into and understood the events which brought Israel to the birth. By this test Wellhausen selfconfessedly completely failed, for he said: 'It is ultimately inexplicable why Israel's history with more or less the same start as, say, Moab's led to a quite different result.'

Hyatt's lucid, scholarly commentary is a worthy representative of the Wellhausen tradition. Much space is given to discussing which sections came from J, E, RD or the various strata of P. Account is taken of the great

advances in knowledge of the Near Eastern background during the last century, and the Book of Exodus is held, in spite of its late date and untrustworthy traditions, to contain a substantial core of history. Yet it is all interpreted naturalistically and there is no recognition of a historical confrontation of the people of Israel by the living, speaking God. Moses is an emaciated, ghostly figure and the history is glimpsed through patchy fog. A cause adequate to explain the subsequent chain of historical events never emerges.

It is disappointing that not only the great classical opponents of Wellhausen are ignored, but also such modern discussions as L. W. B. Rees 'The Route of the Exodus' *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* January 1948, G. Ch. Aalders *A Short Introduction to the Pentateuch* London, 1949, W. J. Martin *Stylistic Criteria and the Analysis of the Pentateuch* London, 1955—particularly interesting on Exodus 6: 3, J. A. Motyer *The Revelation of the Divine Name* London, 1959, M. L. G. Guillebaud 'The Tent over the Tabernacle' *Evangelical Quarterly* 31 (1959), K. A. Kitchen *Ancient Orient and Old Testament* London, 1966, J. W. Wenham 'Large Numbers in the Old Testament' *Tyndale Bulletin* 18 (1967), R. K. Harrison *Introduction to the Old Testament* London, 1970. All these might have added significantly to the understanding of the text.

J. W. WENHAM

THE WAY OF WISDOM IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. R. B. Y. Scott. Collier-Macmillan Ltd. 238 pp. \$2.95 (£1.30).

In this examination of the Hebrew Wisdom tradition Professor Scott has produced a most useful companion volume to his much earlier work—*The Relevance of the Prophets*. In the first half of the book the discussion moves with ease and precision along fairly well-worn paths, beginning with the Biblical tradition and the international context (the latter rather thinly), and moving on to an analysis of proverbial patterns and the use of Wisdom in stories or larger word pictures.

Perhaps the most valuable material is to be found in the second half—in particular a lucid account of the points of contact and contrasts between the prophets and the Wisdom movement. In the context of contemporary debate it is reassuring to know that the prophets have not by some conjuring trick become wise men! Valuable too is the insistence that Job be understood and interpreted as an integral part of the Wisdom literature—albeit as a rebellious piece of Wisdom challenging 'unexamined assumptions'. The same is shown to be broadly true of Qoheleth—the pessimistic philosopher with a positive ethic and a pertinent reminder of the flexibility that religious orthodoxy requires.

The Epilogue is an honest attempt to recognise the theologian's obligation to the modern world. It is little more than a recognition, but might provoke the reader to think this one through for himself in connection with Wisdom. All in all the book has the clarity, width of interest, and grasp of key questions to become a standard introductory textbook.

P. J. BUDD

HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH, MALACHI: AN INTRODUCTION AND COMMENTARY (TYNDALE OLD TESTAMENT COMMENTARIES). Joyce G. Baldwin. Tyndale Press. 253 pp. £0.95 (paperback).

This commentary maintains the high standard of the Tyndale series. Little technical knowledge of Biblical scholarship is assumed in the reader, but he

is given a remarkably full, clear and objective account of the main theories on all the more important issues. While literary and historical problems receive full treatment, the main interest of the commentary is theological. The commentator's standpoint may be described as moderately conservative (on p. 14 the reviewer would have liked to know her dating of the later chapters of Isaiah!), but she is nowhere obscurantist or dogmatic, and her conclusions are clearly argued.

Who will use this commentary? It is safe to assume that the readership will consist chiefly of clergy and ministers, teachers and students. While little technical knowledge is assumed, much of the commentary is necessarily technical in character. I say necessarily, because these prophets are among the more difficult sections of the Bible, and a serious commentary must needs take note of the problems and the various solutions that have been proposed. Unfortunately this will deter the casual reader, and those who turn to a commentary primarily for devotional or homiletic material will no doubt find this one too arid. But the reader who is prepared to do some real study of the Bible will find a ready guide, and will not feel out of depth amid an excess of technical detail, as is too often the case.

Miss Baldwin's commentary is a remarkable achievement, and we shall look forward to more from her pen. The publishers too are to be congratulated on providing so much material for so low a price.

A. GELSTON

THE UNIVERSAL MEANING OF THE KABBALAH. *Leo Schaya* (translated from the French by Nancy Pearson). Allen and Unwin. 180 pp. £3.25.

We use the term mysticism to express two different phenomena: the real or imagined spiritual contact with God, and the attempted explanation of the essentially inexplicable. With rare exceptions the great mystics have been firmly based within the framework of an established religion; hence the explanation of their mysticism is bound to use its sacred books and terminology, though it may transform them in so doing. Since, once such a concept is established, it is normally handed down, even if modified, the Jewish term is Kabbalah, i.e. something received, virtually tradition—the explanation on p. 18 is misleading. Its written basis is the Law, both written and oral. It follows that the reader ignorant of rabbinic thought, both Talmudic and later, and of Gnosticism, some concepts of which live on in the Kabbalah, will find some aspects of Mr. Schaya's book hard to grasp.

It is hard to write a book on theoretical mysticism for one without leanings that way; it is still harder to make it interesting for him; it is almost impossible to make it really comprehensible. Since the author almost certainly did not have such a reader in mind, with this reservation we can give warm commendation to a piece of careful scholarship which shows deep understanding for the subject. It is worth mentioning that the French title *L'Homme et l'Absolu selon la Kabbale* probably gives a fairer indication of the contents than does the English title. The translation is most competent.

H. L. ELLISON

NEW TESTAMENT ESSAYS. *C. K. Barrett*. SPCK. viii + 159 pp. £2.50.

Every book by Professor Kingsley Barrett is full of meat, full of value, full

of interest, and this is no exception. Its vast scholarship and its author's modesty is revealed in one short note in the Introduction. He tells us that he wrote three of the Lectures (those on Acts) in German for delivery at Münster University, but has translated them into English for this volume in order to invite helpful criticism of his position!

Among the pieces in this volume is one on *Church and State in the New Testament* ('the State is created by God, but open to demonic abuse'); one on 'I am not ashamed of the gospel', where these words are skillfully linked with Matthew 16: 27, Matthew 10: 32-3, and Luke 12: 8-9; an excellent paper on *Theology in the World of Learning*, making a bold claim for the validity of theology as an academic discipline; and three major lectures on Acts.

A reviewer needs to be very bold, and very well-equipped, to challenge Dr. Barrett on any matters of fact. His knowledge of the field is encyclopaedic—comparable to that of J. B. Lightfoot, on whom he has recently written. But on matters of judgment perhaps a question can be raised. His basic message on Acts, like that of F. C. Baur a century and more ago is 'Compare it with Galatians, a first-hand document, and you will see how it blurs the vivid insights of Paul, and sees the early age through a rose-tinted haze, brought about either by ignorance of fact, or tendentiousness of purpose.'

Is this all there is to say? Firstly, is it a fully fair account of Acts? Acts gives us the suicide of Judas; the dispute between Hebrews and Hellenists; the dispute at Antioch; the rift between Paul and Barnabas. And in one vital verse (Acts 13: 38-9) the writer gives as accurate an account of Paul's doctrine of justification by faith as could be given in a short space. But in any case, let us grant that the perspective of Galatians and that of Acts are different. One is a red-hot, first-hand, controversial document, one is a reflective history, written years after. In the perspective of history, which is more important—Paul's quarrel with Peter, or the fact that they both were mightily used in the proclamation of the same Christ, and basically the same Gospel? Only on some such lines could Barrett's thesis be brought into question. And any one who attempts it will learn far more from Dr. Barrett than he will ever be able to teach him!

RONALD LEICESTER

TRADITIO-HISTORICAL CRITICISM OF THE GOSPELS (Studies in Creative Criticism 4). *R. S. Barbour*. SPCK. 54 pp. £0.75.

One fears the worst when the publisher's blurb rashly admits that a book is 'tersely written' and demands 'wholehearted participation' from even the reader with 'a wide basis of theological reading and an interest in philosophy'. There is no need to flee. Give attendance to reading and the Professor of New Testament Exegesis at Aberdeen offers an Agag path through the scrubland of the discipline he discusses. Traditio-historical criticism seeks to use specific methods to reveal the way in which oral and literary historical development culminated in the writing of biblical material. The present booklet is confined to an outline of this approach as it has been applied by Käsemann, Knox, and others, to the sayings of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels. Professor Barbour critically examines some of the criteria used (multiple attestation, Aramaisms, dissimilarity, coherence, and so on), and exposes their limitations as tools for determining what could be authentic or secondary in the Jesus material. The writer does not hide his own lack of wholehearted sympathy for the discipline *as at present practised*, and shrewdly

points out that more probably depends on an exponent's social conditioning or genetical make-up than he would readily concede. **NORMAN HILLYER**

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW (New Century Bible). *David Hill*. Oliphants. 367 pp. £4.50.

Dr. Hill, who is Senior Lecturer in Biblical Studies at the University of Sheffield, has provided students and preachers with a succinct but well written verse by verse commentary based on the R.S.V. Fifty pages on matters of introduction give a good and clear account of scholarly opinion up to late 1967. He himself accounts for the persistent early tradition of a Semitic writing by the apostle Matthew by referring Papias' famous conundrum to an apostolic sayings-collection which formed part of Q (and therefore lies behind Luke as well). He later supports this view with frequent examples of possible Aramaic word-play beneath the Greek text. The commentary proper aims to expound the meaning of the gospel rather than turn over technicalities for the sake of the specialist, though there are plenty of cross-references for the reader to pursue particular points. To describe the book as a highly competent mosaic of other scholars' work sounds like faint praise. It is not so intended. The student will find much recent scholarship well and concisely expressed, and many side-lights from rabbinics and Qumran. But let me admit to some disappointment that Dr. Hill too rarely appears to offer us the benefit of his own exegetical insights. This is a good commentary on Matthew. We still await the great one.

NORMAN HILLYER

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE (New Clarendon Bible). *G. H. P. Thompson*. Clarendon Press. 291 pp. £3 (hardback), £1.25 (paperback).

The former vice-principal of Salisbury Theological College has contributed the second of the gospel commentaries to appear so far in the *New Clarendon Bible*. This series is intended for G.C.E. 'A' level candidates and students in universities and colleges of education. The R.S.V. text is printed in full, with short verse by verse comments on the same page. Useful summaries of matters introductory are well covered in forty-three pages. Proto-Luke is not looked upon with any enthusiasm, though the unconvinced must now reckon with Vincent Taylor's forceful restatement of the hypothesis in his posthumous book, *The Passion Narrative of St. Luke* (CUP, 1972). Thompson's notes are meaty though concise, and a model of what can be attractively achieved within a limited space. He has even found room to draw attention to the chiasmus form of the Benedictus. For all that is included, it is surprising that no mention is made of C. F. Evans' comparisons of Luke's central section with Deuteronomy, which students will be expected to know about. Some interesting gleanings from the work of David Daube and J. D. M. Derrett on the legal background of the New Testament would have made a helpful commentary even better. It is a sad sign of the times that the customary high quality paper which for years has enhanced Clarendon Press productions has had to go, though the layout is as clear as ever. The offer of a paperback edition helps to keep the commentary within the budget of the intended market.

NORMAN HILLYER

THE POETIC JESUS. *Andrew Young*. SPCK. 88 pp. £1.90.

WRESTLING WITH CHRIST. *Luigi Santucci*. Collins. 222 pp. £1.75.

These two delightful books are the fruit of sustained attempts to enter into

the mind of Jesus. Each author wants in his own way to reach an understanding of the life of Christ which will be true to the world of the New Testament and to the world of today. Given this basic common purpose the results are remarkably dissimilar.

The slenderness of Andrew Young's book is a tribute to the toil which went into its making. Young is a poet, and his prose, despite some peculiarities of syntax, is highly tooled, brilliantly economical, and crystal clear. Not for him the literary equivalent of Parkinson's Law, where words multiply to fill the space available to them. Each word counts. *The Poetic Jesus* reminded me of that description of Sugar Ray Robinson as 'pound for pound the best boxer the world has known'. Page for page this is one of the best books of its kind one could hope to meet. His method, more successful in the earlier sections, but always profitable, is to take the sights and sounds of the world Jesus knew and show how these entered into his teaching as image, symbol, metaphor and simile. Turning the sights and sounds of the world into a vehicle for eternal truth is an essentially poetic process. It is in this sense, as we are shown, that Jesus is undoubtedly a poet.

Luigi Santucci is a successful professional novelist. But the power behind his prose is unquestionably that of a poet. His book is a multi-media enterprise in which we are switched from first to third person and back, transferred from narrative to drama, from anecdote to meditation, with all the panache and sheer skill of a virtuoso performance by a master craftsman. It is a passionate book. Santucci describes not only what he has imagined, but what, through his powerful imagination, he has also felt. One cannot read the book without feeling what Santucci feels. The reader is involved with Santucci's Christ because Santucci is himself so profoundly involved. And when we meet the characters of the Gospel narrative we know at once that they were of the same flesh and blood as ourselves. Simon of Cyrene, for example, crosses the threshold of our mind in this question: 'Who was this dark man with a red furrow on his shoulder?' It is at this level and in this manner that we encounter the real world from which we can so easily shelter.

Not all the expository suggestions will be judged acceptable. Young likes to rationalise miracles, and Santucci's Italian Catholicism colours what he has to say about a number of things, notably (and predictably) when writing about the Mother of Jesus and the Nativity. But minds like these, about such business, produce some powerful theology. The joy of both books lies in their capacity to reproduce in the reader something of the depth of the experience into which the encounter with Christ has led their authors, and in the authors' ability to deal with that experience both as human beings and as writers, something they do in literary terms which make one blush for much of what passes for Christian literature.

Both books reinforce the view that the Gospels themselves are irreplaceable. This must be judged the mark not of the authors' failure but of their success. Theology may have suffered from time to time at the pens of poets. But theology stands to suffer much greater harm from any divorce between itself and that deepest of poetry which is the servant and fruit of prayer. Both these books made me feel like falling on my knees and rushing into the pulpit simultaneously. While that may not be possible, it cannot (as they say) be bad.

DICK WILLIAMS

THE FORMATION OF THE RESURRECTION NARRATIVES.
Reginald H. Fuller. SPCK. 225 pp. £3.25.

From a tedious but necessary study of the Easter traditions of 1 Corinthians and the four gospels, Fuller argues as follows. From the church's beginning the resurrection of Jesus was central in its proclamation. His resurrection was conceived as the first instance of the general resurrection predicted in apocalyptic literature, and 'as such, it was not a "historical", but an eschatological and meta-historical event, occurring precisely at the point where history ends, but leaving its mark on history negatively in the empty tomb ("He is not here") and positively in the appearances' (p. 48). The empty tomb was not proclaimed in the earliest preaching but a resurrection from the grave is implied, since the apocalyptic conception of resurrection includes resurrection from the grave. The appearances may be defined as 'revelatory encounters'. Fuller's analysis of 1 Corinthians 15: 3-7 indicates to him that the earliest church did not 'prove' the reality of the resurrection from the appearances, and that Paul himself was the first to do this. (But surely this kind of argument from silence is shaky, since 1 Corinthians 15: 3-7 is clearly a summary, not a complete account of the earliest kerygma?) Gradually, this 'bare proclamation' was filled out so as to include narratives of the appearances such as we find in the gospels; and—later still—stories about the finding of the empty tomb (especially in Luke and John). A final chapter attempts to show how modern methods of tradition and redaction criticism help rather than hinder our understanding and preaching of the resurrection faith.

STEPHEN TRAVIS

THE REAL RESURRECTION. *D. H. van Daalen.* Collins. 191 pp. £2.25.

'The problems and questions concerning the resurrection of Christ naturally fall into three categories. The first deals with the records of the event; the second is concerned with its nature; and the third group concerns the message and the implications of the resurrection. Those three groups are quite different in kind. They therefore require entirely different methods.' This quotation from the introduction indicates the scope of this book, for its three parts deal with each of these subjects.

The author clearly has an extensive knowledge of the relevant literature, and has set out to present this in a way which is helpful for the non-specialist. The most valuable part, for many readers, will be the second, where he discusses the resurrection and history, eschatology, myth, cosmology, immortality and faith, respectively. On pp. 54ff., for example, can be found one of the clearest expositions of the reasons why so many theologians, particularly on the continent, are unwilling to regard the resurrection as an 'historical event'. In part, this is because we have not got 'the kind of historical evidence' needed to establish it 'as an event in history'. But how much of our history books would survive the test of strict, scientific proof? Chiefly, however, it is because 'had it been in history it would have been its final event', and because, although it is 'a real event, a real act of God', yet 'its reality is different in kind . . . from any reality in the phenomenal world'. So he concludes that the resurrection 'has obvious connexions with history. But the vessel of history is incapable of containing it'. Would it not be simpler, however, to say that the resurrection occurred in history, yet transcends it?

Half the book is devoted to the third part ('The Message of the Resurrec-

tion'), and represents a somewhat elusive mixture of a positive and comparatively conservative approach with one that is distinctly radical. This strange amalgam is far more obvious, however, in the first part ('Narratives of the Resurrection'), for here the positive and negative alternate in rapid succession, and wise remarks are liberally intermingled with assertions which seem to me quite untenable.

NORMAN ANDERSON

THE RECOVERY OF PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS. *J. C. O'Neill*. SPCK. viii + 87 pp. £2.60.

Professor O'Neill of Westminster College, Cambridge, is by no means an *enfant terrible*, rejoicing in spreading doubt and unbelief. He is a firmly-based Christian believer and teacher. But he seems to take particular pleasure in advancing the most daring hypotheses in connection with biblical scholarship. He has already written on Acts, and espoused the theory that its date should be put in the middle of the second century. Now he comes out with the theory that many famous verses in Galatians, including a whole section of the letter (5: 13-6: 10) are due, not to Paul, but to one or more 'glossators' who edited the original letter to remove obscurities, and to add to its edificatory and liturgical usefulness.

His book (which contains very valuable surveys of past scholarship on Galatians) reads more like a set of lecture notes than a continuous thesis. I profited from the detailed study which the book imposed on me, but I remain unconvinced. Nothing is easier than to expunge passages which to our minds read awkwardly. In text matters the old rule was 'prefer the harder reading'. O'Neill's is 'remove all difficult readings'. And one remembers that the most radical authorship test of modern times, Morton's 'computer test', leaves Galatians unscathed. If Galatians is not solidly Pauline, do we really know anything firmly about Paul? All facts must be faced, but I do not think O'Neill has brought many of his ideas over the line from fancy to fact.

RONALD LEICESTER

THEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS: VOL 8—FURTHER THEOLOGY OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE II. *Karl Rahner S.J.* Darton, Longman & Todd. 273 pp. £3.50.

Father Rahner gathers a further series of occasional papers together, and arranges them into an order of four sections which have little relation with one another. Where no sustained argument in the book is provided, reviewing must necessarily be somewhat sketchy. The First section deals with veneration of the saints, urging a loving commemoration in place of much actual neglect, in terms that offer little that is controversial until the last sentence when 'they entreat the God of the living' is slipped in, and one of the more important issues is thus simply affirmed and not debated. The second section, 'Positions and Callings in the Church' has a variety of topics; on childhood; on Catholic laity, and women's ministry; on the problems of the Catholic intellectual and writers; and on the difficulties of following the 'Evangelical Counsels', especially that of poverty, in the modern world. The third section is devoted to a theological and devotional exposition of the significance of the veneration of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Roman Catholic piety, while the fourth has a more general subject in 'The Future of the Religious Book'.

All the essays reflect the post-Vatican II outlook, as might well be expected,

coupled with Father Rahner's well known concern to re-express the Roman teaching in full loyalty to the magisterium. There is in view the impact of modern society and thinking, but it is not allowed to dent the edifice of doctrine, devotion and practice. Nevertheless, Rahner repeatedly recognises that these papers are tentative and unfinished, and it is evident from time to time that this is so, apart from issues which he himself mentions as left aside. He discusses the role of women in the church, but frankly puts aside any discussion of ordination, although there is reference to the diaconate. The discussion of the practice of the 'Evangelical Counsels' of poverty, chastity and obedience in the modern setting, concentrating on the problem of poverty in an affluent society, has a wider value than for Roman Catholics alone, and is worth pondering by many as to the proper style of Christian living today. The highly controversial issue of the veneration of the Sacred Heart, which has so much in its outward manifestations that is objectionable to non-Catholics, is first of all carefully expounded as the most meaningful term that sums up all the manifold ways of understanding God's dealings with us in Christ, and forms a unitary symbol of the divine love for man, and for man to God. Whether the total 'in Christ' can thus be theologically and devotionally equated to 'the heart of Jesus', especially as so doubtfully represented by the figures of Catholic devotion, is no doubt where the dialogue will join. Rahner's eloquent exposition here still remains unconvincing.

The final section and chapter on 'The Future of the Religious Book' is at least as tentative as anything before. Fr. Rahner thinks of the religious book as having to replace the Bible for practical purposes, in use by the religious public as well as by the more general use, because 'Scripture is indeed too remote, historically speaking, from *our* lives . . . the religious author should quietly spare the reader the long journey . . . from the letter of Scripture to the reality signified by it'. This sounds disheartening, just when, as from Vatican II, the Roman Catholic laity are being encouraged to find in the Bible a means of grace as well as of instruction, which has long been enjoyed by the Reformed Christian. But Rahner has hopes that the growing use of the religious book will bridge the gap between 'specialist' and 'layman'; church-people will be better theologians, even if more lacking in Biblical knowledge, it seems. At least, they will be in a more knowledgeable position as to what religious teachers are giving them, even if they are in a much weaker position for judging the teaching in terms of the Church's theological norm of Holy Scripture. Not a bright prospect.

The volume provides a clear insight into the way one of the leading theologians of the Roman Church would clarify the doctrine and devotion of that church in contemporary terms. If this were the only voice, it would be evident that in most of the issues here raised, the dialogue has only begun, if that. But this voice is both influential and representative of the Roman authority; therein lies the importance of this kind of 'Investigation'.

G. J. C. MARCHANT

REVELATION AND THEOLOGY: AN ANALYSIS OF THE BARTH-HARNACK CORRESPONDENCE OF 1923. *H. Martin Rumscheidt*. CUP Monograph Supplements to the Scottish Journal of Theology. 219 pp. £3.40.

The confrontation of Barth and Brunner over natural theology in the 1930's has become a landmark in twentieth century theology. Less well known,

but no less significant was the clash a decade earlier between Barth and Harnack. Adolf von Harnack, Professor of Church History at Berlin and doyen of early church historians, was the last great representative of positive liberal theology in the Ritschlian tradition. Barth was a former pupil, though even in his student days he had been more attracted to Wilhelm Herrmann at Marburg with his doctrine of the absolute transcendence of God. Since then there had been the First World War and Barth had written his commentary on Romans. The theological (but not the personal gap) between the two had yawned into a chasm.

After the War the two men met at a student conference at Aarau in 1920. Harnack returned frightened and scandalised. Then early in 1923 the journal *Christliche Welt* published an exchange of letters, three by Harnack and two by Barth. It was Harnack who opened fire with 'Fifteen Questions to the Despisers of Scientific Theology'. It was not so much a frontal attack on Barth's main positions as an attempt to probe weak points in the hope that once these were exploited the Barthian edifice would collapse. 'Is the religion of the Bible, or are its revelations, so completely a unity that in relation to faith, worship and life one may simply speak of "the Bible"? If this is not so, may one leave the determination of the content of the gospel solely to the individual's heuristic knowledge, to his subjective experience, or does one not rather need here historical knowledge and critical reflection?' (Q.1.). 'If God and the world (life in God and life in the world) are complete opposites, what is one to make of the close union, indeed the equivalence of the love of God and the love of one's fellow, which comprise the core of the gospel? How is this equivalence possible without the highest valuation of morality?' (Q.5.). 'If God is simply unlike anything said about him on the basis of the development of culture, on the basis of the knowledge gathered by culture, and on the basis of ethics, how can this culture and in the long run one's own existence be protected against atheism?' (Q.7.). Harnack's questions, Dr. Rumscheidt suggests, reflect not only a realisation of what Barth's thinking meant for the established theological position, but a feeling of not really understanding what that thinking wants to express.

Barth replied with fifteen answers, pointing out that what he was objecting to was not scientific theology as such but the forms that it had taken since Pietism and the Enlightenment. The object of theology is the one self-revelation of God. Theology is scientific in so far as it adheres 'to the recollection that its object was *once subject* and must become that again and again, which has nothing to do whatever with one's 'heuristic knowledge' and 'experience' in themselves' (A.1.). Private experience, like historical knowledge and critical reflection, can be helpful or irrelevant. But in the last analysis the Bible is understood 'through neither this nor that "function of the soul or mind" but by virtue of *that Spirit* which is identical with the content of the Bible and that by *faith*' (A.2.).

'The coordination of the love of God and the love of man which the gospel makes is precisely the most forceful reference to the fact that the relation between our "life in the world" and our "life in God" is one of "utter contrast" which is overcome only through the miracle of the eternal God himself. Or is there a stranger, more incomprehensible factor in this world, one more in need of God's revelation, than one's "fellow-man"? "Highest valuation of morality"—gladly, but do we *love* our neighbour? Are we capable of it? And if we do *not* love *him*, what about our love of *God*? What shows more

plainly than this "core" (not of the gospel, but of the law) that God does not give life unless he takes it first?" (A.5.).

'Statements about God derived from "the development of culture, from the knowledge gathered by culture and from ethics" may as expressions of special "experiences of God" (e.g. the experiences of the War) have their significance and value in comparison with the experiences of primitive peoples who do not yet know such great treasures. (Consider, for example, the significance and value of the statements of the War-theologians of all countries.) *These* statements can definitely not be considered as the "preaching of the gospel". Whether they *protect* culture and the individual "against atheism" or whether they *sow* atheism, since they come out of polytheism, would remain an *open* question in each individual case' (A.7.).

The succeeding correspondence elaborated and amplified the two positions, but, as the editor observes, the episode remained an encounter of different theological worlds. The present fascinating volume gives a translation of the text which occupies some twenty-five pages. The rest is taken up with a highly readable and informative introduction, a detailed analysis of the text and an evaluation of the correspondence. The above quotations may serve to give some token idea of the area of debate and the opposing stand-points.

The book is essential reading for students of Barth, Harnack and twentieth century theology. Yet it has an even wider significance. There is a sense in which theology has progressed very little in the intervening half century. Admittedly, Barth himself modified his position more than once, though the end result was not so much to abandon his views here as to state them in a wider context. The biblical technicians have done a good deal of work since then. But have we advanced at all in our understanding of God? How do we really think about God and the world? Barth once characterised the Bible in these words: 'Always there is the same seeing of the invisible, the same hearing of the inaudible, the same incomprehensible but no less undeniable epidemic of standing still and looking up. . . . We think of John the Baptist in Grünewald's painting of the crucifixion, with his strangely pointing hand. It is this hand which is in evidence in the Bible.' It is here that we must begin again.

COLIN BROWN

ORTHODOXY, ROMAN CATHOLICISM AND ANGLICANISM.
Methodios Fouyas. OUP. 280 pp. £4.50.

Part One consists of chapters on the One Undivided Christian Church, the Orthodox and Catholic Church, East and West. How the Churches View One-Another, and Anglican Orders. Part Two deals with the Church, and the Sacraments, comparing the teaching of the three churches. Part Three describes the present relations between the three communions, and the obstacles in the way of their reunion. The suggested Anglican-Orthodox Terms of Intercommunion (1921) are reprinted in an appendix. It is an ambitious book, covering such a vast field of history, doctrine and ecumenical relations, but it is a thoroughly worthwhile exercise, because too often the churches are treated too much in isolation. A large bibliography is supplied, and a separate one on Anglican orders.

The author is on the Inter-Orthodox Theological Commission for Dialogue with the Anglican Communion, so his book is most useful, as it sets out the Orthodox doctrinal position, which is otherwise not easy to locate, except

in Greek (the works of Ch. Androustos are not yet translated into English). Being able to see how the Orthodox view the differences between their own teaching and that of the Roman Catholics and ourselves is fascinating. There is still a slight tendency to see the teaching of the Church of England through the eyes of such apologists as Charles Gore, but his understanding is generally fairly comprehensive. Readers of *The Churchman* may feel that the evangelical viewpoint on the Thirty Nine Articles (pp. 30-3) and Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition (pp. 121-7) is not fully appreciated, or represented. Every theological library should have a copy of this book.

ALAN FAIRHURST

CONSCIENCE VERSUS LAW: REFLECTIONS ON THE EVOLUTION OF NATURAL LAW. *Jeremiah Newman*. Talbot Press (Dublin). 193 pp. £0.90.

This is a welcome attempt to reexamine an important ethical and legal concept and a hundred of its pages gives an historical survey from Pythagoras to contemporary jurists and moralists. Chapter five, in this survey, 'Absolutism and the Age of Reason' would have been improved if, instead of saddling the Reformation and the Puritans with the responsibility of initiating a process leading to legal positivism, and the rule of the totalitarian state, there had been some awareness of the European development from such writers as Marsilius of Padua, well before the Reformation, which could enable his most Catholic Majesty Louis XIV to proclaim 'L'etat, c'est moi' (quoted, in fact by the author) just as much as the Divine Right of the English Caroline kings. More confusion comes about by accusing Puritan doctrines of divine sovereignty (only Puritan?) and private interpretation of Scripture, as tending to identify state law with God's law; where *did* Oliver Cromwell come from, then?!

The later chapters raise a wide variety of contemporary issues and it is hardly surprising that an Irish Roman Catholic professor at Maynooth should angle his 'reflections' towards situation ethics in the Roman Catholic Church, or questions of divorce and public morals and law making in Eire. But student protest, technological society, anarchism, and authority, revolution and gradualism, anthropology and economics, are the wider terms in which natural law is argued both for its permanent validity and also its progressive development in being applied in changing experiences. What is not quite so clear is the place of conscience in this, other than as a polarised stance of mistaken individualism. I could not trace whether Dr. Newman might accept that some informed consciences might understand natural law, so as rightly to criticise both some forms of state legislation and some aspects of Roman Catholic morality; I think the only informed consciences to whom this would be permitted would be the Roman Catholic teaching authority. Incidentally, Descartes did not die but was born in 1596 (p. 86).

G. J. C. MARCHANT

CHRISTIAN ETHICS. *Otto A. Piper*. Nelson. 392 pp. £5.25.

In this book Dr. Piper has set himself the task of making a sweeping survey of man's place and calling in God's world, somewhat after the wide-ranging style of a Systematic Theology. The treatment falls into five parts: *Prolegomena* (largely a conducted tour of successive ethical schools), *Foundations* (the given conditions within which we live), *The Ethical Action* (in which the

first chapter is significantly entitled 'Faith'—for the book takes its title *Christian Ethics* seriously, as rooted in the gospel of redemption), *The Moral Order* (viewed first in general terms—of which a forbidding example is indicated in the heading 'The Dimensionality of Existence'—but proceeding eventually to the clearer concept of the Covenant), and finally the longest section, *Spheres of Ethical Life* (such as the neighbour, the body politic, civilisation, the church; even the biological order).

If the breadth of this is its strength, it is also to some extent its weakness. This is particularly evident in the first section, where one is reminded of the ways of school textbooks by the summary treatment of philosophers and systems of thought, name succeeding name furnished with little more than dates of birth and death and a bare sentence or two of comment. Although the author soon leaves this excessively 'potted' style behind as the book goes on, there is still no time for the thorough treatment of any one subject. The complex question of art and obscenity, for example, is given a single paragraph. War receives just over two pages. This is fair enough, for the work is designedly panoramic, and there is a place for such an approach; but the reader could be disappointed if he were unaware of the author's aim.

What is perhaps a more serious drawback, in a Christian study, is the lack of any close examination of the scriptures that bear on the ethical areas discussed. This again is no accident: the author's preface points out the danger of constructing mosaics of Bible passages to prove almost any point one may fancy. But the proper answer to improper exegesis is surely accurate exegesis, not a retreat into generalisations.

Accepted on its own terms, this book has plenty of wisdom to offer, with its balanced and basically orthodox view of God's world and will, and its insistence on judging the present in the light of the consummation. It might have been less misleading, however, if the whole book not merely its first section, had been entitled 'Prolegomena to Christian Ethics'.

DEREK KIDNER

EARLY CHURCH HISTORY: THE ROMAN EMPIRE AS THE SETTING OF PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY. Edited by S. Benko and J. O'Rourke. Oliphants. 294 pp. £3.

That Christianity is a historical religion is an obvious but often neglected fact. Thanks, however, to newly discovered manuscripts, new archaeological finds and generations of dedicated scholars, we now know a great deal about the historical background of our Faith. This work is the literary expression of a group of American scholars, most of whom teach in Philadelphia, who in 1968 set themselves the task of researching in depth one particular period of history. They chose the period 31 BC-AD 138 not only because it forms the historical setting of Christianity, but also because it is a definite period in Roman history between the accession of Octavius Augustus and the death of Hadrian.

The volume comprising twelve papers deliberately limits itself to strictly historical problems. The result is a well documented, learned and helpful book for students of early Church History. We are furnished with all kinds of ordinary and interesting facts concerning the laws of the period—marriage customs, education and other social elements—as well as insights into the religious and political climate of the time. However, I must issue two caveats. The deliberate restriction of attention to historical themes is most

frustrating when, sometimes, the material is almost begging for a theological commentary. Furthermore there are too many contributors with the result that some essays are far too short. Even so, we have here a useful tool which, because it takes us into the homes, schools and churches of people long ago, it is a welcome change from the usual run of 'dry as dust' Church History books!

GEORGE CAREY

CULTURE AND SOCIETY IN RENAISSANCE ITALY, 1420-1540.

Peter Burke. Batsford. 342 pp. £4.50.

Dr. Burke defines the Italian Renaissance as a cluster of great achievements in art and literature, a creative epoch in the arts; and he goes on: 'These clusters are collective, that is, social facts, and they seem to demand a social explanation.' His book sets out to provide some of the guide lines for such an explanation.

This is an important book, not only for students of the Italian Renaissance but for a much wider public. For the person interested generally in new trends of historical scholarship, here is an historian who has adopted much of the approach (and some of the jargon) of the sociologist in trying to assess the reasons for the great fifteenth century cultural outbreak in Italy; while for both the specialist in the Italian Renaissance and for all students of the history of art and ideas, his findings are significant. He analyses in sociological terms some 600 Italian artists and an unspecified but clearly large number of patrons and clients. His main conclusion is that, since in general 'social forces cannot produce great artists but can frustrate them', the forces helping to create a substantial urbanised and industrial middle class in Italy were precisely those which provided the least measure of frustration to potential artists. The class was not of course completely unified—there were 'two cultures', 'a visual group recruited from artisans and a literary group recruited from the upper classes' (if there is one criticism of this splendid study, it must be that Dr. Burke underestimates the significance of architecture in the Renaissance). Similarly he demonstrates that patrons and clients came from a very wide range of social groupings, from artisans and shopkeepers upwards, lay and cleric, corporate and individual, rich and (relatively) poor, although he is not so clear as to what special factors made for such a major outburst of patronage at this particular time. He notes a change midway through his period—when investment became important, the commercialisation and standardisation of art, although the change did not mean the death of the earlier system of more personalised art. Having established his milieu, Dr. Burke then goes on to analyse the forms the art of the period took, and how these conformed to contemporary social values and religious ideals. And this leads him in the end to discuss the social and economic background against which these artists and patrons acted.

No one who reads this book will agree with all of it (his 'syndromes' on p. 204 are just a little too contrived to be convincing to me); but no one can read it, clearly argued, pleasantly presented, well illustrated, without being informed and stimulated. Only one criticism of the format—the notes are not just references; they contain much important material which needs to be read against the text. It is infuriating to have to read with one finger in a page at the end of the book and constantly to turn over to see this additional material. If only publishers would realise that the practice of putting notes

at the end of the book does not gain them one single extra purchase, saves them little enough in production costs and alienates their readers.

ALAN ROGERS

THE THIRTY YEARS WAR. *J. V. Polisensky*. Batsford. 305 pp. £3.80.

Politics and religion were inextricably interwoven in the series of European conflicts which, beginning inauspiciously in 1618 with a revolt in Bohemia, finally caught up nearly all of Europe before the 1648 Peace of Westphalia. The Professor of Universal History at the Charles University of Prague begins with a comprehensive survey of the world at the turn of the century, and right at the outset makes clear that he is writing 'from an openly Marxist position'. The reader who comes to terms with what seems to be an oddly circumscribed approach to seventeenth century history will nevertheless find here a mine of information, especially about the Bohemian background, where Polisensky's keen native eye has led to the presentation of much rare archival material. While Habsburg, Imperial, Dutch, Danish, Swedish, French and other protagonists are adequately treated in their political aspects, the ecclesiastical and religious dimension, particularly the continuing Counter Reformation, is given nothing like its proper significance.

Between a solid rather than exciting text and a curiously selective index are thirty pages of bibliographical notes, and it is a pleasure to discover comprehensive details and comments which are themselves worth the price of the volume. Two helpful maps lessen the complexities of the period, and an appendix gives the most important variants of Central European place names. Despite its selfimposed limitation, this book (English translation by Dr. Robert Evans of Oxford) will be indispensable for future study of the subject.

J. D. DOUGLAS

THE ELABORATE FUNERAL. *Gavin Reid*. Lutterworth. 191 pp. £1.95.

With such a title a book can scarcely avoid being macabre; and Gavin Reid makes no attempt to take avoiding action. He insists that the human species is already busy—feverishly busy—arranging its own elaborate funeral and he cites numerous pundits and reports to substantiate his view. The catena of quotations makes the book a useful introduction to a number of fields of current inquiry and should provide ready ammunition for the preacher wishing to relate his utterances to the world in which his hearers live.

Gavin Reid discusses ecology, mass media, the deterrent, sex and pop. He finds little ground for optimism in any of these fields. 'The Christian contribution in a dying world is to attend to the stricken.' Even if the Christian finds little to encourage him he must go on doing the best he can in the fight against evil; he has the assurance that the Second Coming will solve problems more effectively than any legislative measures.

Among the definite suggestions Gavin Reid advances are some kind of statutory family limitation to solve the problem of the population explosion, and a statutory limitation of television transmission hours to solve the problem of our becoming television-conditioned. I think he is also advocating—on page 163—the use of illegal means to thwart the efforts of town-planners. It should be clear that there is enough in *The Elaborate Funeral*

to keep a parish discussion group going on far from pietistic lines for a considerable time.

JOHN C. KING

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND 1815-1948: A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY. Edited by R. P. Flindall. SPCK. 497 pp. £5.

As a work of reference this book will prove useful to teachers and students of the period. The price will make it more attractive to libraries than individuals, but anyone with a special interest in the subject, and some without, will find it valuable. The excerpts include sections of important parliamentary statutes, from the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts (1828) to the 1944 Education Act, and from the sermons or writings of the important figures of the period, from Keble's Assize Sermon to Archbishop Fisher's Cambridge sermon. The legal preoccupation of the Victorian church is reflected in the contents—up to 1914 about half the material is made up of judgments and statutes. The general format is a short introductory note, then the text of the document, followed by notes to which the text gives rise. Thus, the Gorham judgment is introduced in a ten line note, the judgment is given in three pages, and notes follow, two of them being biographical on Gorham and Jenner Fust. Not everyone will agree with the selection or with some of the editor's judgments, but the breadth of knowledge displayed in the notes is impressive, and the book fills an important gap. On page 10 line 1 'had' should read 'have'. Rosebery is wrongly spelt Rosebury on page 478.

T. E. YATES

THE RENEWAL AND UNITY OF THE CHURCH IN ENGLAND: SOME THOUGHTS OF AN EVANGELICAL. John Wenham. SPCK. 69 pp. £0.80.

John Wenham is utilising his position as Warden of Latimer House, Oxford, to produce some useful and challenging books. He has a crisp, antithetical style, almost Gibbonesque at times. He is well informed, and passionately devoted to the causes which engage his loyalty. This book represents his thinking about Christian unity in the years preceding, and the months following, the Anglican-Methodist *débauche*.

Beginning with his personal experiences at the Nottingham Conference of 1964 he goes on to define the aim that should animate Christians in their efforts for unity—this he describes as 'the glory of God through the evangelisation of the world'. The first requisite for this he sees as an agreement on 'the ideological question', an agreement, that is, on doctrine. Here he runs parallel to the ideas in *Growing into Union*. He pleads with liberals to take the views of conservatives *seriously*, and to answer, if they can, the questions conservatives address to them.

He then goes on to outline his picture of the local church as it ought to be—built around baptism, the Lord's Supper, the teaching of the Word, prayer and witness. A wide variety of liturgical custom is envisaged within this basic framework. The local churches, he thinks, should and must be linked together, although he has more than a hankering after *Independency*. Although he puts arguments for independency only to knock them down, he seems to enjoy putting them up more than pulling them down! In any case his 'connectionalism' is a very loose one.

He then shows how 'the hammer of God is knocking down all our laborious efforts at contrived schemes of union (giving some frank, but true comments

on the Methodist negotiations) and concludes by suggesting an all-church commission to supervise a five year nationwide scheme of study and prayer, to prepare for real advance round about 1980. So, he thinks, the 'Nottingham Madness' might have some reason in it after all.

I agree with the author in putting much hope on local initiative. I moved at the York Synod an amendment to the motion to reissue the 1968 Anglican Methodist Scheme suggesting that the Church should rely on local initiatives for five years. This was described as 'the counsel of Ahithophel' but the churches would have been saved much travail had it been accepted.

On two points I find it hard to follow John Wenham. One is his firm devotion to an 'infallible' view of Scripture. I write as one who has repeatedly tried to set limits to rationalistic criticism, but I think if we try to prove too much we cannot retain credibility for the rest. The other is his belief that independent, free roaming Christians can be 'placated' into becoming orthodox, conforming church members. Some will make the transition with the passing of the years, but I fear that there will always be the 'church-type' and the 'sect-type'. Wenham has seen so much of the latter, that he finds it hard to do justice to the former.

RONALD LEICESTER

CONTEMPLATION IN A WORLD OF ACTION. *Thomas Merton*. George Allen & Unwin. 384 pp. £5.50.

I am not familiar with Thomas Merton's writings. I turned to this book, therefore, with an admixture of reserve and expectation—of expectation because we shall surely utterly perish unless we can soon find the secret of contemplation in this world of action, of reserve because it is difficult to see how a monk can meaningfully express himself in a world of action, from which by his vows he is excluded. My reserve soon evaporated in the atmosphere of holy worldliness which this remarkable man generates. The book comprises a series of essays originating from the period immediately before his death and they almost all address themselves not initially to the world of action but to the contemplative order to which he gave his life. The remarkable thing about them is, in view of their provenance, that they will speak as clearly to those of us who are outside the monastic world as to those who are in it. Like a great conductor he imposes his authority not only on the orchestra in front of him but on the auditorium behind him. The publishers are to be congratulated on discerning that these essays would command a wider audience than the one to which they were originally addressed. For example, take those words from the essay 'Vocation and Modern Thought': 'It is the conviction that we have to confront all problems and definitely settle them that leaves young monks disturbed and unhappy about the failures of others. But a true and mature identity does not consist in the ability to give a final solution to everything—as if the 'mature person' were one for whom there were no longer any mysteries or any scandals. We discover our identity when we accept our place and our way in the midst of persons and things, in a historical situation, that we do not have to completely understand' (pp. 49f). 'Young monks' only? No indeed. This is a message for old men and maidens, for philosophers and tycoons, for undergraduates and clergymen. Or take this passage from 'The Identity Crisis': 'To sum it all up in one word, our postulants come to us from a society in which man is alienated, in which he is systematically deprived of a serious identity, in which he cannot believe in his dignity, in which he has good

reason to be profoundly sceptical of everything and everyone, and in which he tends to renounce all hope of experiencing himself as real and genuinely worth while. It is a society in which he has not much left but to resign himself with a sigh to passivity with a can of beer in front of the TV' (p. 71).

The eyes of Sartre, Camus and Kierkegaard, the high priests of modern culture, peer in at us between these lines, prisoners as we are in our glossy, comfortable, temperature-controlled, clinical prison houses. The Trappist monk is as much at home with his TV set and can of beer as the rest of us are. So when he asks 'Is the world a problem?', he does not answer in terms of flesh and spirit, much less in terms of world and monastery, but penetrates to the real issue in the classic Johannine manner. 'The world as pure object is something that is not there. It is not a reality outside us for which we exist. It is not a firm and absolute objective structure which has to be accepted on its own inexorable terms. The world has in fact no terms of its own. It dictates no terms to man. We and our world interpenetrate' (p. 154). I end with words from the essay which provides the title *Contemplation in a World of Action*, which ought to be written over every modern activist's door for him to read when he goes out and when he comes in: 'He who attempts to act and do things for others or for the world without deepening his own self-understanding, freedom, integrity and capacity to love, will not have anything to give others. He will communicate to them nothing but the contagion of his own obsessions, his aggressiveness, his ego-centred ambitions, his delusions about ends and means, his doctrinaire prejudices and ideas' (p. 164). My expectations have not been entirely fulfilled but my reservations have been utterly banished. It does not tell us much about contemplation—we shall have to look elsewhere in Thomas Merton's works for that—but it tells us a great deal about the world of action.

STUART LIVERPOOL

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND YOU: A STUDY-GUIDE TO THE SPIRIT-FILLED LIFE. *Dennis and Rita Bennett.* Coverdale House Publishers. 224 pp. £0.50.

This is one of the scores of paperbacks which have come out of the Pentecostal movement in recent years. It is longer than many and more pretentious, as its sub-title indicates. The general run of its teaching is predictable. Sixty-two pages are devoted to the baptism of the Spirit, regarded as a necessary second experience, following on the new birth. A further ninety pages are given up to an exposition of the gifts of the Spirit, as listed in 1 Cor. 12.

The treatment of Scripture is uncritical and rather naive and leads to (unintentional) distortion and misrepresentation. For instance, can one really treat our Lord's conception by the Holy Spirit as equivalent to the new birth of the Christian and the descent of the Holy Spirit at his baptism as equivalent to the believer's baptism in the Holy Spirit? Granted that he lived a hidden life till his public ministry began, can we accept the implication that he was somehow spiritually incomplete till then?

The fact is that the book starts from a certain type of Christian experience and proceeds to read this back into Scripture as if it were the norm. We don't have to deny the reality or authenticity of the experience in order to question the validity of this attempt at systematisation. The book reminds one very much of the popular evangelical 'guides' to the Christian life on which some of us were brought up. They served well for a while, but in the

end their inaccurate and careless handling of Scripture made them a danger for the developing young Christian.

W. N. READ

PRAYER AND MEDITATION: THEIR NATURE AND PRACTICE. *F. C. Happold.* Penguin. 381 pp. £0.50.

This is the third volume of a trilogy by Mr. Happold; the whole work is conceived of as a contribution to our understanding of the spiritual elements within ourselves and within the universe. Judged by any standard it is a remarkable achievement on the part of one who has lived a busy professional life as headmaster of a school. He has an encyclopaedic knowledge of the great masters of the spiritual life, not only within the Christian religion but outside it. Furthermore, as one might expect from his background, he is 'apt to teach' and has a thoroughly practical approach to the problems of those of us who are cumbered about with much business, with little enough time for the inner realities. The present book is divided almost equally into two sections. The first section is called 'The Study', comprising a review of the main Christian and non-Christian traditions of prayer. I particularly value his strong sense of our interdependence within a spiritual universe, so refreshingly different from the dreary scientific materialism in which many of us were brought up. 'Thou canst not stir a flower, without troubling a star.' One obvious question arises, of course, from any study which ranges over Christian, Hindu, Buddhist and Islamic spirituality and it is this—is the distinctive spirituality that flows from the Bible compatible with a spirituality that flows from theologies fundamentally alien to the Bible? or, to put it another way, can we practice certain techniques of prayer without succumbing to the theology that is implied by them? Mr. Happold does not answer the question—why should he?—but he acknowledges it obliquely when he says that 'mysticism does not occupy in Hebrew religion quite the place it occupies in all other higher religions'.

The second section is a 'manual of devotion', a 'catholic' collection of prayers, invocations and meditations gathered from various sources and including many from the author's own hand. They could greatly enrich our personal and corporate devotions.

STUART LIVERPOOL

THE PASTOR AND HIS MINISTRY. *Owen Brandon.* SPCK. 116 pp. £1.50.

This is not an easy book to review. In his preface the author mentions that two people who read the book in typescript remarked on the fact that it treats of many subjects in a small compass. At the same time, as one would expect from Mr. Brandon, it approaches these many subjects from one angle only: to quote the preface again, it 'offers notes on the psychological approach to the work of the ministry'. Those readers who are used to the fairly all-round approach to the subject offered by other volumes in the same valuable series may be somewhat disappointed to find the treatment by no means so full.

Having said this we turn to another part of the preface to find the real value of the book. The author is concerned to show what role there still is for the man of God who would be a pastor to his twentieth century contemporaries. Each chapter (on the minister as servant, interpreter, learner, teacher, guide, theologian, priest, pastor, professional) sets out ways in

which the traditional Christian ministry still has its relevance today, and offers valuable material for those engaged in pastoral ministry.

The chapters are helpfully illustrated from the author's own pastoral experience, and the notes and suggestions for further study are well documented. It is interesting that Mr. Brandon sees his pastoral work entirely in relation to individuals. In days when house groups are a developing aspect of church life it would be helpful to have a chapter on group dynamics and the pastor's relation to various groups (not least his PCC!) as well as to the flock as a whole!

DAVID WHEATON

EVANGELISM: THE COUNTER REVOLUTION. *Lewis A. Drummond.* Marshall, Morgan and Scott. 192 pp. £0.90.

Dr. Lewis Drummond is a Southern Baptist minister, who has had fifteen years' experience in the Christian pastorate in America and for the last few years has been lecturing in evangelism at Spurgeon's College. The basic principles underlying his eloquent appeal to evangelism in this book are (1) that, though mission is essentially God's, he has ordained the local church as his chief agent in fulfilling it. (2) That in order to fulfil its mission the church must be ready to change. The revolution in society must be matched by a revolution in the church. (3) That the pastor as 'pastor-evangelist' holds the key to successful mission, for he must initiate the evangelistic enterprise in the local church and train the people. (4) That the total mobilisation of the lay people is needed, with an imaginative comprehensive programme of Christian education to equip them for their task, which is the 'counter revolution' for which Dr. Drummond calls.

In addition to an exposition of these principles Dr. Drummond surveys the modern world and its trends, provides a theology of evangelism and the evangel, defends the place of evangelistic preaching and evangelistic services, lists some of the major obstacles to effective evangelism today, and concludes with a summons to holiness and the fullness of the Spirit. This readable book (whose conclusions happily coincide with the findings of the Strategy for Evangelism conference at Morecambe last May) will challenge every Christian reader to take his evangelistic responsibility more seriously and could persuade many a pastor to turn the local church inside out, replacing 'come-structures' by 'go-structures'.

JOHN STOTT