

# Book Reviews

## **THE HOLY BIBLE—NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION**

Reference Edition with Concordance and maps

Hodder & Stoughton 1986 1328 pp. + maps Cased, brown £12.95

The New International Version has by now established itself as both a study and devotional translation. In view of this, this edition is particularly welcome. According to the introduction, it has involved over ten years in its preparation and involved more than 40 individuals and half a dozen computers.

The outcome of this labour has led to a very pleasing volume. It is pleasing to handle and well bound with a clear type face. I took the opportunity to compare it with the similar edition of the R.S.V. Many of the cross references are the same, but on the whole there are many more in the N.I.V. An obvious example is Genesis 1 v. 1 where there are 44 references against 8 in the R.S.V. However, the method is slightly different as heavy type is used to refer to key references in order to save space by not repeating verses which are parallel in theme and thought. A further benefit is found giving the parallel passages under the headings, which have appeared in previous editions. In all there are 80,000 references chosen thematically.

The concordance has reduced the 250,000 references of the complete volume to 35,000 essential references in 174 pages compared with 154 smaller pages in the R.S.V. The R.S.V. despite being smaller in the size of the page is, however, that much clearer in type face as it is darker in print. Furthermore it is smaller in format. The N.I.V. benefits from maps that are more distinct and colourful.

It is hoped that we are entering an age when biblical passages are being learnt again. Here is a volume which will assist those who do so both with the cross references and the concordance and at the price is well worthwhile having.

Stamford, Lincolnshire

JOHN R. BOURNON

## **THE CHILDREN'S BIBLE Mary Batchelor**

Illustrated by John Hayson

Lion Publishing for W.H. Smith 1985 416 pp. £5.95

ISBN 0 74591009 2

Many children's books re-tell Bible stories. This is one of the best for its factual, sensitive, and imaginative approach. The stories are allowed to speak for themselves in a panorama of scripture from Genesis to Revelation—237 from the Old Testament and 128 from the New Testament, one for each day of the year, and each beautifully and imaginatively illustrated by John Hayson. They have been chosen as the 'most exciting stories and the best loved ones, the aim being to inform and delight'. Although told simply, from

them may be learned the nature of God and his revelation in Jesus Christ, the heights and depths of human nature, and the meaning and purpose of life. Every story is complete in itself, with no distortion of fact or fanciful imagination. Misinterpretations are avoided; nor are theological or historical questions raised. The headings of the stories are apposite and clear. Thus, Laban becomes, 'The trickster tricked'; Gideon's slaughter is 'A whisper in the night'; Absalom's end, 'Death in the woods'; John the Baptist's beheading, 'Reward for a dancing girl'; Judas, 'The enemy inside'. Graphic descriptions, such as Stephen's enemies snarling in rage, and Saul battering on doors of Christian homes make the stories live. Moral terms are made simple, like 'repentance,' which is to 'Show you are sorry.' Each of the Ten Commandments is splendidly explained. Thus, coveting is, 'To want something that belongs to someone else,' and adultery is 'To steal someone else's husband or wife.' Mary Batchelor's remarkable sensitivity and Christian conviction is evident in the compassion she shows towards the crucifixion of Jesus which is told with extreme feeling. All which is story telling par excellence, clear, uncomplicated, concise, superlative.

'The Children's Bible' is a good family book for reading at bedtime or before leaving for school. It could be useful for adult new Christians and those coming into the church from other faiths who desire a knowledge of the Bible. Its print is clear and attractive, making easier reading for the aged or for those with weak eyesight. It is of sufficient merit for classroom instruction. In a multi-racial school where there are Muslim children familiar with Old Testament characters and events from the Khoran, some of these stories could be read in school assembly without giving offence. A copy of the book should be in every school library. Above all, the simplest and the most advanced Christians would have their faith increased by using it in private meditation. Ministers would find in it topics for sermons.

Produced exclusively for W.H. Smith by the Lion Publishing Company, it must not be confused with 'The Lion Edition Children's Bible' by Pat Alexander which has less stories. But it has the same quality of production the public expects from this celebrated company. Your reviewer commends it heartily as of outstanding merit.

5 Green Lane, Clapham, Bedford

ARTHUR BENNETT

**WISDOM TO LIVE BY: An Introduction to the Old Testament's  
Wisdom Books of Proverbs, Job and Ecclesiastes  
Derek Kidner**

Inter Varsity Press 1985 175 pp. £4.95

ISBN 0 85110 756 9

Mr Kidner's earlier books on Proverbs and Ecclesiastes have deservedly marked him out as an Old Testament scholar with a rare and sensitive insight into the Wisdom Literature. His position is further enhanced by the present work. It goes without saying that this book is a model of succinctness and of finding the right word and phrase for the right place. This is true throughout but is specially marked in chapters 3, 5 and 7 where he sets out to summarise specialist opinion on the three books in turn. The survey of academic opinion on Job could hardly be bettered. Chapters 2, 4 and 6 review the contents of

the books themselves: Proverbs under the title 'A Life well managed', Job, 'A World well managed?' and Ecclesiastes, 'A Life worth living?'. It is to be noted, therefore, that in each case the reader is introduced to the books themselves before being asked to consider specialist questions and suggestions. This is a true didactic method, giving priority to evidence over problems. The book opens with an introductory chapter, 'A Meeting of Minds', which attempts to place the concept and function of Wisdom in the Old Testament scheme of things: 'Where the bulk of the Old Testament calls us simply to obey and believe, this part ... summons us to think hard as well as humbly, to keep our eyes open, to use our conscience and our common sense, and not to shirk the most disturbing questions.' And, following the paired chapters on each book in turn, a final chapter, 'Voices in Counterpoint' (the musician is never far away) integrates and relates them: they are like three houses. Proverbs is the seven-pillared house of Wisdom or ('better still' says Mr Kidner) the gracious, well-stocked home of the accomplished wife; Job is a house in ruins, struck at its four corners by a great wind from the desert; Ecclesiastes, true to itself, is a great house in the grip of slow decay (cf. 12:3,4). Here in turn is the demand for the good management of life, the enigma of its calamities, and its 'tantalizing hollowness and brevity'. Each is given its full expression, as if there was nothing else to say—this (page 123) is the Old Testament's characteristic method, 'to give itself wholly to one thing at a time ... leaving any resulting imbalance to be corrected in due course by an equally massive counterweight.' But, returning to the musical metaphor, Proverbs is 'like the *canto Fermo* ... round which the other voices ... weave their patterns and produce their concords and calculated dissonances.' This marvellous book concludes with three appendices on, respectively, international wisdom, Ecclesiasticus and the Wisdom of Solomon.

43 Branksome Dene, Westbourne, Bournemouth

ALEC MOTYER

**NUMBERS: Word Biblical Commentary 5 Philip J. Budd**

Word Books 1984 409 pp. \$19.95

ISBN 0 8499 0204 5

Can devotion to the literary and documentary analysis of an Old Testament book ever be productive of a commentary which enlivens that book as a veritable and credible abiding Word of God for His Church on earth? The fact of the matter is that if Dr. Budd cannot do it, no one can. All who know him stand in awe not only of his enormous, patient and acute scholarship but also of his devout love for Scripture as God's Word and his delight in every part and portion of it. Scholarship shines in every line of his commentary but at the end it remains unclear why Numbers should be part of Holy Scripture. Each time I have been asked to review a volume of the World Series, I have found it necessary to make the same sort of criticism of the 'Explanation' sections: the over-all schema of the series is now well-known: notes, form/structure/setting, then comment and explanation offering 'a clear exposition of the passage's meaning and its relevance to the ongoing biblical revelation.' I have never found this objective to be fulfilled and, with great sadness, I find the same to be true of the present commentary. Can it be the fault of the briefing given by the general editors? Take the case of the 'fiery

serpent' episode: by way of 'explanation' we are told that it is essentially to be ascribed to the Yahwist, corresponds to 11:1-3 as a disaffection-story, offers the suspicion of an Elohist base to the story, may be a cultic etiology of Nehushtan, offering an assurance that Moses did not institute a snake cult, and 'provided very suitable filler material for the long journey round Edom.'

Anyone who needs to know what is the specialist state of affairs regarding the literary history and pre-history of Numbers could not find a better, fuller more succinct and independent-minded guide than this volume and its respected author; anyone who wishes to contest the validity of a literary and documentary approach to Numbers must take this work of painstaking scholarship into account—and will find it a tough opponent. But, sadly, we will have to go elsewhere to learn what is the testimony of Numbers as part of canonical Scripture.

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ALEC MOTYER

### **THE OLD TESTAMENT PSEUDEPIGRAPHIA**

Vol. 2 edited by **James H. Charlesworth**

Darton, Longman & Todd 1985 1006 pp. £30.00

ISBN 0 232 51627 8

The first volume of this massive work appeared in 1983 and was reviewed (by the present reviewer) in the last issue of *Churchman* for 1984 (98:4). Now we have the second and concluding volume. Together they fill 2,000 pages of large octavo and small print. They are stoutly bound and extensively indexed.

Since the first volume appeared, a rival work on a smaller scale has appeared, *The Apocryphal Old Testament* (Clarendon Press, 1984), edited by H.F.D. Sparks. Despite its title, this work too is designed to replace the second and not the first part of R.H. Charles's *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English*, which has held the field since 1913. Indeed, editions of individual texts in this field have also been appearing quite frequently, but Charlesworth and Sparks are distinguished by their comprehensiveness, and by the fact that they do not aim to include the original, but simply an annotated English translation. Students will find it useful to consult both editions, even though Charlesworth's is the fuller.

The best known items in this second volume are the Letter of Aristeas, 3 and 4 Maccabees, the Prayer of Manasses (included in the English Apocrypha) and the Book of Jubilees. It is especially useful to have a fresh translation of Jubilees from the Ethiopic, though sad that many of the fragments of the Hebrew original from Qumran were still unavailable (from no fault of his own) to the translator.

Other items which readers will be glad to have in this more easily accessible form are the Ascension of Isaiah, Joseph and Asenath, the Biblical Antiquities of pseudo-Philo, and the tantalizing fragments of a wide range of Hellenistic Jewish writers in prose and verse which have been preserved for us in the quotations made by an interested pagan scholar of the first century B.C., Alexander Polyhistor. Nor should one overlook the remarkable fragments of Aristobulus, a forerunner of the philosophical Jew Philo two centuries before his time.

Latimer House, Oxford

ROGER BECKWITH

**ROMANS CHAPTER 1: THE GOSPEL OF GOD** D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones  
Banner of Truth, Edinburgh 1985 394 pp. £9.50 hb. ISBN 0 85151 467 7

After a gap of some years, the famous series of sermons on Romans has now at last received its seventh volume—covering the first chapter of the epistle. It is important, not least because it is in these 29 sermons that Dr Lloyd-Jones addresses himself to the message of the epistle as a whole, and guides us to his treatment of the rest.

As with the rest of the series, the book takes us verse by verse through the chapter, giving a detailed exposition of the text and an equally detailed application of it to contemporary pastoral needs. The Doctor's great strength was that he understood how Scripture speaks to the heart, and unravels the condition of men, and these sermons are sheer delight for those who share that vision, and who long to see it recovered in the Church today. Of course, the Doctor had his prejudices, and they are not concealed in these pages. But it would be foolish of any reader to allow them to detract from the great spiritual benefit which these sermons will bring to those who read them in the right spirit.

The Doctor had a deep understanding of the inner logic of the epistle, and he brings this out in the introductory sermons. He introduces us in a compelling way to the apostle Paul, and brings out both his deep sense of Christian doctrine and his pastoral concern for the young Roman Church. Always, he brings us back to the centrality of the Person and Work of Christ, both in the epistle and in our own lives as believers. This is the true greatness of the message which these pages contain, and it is for that reason that the volume must be warmly commended to all pastors and teachers. We cannot copy or repeat the Doctor's words, but we can share his faith, and capture his vision of Christ for the needs of the Church today. This book is one which points up that faith, and which will inspire every true preacher of the Word of God to seek Christ, and to seek to make him known.

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GERALD BRAY

**THE BOOKS AND THE PARCHMENTS** F.F. Bruce

Pickering and Inglis 1984 4th edn. 298 pp. £7.95

ISBN 0 7208 05724

**THE PAULINE CIRCLE** F.F. Bruce

Paternoster, Exeter 1988 100 pp. £2.95

ISBN 0 85364 397 0

F.F.B. continues to write with his usual weighty erudition and light touch. *The Books and the Parchments* is a fourth and enlarged edition of the book first published in 1950. It is a mine of sound learning, mostly concerning the transmission of the Bible. It covers a tremendous range—from the origin of the alphabet to the latest English translations. You can learn here how dog Toby got his name, you can see what the Lord's Prayer looks like in Gothic, you can get an introduction to the targumim. It is only a pity that it was revised just too late to take account of Roger Beckwith's *The Canon of the Old Testament in the New Testament Church*.

*The Pauline Circle* is a much slighter work, being articles from *The Harvester* on Ananias, Barnabas, Silas, Timothy, Luke, Priscilla and Aquila,

Apollos, Titus, Onesimus, Mark and others. They make excellent Bible studies and could be the foundation of interesting sermons.

One hesitates to question the judgment of one whose scholarship is so accurate, but there are of course points where opinions differ. I am unpersuaded, for instance, that the tradition of Mark's evangelisation of Alexandria can be so easily dismissed. 'There may be nothing more behind the tradition than the arrival at Alexandria of an early copy of the Gospel of Mark, sent from Rome.' It seems to me that the second city of the Roman empire was not likely to have invented such a founder, and that it is best to accept Eusebius' account of its early leaders. One tends to forget how selective The Acts of the Apostles is—there must have been many interesting happenings which Luke could not record.

55 Bainton Road, Oxford

JOHN WENHAM

### **ECUMENICAL THEOLOGY AND THE ELUSIVENESS OF DOCTRINE** Paul Avis

SPCK 1986 158 pp. £5.95 pb.

ISBN 0 281 04186 7

I like this book, and I believe that readers of *Churchman* will like it too—though there's a sting in the tail.

Paul Avis does a wonderful demolition job on the ARCIC Final Report. It is indeed amazing that an International Commission including no fewer than seven Professors and six Bishops and Archbishops could work for fifteen years and produce something so slight. It is even more amazing that we should be expected to take seriously their claim that this 'stupendously little' Report (Dickens fans: do you remember Mr Tappert's legs in *Barnaby Rudge*?) not only encompasses but also solves the massive theological differences which rent the Church asunder four hundred years ago and have kept her divided ever since.

But it is hard for the theologically illiterate such as me to progress beyond the feeling that something only 100 pages long calling itself 'The Final Report' is likely to be richer in pretension than substance. Here Paul Avis comes to my rescue! He subjects it—or more accurately the half of it concerned with Authority—to a rigorous theological and philosophical analysis which opens one's eyes to the Report's sheer naivety. Anyone preparing for Synod debates on ARCIC could not do better than acquire this book and absorb it.

I am giving the impression that he simply provides ammunition for my prejudices. But actually nothing could be further from the truth. Like all good theology, this book 'subverts our common preference for a quiet life and our desire to have our prejudices confirmed as fact' (p.130, quoting Nicholas Lash). Be wary—this is what I meant by the sting in the tail. Not only the ARCIC Report lay in pieces on my floor after reading it. For in fact his intention is much more positive than just 'to break down, to destroy'. He also seeks 'to build up, to plant', and specifically to sketch the basis of a distinctively Anglican approach to ecumenical theology which would avoid the traps into which ARCIC plainly tumbled. And the Anglicanism he proposes is one unfamiliar to Anglican Evangelicals, not to say

uncongenial—one which accepts pluralism as basic to Anglicanism from the start and turns it into a virtue.

Into what traps did ARCIC tumble, and what is the justification for this positive evaluation of Anglican pluralism? Paul Avis' answers to both questions go side by side, and may be summarised as follows.

**1. Q. What is the nature of doctrine?**

A. The ARCIC Report is based on the assumption that doctrine is essentially verbal and propositional, the product of reason grappling with revelation. But this is to put the cart before the horse. Doctrine is not essentially propositional, but *personal*: it arises in the human soul, born by the Holy Spirit's breath and fed by the spiritual experiences through which God leads us. We seek to understand what we already comprehend—and so we try to formulate our experience of God in propositional terms. But essentially our comprehension of God is seated in the 'tacit dimension' of our being, the hidden area in which intuition senses far more than reason can understand. Here lie the springs of our being, and the true motivation and indeed 'raw material' of our theological efforts. In contrast to Roman Catholicism, argues Avis, Anglicanism has maintained this personal approach to doctrine, setting its face against an imposed uniformity of teaching, and allowing that, in our longing to grasp the ungraspable, we will inevitably fall short and differ from each other!

**2. Q. What is the nature of ecumenism?**

A. According to ARCIC, the ecumenical challenge is to ginger up the theologians, so that they can reach agreement where previously they disagreed. (In effect, this means that the Anglicans must agree to renounce their distinctiveness—but that is by the way). Once the theologians have done their bit, intercommunion and reunion can follow logically. But again, says Avis, this is the wrong way round. Christians find themselves already united by an unconquerable sense that they are one in Christ. Ordinary believers cannot attach importance to the games theologians play. Of course, they need to be shown that formal theology is important, but at the same time their instinctive sense of oneness should not be pooh-poohed—for it arises from the heart, where God creates awarenesses that surpass understanding. Anglicans, used to living in a 'mixed' Church, know all about this already. The obstacles to intercommunion, Avis suggests, are much slighter than those to reunion, precisely because it is heart-to-heart.

**3. Q. What kind of teaching authority should the Church exercise?**

A. The ARCIC Report simply swallows the Roman Catholic view. It accepts that general councils may be preserved from error, and that the Pope too, representing the Church, may promulgate error-free doctrine. Avis comments, 'It is difficult to see how the Anglican members of the commission ever allowed themselves to get into the position of sponsoring this view' (p.44). Anglicanism would not exist, but for the conviction that 'General

Councils ... may err, and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining unto God' (Article 20). The Marian dogmas form an enormous obstacle—are we to believe that the Anglican members of the commission, having agreed that the Pope and general councils of the Church are preserved from error by a special dispensation of the Holy Spirit, are prepared to accept these promulgations?

But in fact more is at stake than one's view of councils and the papacy. Divergent understandings of the nature of truth and of knowledge are involved here. For surely all our apprehensions of God in this life must be partial and incomplete, because we are seeking to understand a transcendent mystery. How can we ever claim to have given perfect expression to a truth? Whether it likes it or not, the Roman Catholic church is becoming more and more pluralist, and the notion of an infallible magisterium, sitting at the centre and commanding the obedience of all as it articulates unifying dogmas, is increasingly a romance rather than a reality. But Anglicanism has existed in this real world for 400 years, and has evolved various ways of coping with its comprehensiveness. Paul Avis wants to make its comprehensiveness a strength, and proposes (tantalisingly briefly, at the end) an understanding of *polarity* which could give philosophical and theological justification to the deliberate holding of truths in tension (rather than seeking to choose between them). I wish he had said more about this.

#### 4. Q. How does the doctrine of the Church develop?

A. Again ARCIC simply capitulates to the Roman Catholic answer. It does its best to recognise that councils and Popes are conditioned by the times in which they live, but it nonetheless holds that their error-free teaching rises above time and culture and becomes 'part of (the Church's) permanent witness' (Report, p.92). It also does its best to balance this acceptance of the traditional teaching role of the magisterium with an emphasis on the necessity for such teaching to chime with the awareness of the whole Church (when the Church gladly embraces it, its divine origin is made clear), but it does not displace the *locus* of authority by one centimeter ('it is not through reception by the people of God that a definition first acquires authority ...', Report p.92). So it has a romantic vision of a Church which achieves ever more exact statements of the truth, and ever clearer applications of the truth to the problems of the world, never needing ever to gainsay something previously said, and all the time with the laity gladly clamouring their support.

These are the myths which Politburos weave around themselves. Paul Avis criticises the sheer unreality of this vision: faced with disagreement over a pressing practical problem (such as birth control), how could the Roman Catholic Church ever achieve a 'definition' which was not either hopelessly banal or irrevocably divisive? The divisions following *Humanae Vitae* simply puncture the myth.

However it is possible to believe in the indefectibility of the Church in a way that does not exclude repentance for past failures. Anglicanism gives a much more limited role to general councils, and subordinates them very firmly to the authority of Scripture: for the only sure ground for believing in the preservation of the Church is the indefectible faithfulness of God, who



will certainly present her spotless to her husband. But the preparation for that marriage encompasses many slips and much unfaithfulness on our part. The life of repentance is to be lived by the whole Church, and not just by individual believers.

A brief summary like this cannot do justice to a book which is rigorously argued—and beautifully written. Paul Avis plainly draws on wide reading in philosophy as well as theology. It is a book to be reckoned with and deserves to be widely read. But his challenge for Evangelical Anglicans is crystal clear (though he never directs it specifically): how far do we want to commit ourselves to a comprehensive, pluralist Church? Whether we like it or not, it has always been the genius (the calling?) of Anglicanism to find the middle way, between the high authoritarianism of the Church of Rome on the one hand, and the independent individualism of the ‘gathered Church’ on the other. It encompasses both extremes within itself—in splendid isolation from each other? Sniping at each other from well-fortified positions? Tolerating each other but wishing each other away? Self-consciously seeking an accommodation (ASB!)? Or living acceptingly in tension until the Day dawns?

Really, Paul Avis is right: only the last two of these options represent distinctively Anglican positions, and of these the last is the one which best matches the pattern of gracious self-denial and loving repentance left to us by our Lord. If we will be Anglicans, then let us commit ourselves to this. It could be our decisive contribution to ecumenism.

The Vicarage, Albury, Ware, Herts

STEPHEN MOTYER

**AGREEMENT AND DISAGREEMENT Alasdair I.C. Heron**

Handsel Press, Edinburgh 1984 32 pp. £1

ISBN 0 905312 39 2

The sub-title of this booklet is as instructive as it is long: *The Common Ground and Major Differences in Belief between the Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church*. Even that does not tell the whole story. What has been published as a booklet by the Handsel Press began life as a church report under the hand of the Church of Scotland's Panel on Doctrine. Professor Heron (then of Edinburgh, now of Erlangen) had drafted the original report (he calls himself its ‘chief culprit’) and has now revised it under his own name for wider circulation.

And it has been well worth the effort. Like so many documents of its kind, it represents a considerable labour which would normally have ended its days unread in the middle of a volume of church papers. Its appearance is welcome, and it is to be commended not simply to readers in Scotland. For the essential ‘agreements and disagreements’ to which it draws attention are broadly those between Catholic and Reformed/Protestant traditions in general, and only secondarily specifically between the Catholics and the national church in Scotland.

A particular point to be welcomed is that this is a record of agreement *and* disagreement. It is much happier to see common ground delineated in the

context of ground which is not held in common. *Agreement and Disagreement* goes further, and notes that even 'every element of the common faith' is not 'necessarily understood or emphasised in exactly the same way by both churches' (p.10). Conversely, the fact that there are basic differences in the understanding of doctrines affirmed on both sides should not lead to a denial that (for example) Catholics 'believe in the Bible' or 'recognise Christ as the one Mediator', since the Roman Catholic church explicitly affirms both. 'The differences ... do not have to do with the authority of the Bible or the sole mediatorship of Christ in themselves, but rather with how these themes are interpreted and related to others.' (p.11)

In the context of the plethora of ecumenical documents under present discussion this brief guide is to be commended for its clarity and succinctness. It is as helpful in its discussions of method as when particular issues are in focus, and it is perhaps there that evangelicals are most in need of cool heads today.

Rutherford House, Edinburgh

NIGEL CAMERON

**JESUS CHRIST THE WITNESS OF HISTORY** Sir Norman Anderson  
IVP 1985 176 pp.

Sir Norman Anderson has again left us in his debt. As a lay theologian with a mind trained in legal studies, his perceptive statements are based on a faithful adherence to a conservative attitude to scripture.

This book, which is a revision, is reissued at a crucial time for the Church of England. The historicity of at least some of the facts concerning Christ are again under attack. And here we have answers which have been very thoughtfully considered. To the author the Resurrection has always been the key to the truth Christ declared. In this revision he notes that there has been a change in scientific thinking about miracles which has led him to omit statements he found necessary in the previous volume.

One of the gains of this book is that the reader and particularly the pastor, can benefit from the width of Sir Norman's reading. Frequent apposite quotations will no doubt find themselves in many an address. These are derived from opponents as well as followers of Christianity.

There are only four chapters but each is vital in the examination of his subject and it is not without significance that the title of the book has been altered from Christianity, the witness of history, to Jesus Christ, the witness of history. The person of Jesus has been given a new pre-eminence in secular thought in recent years, but it has often been in an existential context. The fact of Christianity may not be doubted but the historical fact of Christ, his message, mission and ministry, has, even in some Christian circles, become clouded under the modern emphasis of experience. Starting, therefore, from the argument of a historical basis, we are reassured that many now realise that what is recorded of Christ are the authentic deeds and words of the historic Jesus. They are not myths but bear the seal of the Son of Man and God.

## Churchman

Thus the second chapter is entitled, 'The central figure, how are we to regard him?' Set against man's assessment and apostolic proclamation, his authority, claims and sinlessness are examined. Yet this is not without a recognition that some have queried certain of his actions. His death is examined in the light of various theories of the atonement. His resurrection is examined as an event of crucial importance. The statement of Bultmann that 'the Easter faith is not interested in the historical question' is carefully considered in the light of scripture and theological statements. The empty tomb is declared as a fact, though not without the various hypotheses being examined. In line with C.S. Lewis the author is convinced that 'the Resurrection, and its consequences were the "gospel" or the Good News which the Christians brought.'

A book to read, but also a book to have for reference.

Stamford, Lincolnshire

JOHN R. BOURNON

### **THE ENIGMA OF EVIL: Can we believe in the goodness of God?**

2nd edition **John W. Wenham**

Inter-Varsity Press 1985 223 pp. £4.95 pb.

This book is a re-publication under a new title. While the content is apparently the same, it is not God's goodness but man's evil the author desires the reader to consider. He offers a bold and constructive approach to the human predicament when faced by human wickedness in the light of the claim that God is good, and disarms the critic by stressing that his book is concerned mainly with phenomena in the Bible rather than modern thought. Intended primarily for the Christian, as a defence against liberalism it develops into an apology that justifies the Christian view of God. To that end Wenham accepts the Bible revelation and dismisses the facile attempt to distinguish between the ontological God of the Old Testament and that of the New. But he admits that faced with the fact of evil and belief in a good God unanswerable questions are raised. Unfortunately, he makes little attempt to deal with crucial theological questions. He accepts the Adamic story but does not consider such questions as, If God is omniscient he must have foreknown that Adam would fall; then why did he create him? and in doing so, is he the author of evil? Or, could one created originally righteous ever sin? Truth often lies in paradox, and Wenham is content to leave it there.

The author's positive stress on the blessings of suffering that apparent evil can produce, and his fine argument on the solidarity of the human race is highly commendable. He has also a strong argument on Bible inerrancy, provided its divine revelation is accepted, and is not used as fool proof historical data. His treatment of Old Testament moral laws is not so convincing. But, all told, the book is one that every Christian should read. It is an admirable treatment of problems that lie at the heart of a vibrant belief in the Christian God.

Clapham, Bedford

ARTHUR BENNETT

**THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH R.K. Harrison**

Eerdmans, Grand Rapids 1985 251 pp. \$12.95

ISBN 0 8028 0044 0

The author, who is Emeritus Professor of New Testament at Fuller Theological Seminary in California, offers us in this compact volume an authoritative, conservative account of the growth of the Church in New Testament times. He begins his survey with the traditional distinction between the Gospels and the rest of the New Testament, and concentrates on the latter. This distinction is certainly not beyond dispute, but the book avoids the major critical questions posed by Gospel studies, except in so far as these have a bearing on the composition of Acts.

It is Luke's account of the Church which the author takes as his starting point, and an entire chapter is devoted to the question of its historical reliability, which he accepts virtually without reservation. The rest of the book unfolds with Acts as its controlling principle, but with excursions into the Pauline Epistles and the rest of the New Testament as appropriate. Along the way questions like the relationship between Church and State, the break with Judaism and the character of the Gentile mission are given compact but scholarly treatment.

The fourth chapter is devoted to the internal development of the Church, and focuses on its theology (derived from the sermons reported in Acts) and on matters of Church order. The author defends the view that there are incipient credal formulae in the New Testament, and plays down the phenomenon of 'Early Catholicism', which he tends to regard as a distortion of the evidence. In the final chapter, he describes eight local churches—the six to which Paul wrote, plus Jerusalem and Antioch.

In general, the information supplied here and the interpretation put on it reflects a sober judgment of the facts coupled with a desire to maintain a conservative theological position. In one or two places there is a notable tendency to skate around potential embarrassments; e.g. nothing is said about infant baptism, despite the fact that there is a section on baptism itself, and the whole matter of asceticism is pushed into the background in a way which suggests that the author has succumbed to some typically Protestant prejudices, such as a dislike of celibacy. However these are minor flaws in a book of this kind, and do not detract from its value. Occasionally some readers may feel that not enough justice has been done to critical positions, but for the beginner in the field there is ample material to absorb in this area.

The biggest fault in the book is the lack of any kind of index, which is bound to compromise its value as a student reference work. This is especially regrettable, as there are a large number of Biblical quotations, as well as references to modern scholars, which are very difficult to follow through. It is to be hoped that in a future edition this defect will be repaired, and a valuable work made that much more accessible to the public.

**PHILOSOPHY FOR UNDERSTANDING THEOLOGY** Diogenes Allen

SCM, London 1985 287 pp. £9.50

Here at last is a book which theology teachers have been waiting for—an authoritative but accessible guide to the philosophical background which students need if they are to understand Christian theology properly. There was a time when it could be assumed that most ordinands would have a smattering of Greek thought tucked away somewhere, and it was always possible to extrapolate from Plato and Aristotle to the moderns.

That happy time is no more, but strangely, there has been little attempt to fill the gap with a guide to the essentials. This book is that guide. Without wasting time on non-essentials (from the theologian's standpoint, that is!), the author takes us straight to Plato and expounds those parts of his teaching which have a bearing on theological thought. The balance between ancient and modern is fairly even; six chapters are devoted to Plato, Aristotle and their followers (including Aquinas), and five to the modern period. Kant and Hegel are allotted a chapter each; lesser mortals are subsumed under headings like Existentialism, Empiricism and Phenomenology!

The titles are forbidding, but the book is written in an attractive style which the non-specialist will have no trouble grasping. There is the usual complaint with works of this kind, in that not everyone will share the author's choice of writers, especially in the modern period, but given the limitations of the work as a whole, this is hardly a serious criticism. Considering that he has managed to get as much as this into the available space, he deserves to be warmly congratulated. Nobody has been left out who must be included, though it would perhaps have been helpful to indicate the extent to which the Reformers were indebted to contemporary and classical philosophy. It is true that they were not philosophical theologians in the sense that Aquinas was, but a single reference to Luther and two to Calvin seem a bit meagre. There is also no mention of John Wycliffe, in spite of the fact that a good deal has been written about his philosophy in recent years.

This book deserves to become required reading for any basic theology course, and should help to bridge the gap between the classical theological tradition and the educational background of the average student today.

Oak Hill College, London N14

GERALD BRAY

**TRAGEDY IN EDEN** *Original Sin in the Theology of Jonathan Edwards*  
C. Samuel Storms

University Press of America 1986 316 pp. £12.75

Human wickedness in its nature, commission, and omission never ceases to occupy man's mind. Out of this subject have arisen brilliant treatises such as Jonathan Edwards *Original Sin*, and his *Freedom of the Will*, which are as much an answer to Pelagianism and Arminianism as they are to modern liberal theology. Storms' book offers a profound analysis of both works and steers the reader through Edwards' torturous and complex thoughts. It will add lustre to the 18th century American metaphysician and preacher whose

stature as a Christian thinker is being increasingly regarded. As a study on soul-anthropology, his *Original Sin* is a masterly exposition built upon an acceptance of Bible inerrancy and the historicity of Eden, Adam, and the Fall. Without this the arguments of Edwards, and somewhat of Storms, are meaningless. Having relevance only if there is a God to sin against, some religious faith in the reader is necessary, and an understanding of Christian dogmatism.

Storms hopes that it will supply 'the interests of contemporary evangelicals', though, as a college text, it is listed as for adults professionals, and particularly adult laymen. Whether it will do this in view of the author's style and complexity of thought remains to be seen. It proves the point that doctrinal theses, of which this is a two third reproduction, are not the best form for interesting and instructing the uninitiated. Nor is the book made easier by long indented quotations, involved sentences, and heavy underlining. But few, who know Edwards' Works intimately, on studying Storms' thesis, will disagree with him that Edwards' doctrine of the fall of man is 'its most lucid and convincing defence ... since Paul penned Romans.' (p.xii). Although an attempt to answer John Taylor's book on the same theme, Edwards went beyond it in offering a comprehensive defence of the pure Reformed view and supported it by his earlier work on 'The Freedom of the Will' which Storms holds should be held with it. If, as Edwards claims, and Storms explains, from scripture proofs, observation of man, and the universality of death that every person enters the world innately corrupt in moral and afflictive evil, the gospel of redemption and regeneration is the only remedy. To that end Storm gives an incisive description of Edwards' use of the tree metaphor—as the root is, so are the branches—in a kind of ontological solidarity, though he thinks Edwards is not so successful in his doctrine of imputation.

After a brief account of Edwards' life and spirit the foundation is laid for what follows. He makes much of the somewhat neglected field of English theologians and their influence upon New England counterparts, but his particular aim is to examine Edwards' views in answer to Taylor's. Vital questions are raised—Does God's foreknowledge involve his fore-ordaining sin, so making him the author of evil? Will infants who have not sinned be finally saved? Is sin an acquired or an innate habit? How can sin be imputed to one who has not sinned as Adam did? Storms examines and clarifies these and other questions, but his most important and enlightening exegesis is his analysis of Edwards' answer to the problem of Freewill. To this he devotes a large section of his book. He makes much of Edwards' premise that the will is determined by a prior cause, so that the will is as the motive is and acts by the mind's faculty of choice. In that sense it is not the will that is free but the person who has the power of freedom. Storm then raises the question of human responsibility and personal identity, pointing out with Edwards that there can be no such thing as contingent events, or God would not know everything, his decrees being the basis of his fore-knowledge. In this sense God foreordains sins, including those of Christ's crucifiers on the ground of his decretive will (so says Edwards) but hates the sins that will occur. What concerns Storms here is that in holding to this, Edwards yet seeks to exonerate God from being the author of man's corruption, for as Edwards rejects self-determination as the cause of the will's action it must be God who

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is behind it, and raises the question, How can Adam, created in original righteousness, be able to sin?

These are as much philosophical as well as theological points. In dealing with them Storms avoids arid discussion and offers clear principles necessary to an understanding of modern man. His admiration of Edwards, whose views he largely shares, is obvious, though he does not hesitate to criticize him. He has offered to the Christian constituency a book that will make its mark in opening a window into Edwards' mind. Those who are prepared to read it thoughtfully and intensively will find in it a light thrown upon what Luther called man's 'dark guest within'.

5 Green Lane, Clapham, Bedford

ARTHUR BENNETT

## **UNION WITH GOD—The Teaching of St John of the Cross** **Desmond Tillyer**

Mowbrays 1984 111 pp. £3.75 pb.

ISBN 0 264 86934 7

This is a timely book for an age when more and more Christian people are seeking the goal defined in the first part of its title. The author (who is Vicar of St Peter's, Eaton Square, and commended in the Bishop of London's Foreword as a parish priest with a deep love of souls) tells us that he is writing for 'men and women of Christian faith who are committed to seeking union with God ... only a basic grasp of the fundamental articles of faith is assumed; detailed, technical theological expertise is not required'. Yet as one reads the argument one is struck time and again by the need to turn to St John himself to see what it is that Mr Tillyer is re-interpreting for us.

Much in this book will be readily identified by evangelical Christians—the need to begin with conversion (p.62), the importance of a love for the scriptures (p.25) and the concern of the writer (as of his subject before him) to set both theology and psychology in a Christological framework: 'any theology which attempts to describe God without Jesus Christ is not Christian theology and its vision of God is inadequate to encompass the riches of the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Any psychology which attempts to describe man without Jesus Christ is not Christian psychology and its vision of man is inadequate to describe the measure of the fullness of the stature of man as seen through God's eyes'.

Yet one is also left with the inevitable query. St John of the Cross wrote as a spiritual director of those who had set themselves apart for a monastic life, so how far is his teaching really practicable for Christian men and women involved in the rush and bustle of 20th century life? Perhaps more so than many believe, and there is a need of spiritual directors among evangelicals to point their fellows on the path of this union.

Again, St John is quoted as warning, as do most Catholic writers, against assurance (p.48), while this doctrine is of great significance to the evangelical theology and experience of justification by faith. Mr Tillyer is also keen to warn those whose devotion is helped by visual aids such as crucifixes, holy pictures, ritual acts, the beauty of worship (or even particular gifts of the spirit, or fervent hymn-singing) to beware that such aids do not become masters, causing the devotion to stop short with them.

Finally, while concurring with Mr Tillyer that the great aim of every pastor of souls must always be to bring them to realise and enjoy their union with God, one is left with the question as to whether this is, in fact, the only way, or indeed the best way. No doubt many will continue to find St John's teaching and experience relevant and helpful to their particular situations but God has His own pathway for each of us, and it is for the wise pastor to discern what course that is taking for each individual rather than to fit each person to a Procrustean bed of spiritual experience.

Christ Church, Ware

DAVID WHEATON

**GEORGE WHITEFIELD John Pollock**

Lion Publishing Company 1986 272 pp. £4.95

ISBN 0 7459 1018 1

**WILBERFORCE John Pollock**

Lion Publishing Company 1986 368 pp. £4.95

ISBN 0 7459 1061 0

The re-publication of these two books is to be warmly welcomed in again bringing before the public the work and influence of two great Englishmen, Whitefield as a most powerful preacher of the English church, Wilberforce as a leading figure in one of the noblest acts of any nations—the abolition of slavery.

Pollock's aim in his 'George Whitefield' is to present a kind of T.V. *Panorama*, not an in-depth biography. He claims it is not fiction; but in parts it reads as such, by his use of vivid imagination and fanciful suppositions. However, he captures the spirit of Whitefield in a way that can never be gleaned from his sermons, that in cold print appear dull and tepid. What also emerges in the book is the importance of the 'Great Idea', personal regeneration, as the transforming power of character and personality. It is an eminently readable book for newly won Christians and young adults as an introduction to the life of a great man and his work, and should be a stimulant to Christians to live out more assiduously the truths that Whitefield proclaimed.

Pollock's approach to Wilberforce is different. Here he is at his best in the quality of a true biographer. This is genuine biography, well researched, finely documented, its sweep broad, its detail meticulous, its characterisation vivid. Wilberforce speaks through the book, so that the causes he championed become those of the readers who are left with a feeling that if this is practical Christianity let us have more of it. The author who has culled and selected material, much of it from untapped sources, writes as if he had lived through the Wilberforce era, and had intimate knowledge of events and every aspect of the reformer's temperament and disposition. He does not hesitate to point out weaknesses in his character and political strategy, his tendency to vacillate, to drift, and to be slothful in personal affairs. Nor does he forbear to correct previous 'Lives' and to pass judgments on Wilberforce. But in all, he stands forth in the pages as tender-hearted, compassionate, generous, a lover of children, the champion of the poor and oppressed, a gracious defender of Christianity in an age of radicalism and infidelity, and himself not bedevilled by the grandeur of power.

There are, however, certain weaknesses of presentation. Pollock tends to make Wilberforce subservient to politics, so that at times what results is more



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history than biography, in spite of his claim that he has minimised the historical background in the hope that 'my book offers a fresh starting point for historical debate'. Be that as it may, he gives us the portrait of a man of broad humanity, one after the fashion of St. Paul who could found radiating churches, yet pleased for the life of a runaway slave.

There is an excellent biography and a good index. A family tree would further enhance the book. Your reviewer has no doubt that Pollock's book will become a classic biography.

5 Green Lane, Clapham, Bedford

ARTHUR BENNETT

## **HANS KÜNG** John Kiwiet

Word Books, Waco Texas 1985 192 pp. \$8.95 pb.

ISBN 0 8499 2954 7

A wide readership will be grateful for this attempt to describe Hans Küng's career and theology which are so very 'prophetic' rather than 'systematic'. The task is well done at a level accessible to the interested general public to whom Küng, for all his erudition, appeals so strongly. It is a pity, however, that this volume, unlike some others in the series, has no index.

Kiwiet begins with a sketch of Küng's career with his extraordinary rise to fame and influence under Pope John XXIII, through to his fall from favour and ecclesiastical marginalisation. The influence of Congar and Barth emerge as formative, as do Küng's early Hegel studies.

Küng and Barth on justification are quite properly given a complete chapter which spells out Küng's position of justification through Christ alone as being inseparable from sanctification: declaratory righteousness must be accompanied by actual righteousness in the grace of Christ. Barth's validation of this as his own position is discussed although the interesting point that one can find more definitely Reformed passages in the *Church Dogmatics* is not raised. This highlights Kiwiet's tendency to discuss other theologians only through Küng's handling of them.

The three middle chapters provide an account of Küng's ecclesiological, ecumenical vision and Küng's zeal for a modern mediating position in his own church and for the Church worldwide. Küng seeks to recapture the prophetic and charismatic for ecclesiology, hence his continual conflict with the structural, institutional, priestly and hierarchical. I found the account of Küng's ecclesiology over-laced with repetitions of the saga of his conflict with the Vatican which had been given in the first chapter; nevertheless the issues are brought out clearly. These include Küng's advocacy of a reformed focal Petrine ministry and of a ministry modelled on the ideal of service not authority.

Kiwiet's two penultimate chapters contain a summary of the voluminous *On Being a Christian* and *Does God Exist?* which could well prove helpful for the first year theology undergraduate. Küng strives for a new synthesis of the ancient and the modern, for a far more humane and involved Christianity today. Kiwiet gives us basic guide-posts through the mass of material expounding this.

The book is good descriptively, less than deep critically and analytically. We get little of the contemporary systematic context into which Küng fits,

notably his great affinity with Pannenberg and Moltmann deriving from their common recovery of Hegel. Nor are we given the basic *theological* difference between Küng and Rahner and von Balthasar who assisted in his deposition as an official Roman Catholic teacher. Kiwiet offers a solid review of the career and diverse writings of an extraordinarily charismatic, dynamic modern thinker.

Trinity College, Bristol

TIM BRADSHAW

**HENRY MARTYN John Sergeant**

*The Banner of Truth* Trust 1988 463 pp. £3.50 pb.

ISBN 0 85151 4685 5

Periodically, evangelical Christianity produces a saint. Henry Martyn was such, and acknowledged so by his intimates. Born in 1781, and dying alone at Tocat in Persia in 1812, his brief but memorable life left behind it a blaze of glory. Few persons were so qualified as John Sergeant to write his biography. They had taken their Cambridge degree together but were unknown to each other until Charles Simeon introduced them, a meeting that led to a deep and lasting friendship. It was thus fitting that Sergeant should write Martyn's life. The present edition is that of 1862 which for the first time included as an appendix Martyn's seventeen letters to Lydia Grenfell whose refusal to join him in India in spite of a mutually confessed affection caused him the greatest pain. Sergeant's book, drawn largely from Martyn's private Journals and Narrative, traces his life from childhood through a brilliant academic career to his work in India and Persia until his death. Although styled a 'Life' the book is more a portrayal of Martyn's spiritual fervour and God-devotedness, and is a classic example of evangelical spirituality and saintship. It challenges the reader to face often forgotten elements in the Christian's walk with God—self-abasement, contrition, heart-watchfulness, attrition over inward sin, and self-examination, all in the light of Christ's redeeming death. Who but a Martyn could write in a boat full of hostile soldiers on his way to India, 'Two things were much on my mind this morning in prayer: the necessity of entering more deeply into my own heart, and labouring after humiliation, and, for that reason, setting apart times for fasting; as also to devote times for solemn prayer for fitness in the ministry, especially for love of souls, and for the effusion of the Spirit on heathen lands,' (p.105)? Or, again, on reaching Calcutta, 'How sweet to walk with Jesus,—to love Him and to die for Him ... I found my Heaven begun on earth. No work so sweet as that of praying, and living wholly to the service of God,' p.158. Of historic interest are Martyn's descriptions of Indian and Persian life and religion in the early 19th century, the English soldiers' contempt of East Indian Company's chaplains, the difficulty of trying to missionise the natives, and Martyn's problem of what to do when requested to baptize those with a nominal view of Christianity but without its spirit. Although he translated the New Testament and Psalms into Hindustani and Arabic, and influenced a few people to Christ, outwardly he appeared to achieve little, but his Life and Letters have inspired many believers to draw nearer to God. 'He was in our hearts,—we honoured him;—we loved him;—we thanked God for him,' said T. Thomason, a

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Cambridge and missionary friend in India (p.406). Such sentiments may arise in the hearts of those who read Sergeant's book. The publishers are to be commended for having re-issued it for the present generation. It will be of help to many in the way of godliness.

5 Green Lane, Clapham, Bedford

ARTHUR BENNETT

### **THINKING ABOUT GOD Brian Davies**

Geoffrey Chapman, London 346 pp. £9.95

ISBN 0225 66476 3

### **THE MYSTERY OF THE TRINITY Edmund Hill**

Geoffrey Chapman, London 193 pp. £8.95

ISBN 0 225 66470 4

These two books are the latest in the new series, *Introducing Catholic Theology*, which is appearing under the general editorship of Michael Richards. It is intended for theological students, but clergy and interested laypeople will also find the volumes accessible and useful to them. The contributors are all Roman Catholics, drawn from English-speaking countries around the world. They are all 'post-Vatican II' theologians, and write with contemporary concerns and an ecumenical dimension in mind.

The first volume, by Brian Davies, is in many respects a model for the series as a whole. It covers the philosophical problems raised by the concept of God, and deals very fully with the modern debates on this subject. Fr. Davies is extremely widely read, and has a great gift for explaining complex ideas in simple language. Some readers may feel that his many illustrations sometimes defeat the purpose of explanation, but this is surely a minor fault in a book of this kind.

The author takes us at great length through the classical 'proofs' for the existence of God, pointing out their strengths and weaknesses. In the second part, he deals with some of the divine attributes, especially those which have come under attack in recent years. There is a very useful discussion on eternity, and another on divine omnipotence. The third part relates philosophical theism to Christianity, and examines to what extent Christian beliefs in the Trinity and the Incarnation can be rationally defended. He makes some very telling points against the arguments put forward by John Hick and Maurice Wiles (in particular) and shows that traditional orthodoxy can still be defended as a rationally coherent system of thought today.

It is particularly refreshing to find a Catholic scholar who is still prepared to defend Thomas Aquinas. Much of the book is a modernised exposition of the Angelic Doctor's thought, which Fr. Davies defends against its recent detractors, some of them Catholic. There is no trace of denominational sectarianism in this; the author engages freely and fairly with every theological position currently being propounded in our universities and colleges. It can be recommended without reserve to students of all persuasions, who will learn a great deal from this book, even if they find themselves disagreeing now and then with the author.

Edmund Hill's study of the Trinity is a world away from Brian Davies. Fr. Hill is not a Thomist, and has little love for the Scholastic tradition, which he openly criticises as sterile. His book is really a plea for a return to the theology of St Augustine, whose *De Trinitate* he expounds at length. This is a

useful and necessary rehabilitation of a long neglected work, but one is entitled to ask whether it is out of place in a study of this kind. It would make an excellent introduction to an edition of the Latin text, but in this volume it appears as the centrepiece to which the preceding and subsequent chapters are effectively subordinated.

These deal in a rather cursory way with the evidence for the Trinity in the New Testament, and with the pre-Augustinian development of the doctrine. The last section is little more than an attack on Scholasticism and a plea for a new pastoral approach to the Trinity in the light of Vatican II. No doubt this is an interesting and important theme, but again one is entitled to ask whether it is not slightly out of place in a work of this kind. After Davies it comes as something of a disappointment, although this is not to detract from the very useful things it contains. We need to take a fresh look at Augustine, and to criticise Scholasticism, but we also need to review the doctrine of the Trinity in the light of modern speculation. For this however, we shall have to wait for another volume on the subject to appear.

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GERALD BRAY

### **THE REVIVAL OF RELIGION Various Authors**

The Banner of Truth Trust 1985 449 pp. £6.95

ISBN 0 85851 435 9

Amongst formal churchmen few religious subjects cause more confusion and arouse more distaste than do revivals of religion. This compendium of fourteen homiletic addresses by Scottish evangelical ministers, well known in their time, if read prayerfully and carefully, will do much to dispel dislike and distaste of what to many Christians is accepted as mighty acts of God. In an exhaustive study, the lectures set forth the scripture principles, nature, progress, and fruits of the Revival of Religion, and are more relevant to the current situation in Britain than they were when first delivered in Glasgow in 1840. In the present age of doctrinal indifferentism, moral decadence, falling church membership, and replacement of the terms 'revival' by that of 'renewal' (a scripture word that connotes the mind not the heart), it is good to have this book re-published.

As a passionate plea to the Church in clear and clarion terms it deals with the essence of Religious Revival as the work of the Triune God, the means he permits the Church to use, and the fruits that may be expected. Each subject is theologically undergirded by exposition, explication, and application of a major scripture truth basic to Revival of Religion. Throughout, the appeal is to reason and understanding, and avoids typology. The speakers have no room for attempts to promote excitements and calling them a revival; and warn against errors such as reliance on outward signs, novel doctrines that arouse controversy, excessive music in place of teaching, going beyond accepted means of grace, and despising accepted forms of worship. By their definition, Religious Revival is the re-awakening of a dormant Church, and through such a revived Church the widespread conversion of non-Christians. While attributing Revival to the sovereign act of God, it is pointed out that this can be hindered (but not ultimately prevented) by the state of Society,

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urban social conditions, political controversies, low ethical standards, and Church-members' nominal Christianity, indiscipline, Sabbath profanation, and lack of interest in, or zeal for, Revival. An eschatological element colours the addresses on the ground that 'One day the Gospel shall be universal and triumphant over the world ... We are therefore entitled to look for religious revivals in the future days of the Church' (p.221). The speakers' general thrust is anti-millennialist in a belief that scripture promises and prophecies set forth the coming of Christ's world Kingdom, and as God cannot lie, Revival of Religion will precede it; so anticipating Latourette's tidal simile of Christianity's ebb and flow until the world is inundated by religion.

To that end it is argued that not more means of grace but more faithful use of existing ones is necessary, yet not as an efficient cause of Revival, but as a God-allowed condition (p.xxi), the two primary ones being prayer and God's Word preached. Other preparatory 'means' are listed as fasting, personal testimony, church discipline, pastoral visiting, and godly living. The final lecture pleads with the Christian to desire, expect, and seek after such a Revival. The book has thus a personal application, the principles of *The Revival of Religion* having relevance to the spiritual life of Christians. It deserves to rank alongside Jonathan Edwards' *Works of Revivals*, John Gillies' *Historical Collections*, and W.B. Sprague's *Lectures on Revivals*. It should be on every Minister's desk. Although parts are verbose and repetitive, few persons who read it can fail to be deeply moved and stimulated to long for and plead with God for a full out-pouring of his Spirit upon the Church and the non-Christian world. It is highly commended.

5 Green Lane, Clapham, Bedford

ARTHUR BENNETT

## **CHRISTIANITY: A WORLD FAITH**

edited by **Robin Keeley**

Lion 1985 384 pp. £12.95 hb.

ISBN 0 85648 840 2

This, the latest in the Lion series of handbooks, lives up to the standards of that house for quality both in presentation and content. Sixty-three contributors share with the eight consulting editors in providing the reader with a first-hand description of the state of Christianity in all six continents. Lavishly illustrated and set out with tables, maps and charts, this work provides a mine of information not just for Church leaders but for any Christian who wishes to be better-informed about the situation of his fellow-believers and their insights into this world-wide faith.

The organising editor has shown a sure touch in knowing whom to approach in order to give an expert 'inside' account in each field. However, there are the inevitable problems of unevenness consequent upon using a variety of contributors. Pages 180-181 give useful statistics of Christians in Asian countries; comparable tables for other continents would have been most useful. It is significant that there are two pages each on the Soviet Union and Poland, while England is dismissed in two paragraphs (no doubt

because most readers will be familiar with that scene), and some sections (e.g. pp.206–7) appear to be repeated on other pages.

There are illuminating sections (e.g. pp.26–30 diagnosing and assessing the process of secularisation), perceptive contributions (pp.368 ff. on Spirituality Today) and challenging articles (pp.306–7 on the church of the poor). But not everyone will accept all that is said here: is assertiveness (p.352) a Christian characteristic for men or women? Surely footwashing on Maundy Thursday is now far more widespread than only on Patmos and in Jerusalem (p.47), and the belief, that in taking bread and wine in thanksgiving for the death of Jesus for us they meet the living Christ, is by no means unique to Lutherans (p.55). The Ecumenical Patriarch is His All Holiness Dimitrios (p.46) and the colours on page 44 make the print hard to read. No doubt every reviewer could produce a different set of contents, but it is strange not to have any assessment of the contemporary impact of Christianity on the arts, or consideration of the way in which the churches are using modern technology (e.g. radio as in the work of FEBA) to spread the Gospel.

These are minor criticisms which must not be seen out of proportion when reviewing so notable an achievement for which editor and publishers are once again to be congratulated.

Christ Church, Ware

DAVID WHEATON

**MOORE'S INTRODUCTION TO ENGLISH CANON LAW (Second Edition) E. Garth Moore and Timothy Briden**

Mowbrays 1985 181 pp. £25 (clothbound)

ISBN 0 264 66901 0

With so many things in the Church of England changing, the publication of a second edition of this handbook by one of our leading ecclesiastical lawyers with a barrister colleague is to be welcomed. The sixteen chapters and tables of statutes, measures, canons and cases show that this is just the volume to deal with many of the queries which confront incumbents, churchwardens and officers in the parishes up and down our land.

However, when one bears in mind the importance of accuracy of detail in such a work, it is disappointing to find so many mistakes or omissions. We take the liberty of listing a few, in the hope that a third edition (which such a book certainly deserves) might deal with them.

There are sentences on pp.29, 65, 105, 124 and 145 which just do not make sense. Since the Endowments and Glebe Measure of 1976 churchwardens no longer receive the benefice income during a vacancy (p.37); the Bishop to the Forces is no longer the Suffragan Bishop of Croydon (p.56); that baptism may be administered by an unbeliever is correct (p.73), but it would be helpful to know where 'it is said'; pp.96–7 appear to have been written in ignorance of the publication in 1983 of *Ministry to the Sick: Authorised Alternative Services*, and while p.128 tells us that the Canons of 1603 are now repealed, p.100 states that Canon 113 of those canons has not been repealed. Note 36 on page 82 actually belongs to page 81, where note 35 is wrongly aligned.

There are copious footnotes, but unfortunately the practice of having the reference number not aligned with its note makes for difficulty in checking

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references. Although the authors write as lawyers, their theological sympathies are recognisable, and it is interesting to speculate where they would claim that the Book of Common Prayer includes the performance of 'at least a token penance' when it makes provision for both public and private penance.

The book deserves better than to end this review on a negative note, as it is an important and helpful reference work, which is why we cannot allow its inaccuracies to go unchecked. We look forward to a further revision at the earliest possible date, and hope that parishes would give serious consideration to purchasing copies for their office-bearers.

Christ Church, Ware

DAVID WHEATON

### **THE GOOD SHEPHERD: Meditations on Christian Ministry in Today's World** **Lesslie Newbigin**

Mowbray 1988 158 pp. £3.95

ISBN 0 264 67056 6

Christian leaders living in neither Birmingham nor Madras need no longer envy those who do. These latter had among them, for a time, a senior pastor with a profound understanding of the needs and calling of his fellow under-shepherds of Christ's flock, and a gift for communicating a word in season for their weakness and strength.

The thirty addresses reprinted here, originally spoken to clergy (in one case to a synod) of the Church of South India, are now available to all. They were published there first, then here in 1977; this edition should enlarge their value further, and wastes no space as its author wastes no words. A brief Foreword comes from Bishop Keith Sutton of Lichfield, in whose diocese Bishop Lesslie now ministers, within the U.R.C.

The chapters vary from two or three pages to nearly a dozen: they read almost as delivered at the monthly communion service for C.S.I. clergy in Madras. Breakfast came next; it is intriguing to wonder what come-back there was in the discussion afterwards. There are minimal deletions of purely local matter, surprisingly little repetition, nothing unintelligible to British readers, and on almost every page a nugget of pastoral wisdom to make us pause, and maybe change.

I particularly valued the talks on worship (chapter 5), Youth in the Church (10), The Pastor as Student (22), and the frequent points about Evangelism (11, for instance). I feared there might be nothing about apostolic suffering, but then reached chapter 29, 'When I am weak, then I am strong: scarcely two pages, but so telling.

The only place where the culture-gap seemed wide was where we read that anyone behaving as Jesus did 'would be quickly excommunicated from most of our churches' (p.19). Do they still excommunicate in India?

The addresses are mostly New Testament-based, though not expository. Not all would agree with their precise weighting of the balance between evangelism and social action; is (physical) healing, for instance, 'part of our ministry as much as preaching and teaching are' (p.72)? The Pastoral Epistles suggest not: yet how refreshing to hear in another context, 'It is very hard to maintain this tension steadily in practice. We are constantly being pulled one way or the other' (p.107)! That is several degrees more humble than the page

of assertions in 'Faith in the City', for instance, which has it all neatly worked out and dismisses other approaches as ignorant. If you don't feel the tension, are you in the team at all?

Some of Bishop Lesslie's words must have hurt when first spoken: these pages can still be painful as he holds our less attractive qualities up to the light. 'Most of us will agree, sadly and reluctantly, but inevitably, that the chief obstacle to the saving work of Jesus Christ today in India is the Christian Church'. But this is wounding by the surgeon, not the mugger: the pain is not from cynicism and despair, but from commitment and love. He dares to make our credible representation of Jesus 'as the Saviour of the whole nation' a higher priority than the collection of statistics—'which are hopelessly inaccurate anyway, and probably serve to emphasize all the wrong things about the church'.

From the practicalities of remembering names and visiting that does not leave people just as they were before, to his survey of the whole church's political stance or its spiritual needs, the dominant motif is allegiance to Jesus, the good Shepherd and great High Priest. Page 44 has this powerful paragraph ... but why not buy the book for yourself, or your Vicar, Curate or Colleague? One story does not come twice and will bear repetition here. The C.S.I. was involved in a project of installing new lavatories—modern flush toilets—in a dozen homes in a deprived part of the city. One resident asked, 'Have you come to convert us?' The only possible answer, says the Bishop, was 'Yes!' Anything less than that would be failure: only changed people can themselves be agents of change.

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CHRISTOPHER IDLE

**FAITH IN THE CITY Archbishop's Commission on Urban Priority Areas**

CIO 1985 398 pp. £7.50

ISBN 0 7151 3709 3

It is a matter for great regret that, such is the size of this volume, comparatively few people are likely to read it carefully and in full. This could be a tragedy for the church and the nation because in these pages, with all their limitations, there are seeds of hope for the whole church in England and not only for the Established church or the Urban Priority Areas. In paragraph 8.100 the authors make the point: 'one thing can be said with a degree of certainty. It is that the UPAs and the people who live there need the nation's confidence and support; if we do not give it, the loss will be ours as well as theirs. For if the present pattern of decline continues it will bring wider effects which will touch all our lives.' There are many prophetic statements in this book but that will serve to sum up the message.

We shall now consider the Report under five headings—prophetic, ecclesiastical, ethical, evangelistic and theological.

As an attempt at prophecy in both meanings of the word this is quite superb. No doubt it is in no sense a complete blueprint for the renewal of our inner cities and council estates but there is no doubt that the seeds of an



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answer are to be found here. At the very least the Report removes a number of misconceptions. For example, 'the potential for small businesses to regenerate the UPAs (particularly the outer estates) is limited'. Again, 'if "no businessman in his right mind" would invest in certain UPAs, the public sector must provide more employment opportunities and increased income support for those who are at present unemployed'. These truisms of the inner city have not yet been accepted by our politicians. The reasons for them are carefully spelt out here and must be accepted if total disaster is to be averted. This report is full of perceptive ideas which are certainly not based on some kind of incipient Marxism but upon the sheer facts of the case.

The Report's approach to the ecclesiastical scene is realistic and exciting. For example, seeking to redress the imbalance of Synods and Councils, the writers urge a major change in the way the Church of England's structures are elected and chosen. If this were done, there could be a proper representation of ethnic minorities in the councils of the church and the effect of this would be most exciting. But the base point is expressed in 4.2 'many people we spoke to claimed that unless the Church of England acts quickly and decisively it will cease to exist in any effective form in many UPAs'. If that is true in some parts of the country, then at all costs the church must change—and change quickly. Not all the changes recommended are, however, wise ones. For example, the Commission would clearly like to eradicate different forms of churchmanship by ensuring that ordinands are not trained in a particular and coherent theological pastoralia. But this is one of very few blemishes in a report which is seminal and full of hope.

Ethically, this report is alarming at one point. Apparently the Church of England has now accepted the continued existence of homosexual clergy if the specific use of the adjective is meant to mean practising homosexuals. Had the Commission meant to describe clergy without an inclination to marry, they could have referred to bachelors or the unmarried; but perhaps it is no longer fashionable to be unmarried, celibate and holy.

We turn now to one of those elements in the report which is less than adequate. The Commission speaks of the need for 'a clear commitment to promoting church growth' but says virtually nothing about it. There is a major lacuna here and most of the Commission's recommendations will not meet the problem. If the clergy are to spend much of their time as community workers and social workers—or as politicians—instead of evening visiting, there will be less church growth than ever.

Finally what of the theological content of this report? Here there will be widespread disappointment. Chapter three is brief—all too brief—and much of it is in fact concerned with sociological considerations. There is little about the need for the poor to have 'the gospel preached to them'. What they appear to need most is the transformation of the environment. But the fact is that the massive strides forward which have been made in many UPAs in the last 20 years have not brought people *one step nearer to God*. To some extent this report will reinforce the oft-heard comment of some inner city clergy: 'I am not concerned about evangelism but about Kingdom Theology'. But a proper theology of the kingdom must entail the recognition of the rule of the King. This element is missing from the Report and it is a *vital and tragic omission*. Again how far can a truly *Christian* theology emerge 'from personal experience' and not from a primary study of the Bible? There is

here a totally false dichotomy. Nevertheless, in spite of some serious omissions, this report is, within its limitations, most valuable, visionary and in very truth a sign of hope. Let us seek to hear it.

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### **FEMINISM & THE RECONSTRUCTION OF CHRISTIAN BELIEF**

**William Oddie**

SPCK 1984 159 pp. £4.50 pb

ISBN 0 281 04105 9

**THE ROLE OF WOMEN: 8 Prominent Christians debate Today's Issues**

edited **Shirley Lees**

IVP 1984 224 pp. £4.95

ISBN 0 85110 721 4

**FEMININE IN THE CHURCH** edited **Monica Furlong**

SPCK 1984 194 pp. £4.95

ISBN 0 281 04120 2

**WOMAN IN THE BIBLE** **Mary Evans**

Paternoster 1983 160 pp. £4.95

ISBN 0 85364 337 7

#### *The Debate on the Ordination of Women*

A marked failure by the church to take seriously some part of Christian teaching has usually been challenged in due course by a providential reaction, but often of an extreme kind, such as forces Christians to reconsider the issue, but does not supply them with an instant solution. The readiness of Christian nations over many centuries to resort to warfare and bloodshed, with little regard to the conditions of the 'just war', was challenged from within Christian circles by separatist groups like the Waldenses and Quakers, who instead of re-emphasising the conditions of the just war declared that war was absolutely unlawful. Tyrannous government by Christian monarchs, contrary to Old Testament teaching on the duty of kings, was challenged by democratic and republican movements which drew their inspiration from ancient Greece and Rome rather than from the Bible, but which now supply the pattern for most western societies. Failure by Christians to heed the Bible's warnings about the dangers of riches and the obligation of mercy to the poor was challenged by a secular socialism which now supplies the pattern of most *eastern* societies, and is active in the west as well, where constant efforts are currently being made by well-meaning people to baptize it into Christianity. And failure by Christians to respect biblical teaching on the dignity of womanhood was challenged by a secular feminism which sought to obliterate the created distinction between the sexes, and which, after achieving certain more or less desirable reforms in civil life, is now attempting to bestow a unisex ministry upon the Christian church.

To assess these sorts of developments and their future prospects requires a clear biblical vision and a long historical perspective. It is always a temptation to Christians to avoid hard thinking and heroic effort by limiting their outlook to those options and judgments which at present have possession of the public mind or have become the norm of human behaviour. But there is, in fact, no reason to suppose that Christian theology will be unable in the long run to settle the dispute between pacifism and the ethic of the just war, perplexing though the issues at present appear, especially when magnified

and distorted by the lens of the nuclear threat. Similarly, though democracy and communistic socialism are the only forms of government which are at present considered serious contenders for acceptance, there seems to be no prescriptive reason why Christian political thinkers should opt ultimately for either, and not take as their goals other forms of government which have existed or could exist, and might better embody biblical principles of justice. So too, in considering the relationship between the sexes, there is no reason at all why Christians should agree to the categories of emancipation, equality and identity in which the question is always now posed (though they will certainly be pilloried for refusing to do so), and not resolve it instead on the New Testament principles of love, respect and complementarity.

The secular origins of the feminist movement in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are sketched out in the opening chapter of *Why Not? Priesthood and the Ministry of Women* (ed. M. Bruce and G.E. Duffield, Marcham, 1972; revised and augmented edition 1976). Its later developments are searchingly analysed by William Oddie in *What will happen to God? Feminism and the Reconstruction of Christian Belief* (SPCK, 1984). How different the Christian approach to the relationship between the sexes is, when straightforwardly presented from the biblical sources and compared with modern attitudes, is strikingly apparent from S.B. Clark's magisterial book *Man and Woman in Christ: an Examination of the Roles of Men and Women in the Light of Scripture and the Social Sciences* (Servant Books, 1980; distributed in Britain by T. & T. Clark). This massive but very readable book, the work of a Roman Catholic who writes like a conservative evangelical, is much the most thorough Christian treatment, to date, of the question as a whole. A popular presentation, but largely confined to the marriage relationship, by Elisabeth Elliot, widow of the missionary-martyr Jim Elliot, comes to very similar conclusions. It is entitled *Let me be a Woman* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1979).

Most of the current literature from Christian sources is much less general than Clark's book, and is mainly directed to the specific question of the ministry of women in the church, and whether they should be ordained to it. An attractive example, though dealing also with the marriage relationship, is *The Role of Women* (ed. Shirley Lees, IVP, 1984), in the series 'When Christians Disagree'. Here the editor presents certain 'agreed' starting-points (which perhaps beg certain questions), but after that the eight contributors, four of each sex, present their own views and respond to each other's. There is an attempt at balance here, and an attention to the Bible, which is refreshing. Different in both respects is *Feminine in the Church* (ed. Monica Furlong, SPCK, 1984), a symposium published on behalf of the Movement for the Ordination of Women. There is one evangelical contribution (a MOW leaflet reprinted), which the editor characterises by saying that its author 'addresses himself to those still concerned about biblical injunctions about women' (p.8). Not all the contributions are as bad as this dismissive attitude to the Bible would suggest, but taken as a whole they notably fail to measure up to the call for 'theological seriousness' issued by one of the participants. Incidentally, the contribution by the Bishop of Salisbury illustrates vividly how much of the discussion of this issue is at cross purposes. He assumes that he has proved his case if he can show that women are qualified to perform 'so-called priestly functions, Eucharist, blessing, absolution' (p.172f.),

whereas the reservations of evangelicals concern headship-functions, such as bishoprics and the pastoral oversight of congregations, to which the ordination of women as presbyters would open the way.

The way that the present feminist climate of opinion, and its arbitrary assumptions, can influence (perhaps unconsciously) even responsible writers, is shown by the discussion of headship in the book by Mary J. Evans, *Woman in the Bible* (Paternoster, 1983). On p.65f. she makes the extraordinary assertion that 'in Greek, *kephale* (head) is not used in the sense of ruler or chief but it is sometimes used in the sense of source or origin.' In reality, the usage she denies exists is quite well attested in Greek literature, whereas the one she favours is much more dubious. And as regards Paul's own use of the term, the fact that the 'headship' of the man implies his *authority* is put beyond doubt by Eph. 5:22-4. Similarly, on p.90f. the authoress rejects as unthinkable the traditional idea that the 'authority' on a veiled woman's head (in 1 Cor. 11:10) is the authority of the man and not her own. But in fact there is no more reason why, in Semitic idiom, the authority on someone's head need be that person's own authority than the blood on someone's head need be that person's own blood (cp. Josh. 2:19; 2 Sam. 3:29; 1 Kings 2:33); and since we know that the Jews of the first century regarded a woman's veil not as the sign of her authority but of her modesty and shame (Philo, *De Specialibus Legibus* 3:56; Rabbi Joshua in Genesis Rabbah 17), and Paul gives no hint that he wants to reverse the accepted symbolism, it is in all probability the man's authority and not the woman's own that Paul has in mind.

Much play is made by advocates of women's ordination with the cultural changes that have occurred since the first century. The veil on which Paul insists in 1 Cor. 11, and the silence in public on which he insists in 1 Cor. 14, were contemporary customs well attested in Jewish sources, but which do not any longer survive. It is evident, however, from Paul's manner of defending them that it was not the customs which he valued but the principles which they expressed, namely, the headship of the man (1 Cor. 11:3) and the willing subordination of the woman (1 Cor. 14:34). In an age which regards headship as essentially tyrannous and subordination as essentially degrading, his principles are of course no more welcome than his customs, and they are freely abused as misogyny or Judaizing, or (more politely) dismissed as results of the Fall. Paul would want to remind us, however, that only those who have a completely realized eschatology, like the heretics of 1 Cor. 15 and 2 Tim. 2, imagine that we have already escaped from all the results of the Fall; and, in any case, he leaves us in no doubt that the Fall only confirmed a relationship of headship and subordination between the sexes which goes back behind the Fall to the Creation itself (1 Cor. 11:8f; 1 Tim. 2:12f.).

It is in this last passage, 1 Tim. 2, that the relevance of his teaching to the ordained ministry becomes more explicit: 'I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man'. The ministry of 'presbyter-bishops' (or elders-cum-overseers), which the Pastoral Epistles give instructions about, was a ministry of this sort—of teaching (1 Tim. 3:2, Tit. 1:9) and of pastoral rule (1 Tim. 3:4f.), i.e. 'dominion'; it was also the same outwardly appointed ministry which Paul, following the pattern of the synagogue, had established in all his missionary congregations (Acts 14:23; Tit. 1:5); and the same which, in a slightly developed form, we have inherited from sub-apostolic times. If

the created relationship of the sexes is to be observed, it is not, Paul says, a ministry for women. It not only never has been, but it never could be.

The outwardly appointed ministry is not something which appears out of the blue in Acts and the Pastoral Epistles, but something which goes back, under the same title of 'elder' (Gk. *presbyter*), to the appointed ministry of the synagogue. It is not, therefore, as the Bishop of Salisbury says, something which 'evolved partly out of practical necessity, when Gentile Christians were scattered individuals, many of them slaves, and a family/house church pattern was difficult to sustain' (*Feminine in the Church*, p.174), but goes back to the very roots of the church, in Judaism, and was there from the beginning, as Acts indeed indicates. Nor did it arise, as others imagine, from a second-generation institutionalizing of the unappointed and unpatterned charismatic ministries: it was there among them from the start, and was needed to provide them with some sort of order. Because it was outwardly appointed, it was not just a spiritual gift but an office; and the question whether women should today be ordained is not the question whether women are eligible to receive all spiritual gifts, but whether they are eligible to hold this office. And since it is an office of pastoral rule over mixed congregations, the biblical answer to the question has to be 'No'.

Of course, the office *requires* spiritual gifts, and primarily the teaching and pastoring gifts, which (like other gifts) the Spirit in his freedom may bestow on women as well as men (1 Cor. 12:11) and which we are forbidden to quench (1 Thes. 5:20). However, the chief responsibility for pastoral rule or oversight necessarily rests, as Paul says in 1 Tim. 2:12, with those who have headship, i.e. with men, and the most important part of oversight will be the oversight of teaching. The cultural change whereby women are no longer expected to keep silent in mixed company allows more scope today for teaching by women than was possible in the first century, but they will teach (as they will pastor) only under the oversight of the male bishops and presbyters, and it is with them that the main burden of teaching will still rightly rest.

Paul does not say anything explicit about the oversight of the sacraments, though this was obviously included in oversight; and before long, in the interests of the strict discipline of the primitive church, the bishops and presbyters took the *administration* of the sacraments, and not just the oversight of their administration, almost wholly to themselves. Whether there is room here too for some relaxation today will depend upon how far traditionalist theologians are willing to rethink the idea of ministerial *priesthood*, and how far those (both men and women) who are calling for a change of practice are willing to be bound by any alternative form of Christian order.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>There is a fuller discussion of the whole issue in the writer's contribution to *Man, Woman and Priesthood* (ed. Peter Moore, SPCK, 1978).

**LEADING YOUR CHURCH TO GROWTH****C. Peter Wagner**

Marc Europe 224 pp. £3.95

ISBN 0 947697 22 5

This book is published in conjunction with the British Church Growth Association and has an importance out of all proportion to its size. Anyone concerned about the life of the local church will find considerable stimulation here. Indeed it is also not too much to say that anyone who trains others in pastoralia needs to be aware of the arguments in this book.

Though written in the United States and inevitably using words and phrases unfamiliar to the British ear, Dr Wagner's work is extremely relevant to the British ecclesiastical scene. The book is primarily addressed to the question of the nature of the ministry and challenges many assumptions. For example, he discusses the idea of the minister as 'enabler' and suggests that it is an inadequate and indeed dangerous misunderstanding of the minister's role.

The results of much previous research are carried further by showing, for example, how often churches have a built-in limitation in growth above 200 active members. It may be that the figure for inner-city Britain should be nearer 100 but there is no doubt of the truth of the point he is making. Wagner shows the way in which the right style of leadership can ensure that such a church continues to grow.

First impressions of this book are likely to produce a resistance, but what is written here in unfamiliar form is of great importance. Leadership is crucial in every other field of human endeavour; it must be crucial in the church: and it can be learned.

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JOHN PEARCE

**PREACHING ON SPECIAL OCCASIONS Vol. 3 Edward H. Patey**

Mowbray 1985 122 pp. £4.25 pb.

ISBN 0 264 67046 9

**PREACHING AT THE PARISH COMMUNION Denis B. Runcorn**

Mowbray 1985 137 pp. £4.25 pb.

ISBN 0 264 6706 7

Mowbrays and the College of Preachers continue to put the church in their debt through the latest volumes of sermons. At a time when few people buy sermons to read, these are really working volumes for the preachers. They are intended to stimulate thought, provide themes and offer resources for a rounded pulpit ministry.

Inevitably the volumes vary according to their authors and subject matter. The books under review are certainly widely different in their presuppositions. The last Dean of Liverpool's *Sermons on Special Occasions* is characteristic of a particular school of preachers. The sermon is an opportunity for all kinds of observations on the general themes of the service concerned. He tackles sermons for such occasions as Christian Heritage Year and gatherings of the legal profession. Inevitably this means that the sermons have limited value in the ordinary parish church. Nevertheless most clergy will discover here stimulating ideas on a wide variety of themes.

The problem is that, in the attempt to be relevant, the Dean seems to allow his own personal views to obtrude. For example, in a civic service he even

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defends the use of Lord Mayoral robes—an issue which is highly controversial for many socialists. One wonders whether it is not wiser to keep to a straight exposition of Scripture, saying only what is without question the message of the Lord without letting one's own views on controversial matters be known. Of course special occasions are particularly difficult in this regard but the principle abides: the pulpit is the place for that which is the Word of God without question—insofar as we can achieve it.

Dennis Runcorn's book will be much more useful. Here there is a real attempt to expound the Year Two Epistles of the ASB and it must be said that many of these, all too brief, sermons are models of their kind. Some of them might even be read verbatim at a short early Communion, so beautifully are they crafted. What is particularly helpful about these sermons are the apposite and illuminating illustrations. Many preachers would find this book stimulating and indeed exciting. Many lay people would find these addresses a helpful part of their preparation for the Sacrament.

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### **AFTER COMMUNION—A COLLECTION OF POST-COMMUNION PRAYERS FOR USE WITH THE ASB 1980 Charles MacDonnell**

Mowbrays 56 pp. £1.95 pb.

ISBN 0 264 67060 4

The provision of thematic readings in the 'provers' of the ASB has encouraged many to go on meditating on those themes as opportunity affords during the rest of the service. Charles MacDonnell's book is intended to provide devotional material for those who find it easier to do so through the help of a set form of words.

In his preface the author expresses the hope that the collection of prayers, reflecting the Catholic tradition, will prove doctrinally acceptable to most Anglicans. Careful study, and then attempted use, of these prayers, suggests that, while there are some helpful ideas (e.g. in Lent 3 the parallelism between God confirming His love in the sacrament, and our affirming our hope in our trials, and the prayer in the Ember weeks for 'faithful labourers to sow your word and reap the harvest of souls'), there are at least three features in these prayers which reflect the way whereby prayer, once it loses its Biblical roots, can become misleading and doctrinally defective.

First there is an outright Pelagianism. On St Bartholomew's day we are encouraged to pray that the feast of the Apostle may make us worthy of a place at the heavenly banquet. These are sentiments from Hippolytus, we know, but he did not find them in, or make them consistent with, Holy Scripture.

Secondly, there is the misunderstanding of the nature of the sacrament. Constantly the emphasis is on the feast/sacrifice we offer, especially in Appendix III, instead of reflecting the truth that in the sacrament we are the recipients of the 'benefits of His passion'.

Finally, the most dangerous tendency of such prayers is that they can rob the believer of his or her assurance. This is done not only by praying for the dead (p.42 where, in spite of the author's undertaking in the Preface, tendentious words are not put in brackets) but also by introducing the notes

of uncertainty with the use of such phrases as 'may our Paschal celebration of your Son's resurrection keep us in eternal life, and account us worthy of a place in your Kingdom' (Easter Day and Week). This reviewer does not want to appear to be nit-picking, but feels that our understanding of God is so shaped by our devotional life that these tendencies, so current in contemporary Anglicanism, but untrue to the heritage of the Reformers and the Prayer Book, cannot go unchallenged.

One of the weaknesses in much of today's Christian practice (in part consequence of the spread of the Parish Communion movement) is the frequent lack of careful preparation for receiving the sacrament. MacDonnell rectifies this by providing at Appendix I suggestions for preparation before and thanksgiving after the service.

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DAVID WHEATON

### **LENT, HOLY WEEK AND EASTER**

SPCK (also published by Church House and Cambridge University Press) 1986

302 pp. £12.50 hb. £2.95 pb.

ISBN 0 281 04204 7

These services were approved for use in an unusual way. They were not revised on the floor of the synod but were given general approval after which members sent in their amendments which were accepted or rejected. The final services did not come back to the synod.

It must be said that this book is beautifully produced and that most parishes will find something of value here. There are, for example, some very moving services of penitence suggested for the beginning of Lent. There is an exquisite arrangement of Compline, here called Night Prayer. Palm Sunday is marked by a special service which includes a very lovely prayer over the palms. 'Let these palms be for us a sign of his victory; and grant that we who bear them in his name may ever hail him as our king'. The commemoration of the departed is a refreshing new composition: 'That we, with those who have died in faith, may find mercy in the day of Christ, let us pray to the Lord'.

Suggestions are made for an Agape with Holy Communion, describing how the meal and the worship may be put together. Indeed this is an example of the general approach of the whole book which is intended to be a 'directory from which choices may be made. We think of the book,' they say 'as a manual to be used with selectivity, sensitivity and imagination.' If the users hearken to these words, many churches will find their worship in Lent greatly enriched. For example, there are, printed out here in full, both continuous readings of the passion and also the same in dramatic form.

The Maundy Thursday service is less satisfactory. It uses the unfortunate confession which speaks of us as having 'marred your image in us'. There is provision for a 'Watch' which would naturally refer to a period of prayer before the Reserved Sacrament. However this is not explicitly stated and the Liturgical Commission suggest that a watch could be kept without it. Nevertheless one must be concerned at the re-entry of this unreformed practice as a possibility within the Church of England.



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The same hesitations apply to the Good Friday service for which the provision is interesting and useful except for the introduction of the 'Proclamation of the Cross' which, of course, is parallel to the Veneration of the Cross in the unreformed rite. All that is said here is that 'Appropriate devotions follow'.

A very useful lectionary for Holy Week is provided and the special Easter Liturgy is a treasury of good things.

One of the most fascinating items in the book is the 'Form of Absolution' which departs from the Prayer Book patterns and asserts. 'I declare that you are absolved from your sins.'

It is to be hoped that users will select carefully from this volume. Certainly they will find here much of real value and beauty, but it remains something of a 'curate's egg'.

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JOHN PEARCE

### **GOD IS LOVE: Communion Addresses J.W. Alexander**

Banner of Truth 1860 Revised 1985 366 pp. £2.95 pb.

ISBN 0 85151 459 6

It is unfashionable today to print sermons or indeed to read them but, in every generation there are some sermons which should be preserved for posterity. Such are the sermons of J.W. Alexander who ministered in New York in the first half of the Nineteenth Century. This collection is exclusively made up of sermons preached at the Lord's Supper and concentrates upon the Cross and Death of the Lord.

Alexander is familiar to us through his moving translation of Gerhardt's 'O Sacred Heart' and it is a great privilege for the church in our day to have these sermons in print. Curiously, they are extraordinarily relevant to the concerns of the 1980s on this side of the Atlantic. For example he points out the appalling dangers of pantheism, 'Instead of believing nothing, it is believing everything ... All systems are voted to have a form of truth. All worship has something good in it, whether addressed to Jesus, to Mary, to Jove or to Juggernaut.' These quotations come from the sermon on 'God is Love' in which Alexander rigorously teases out what this really signifies. For example he points out that 'To us, as redeemed, God is love, yes, all love; but we dare not assert that there are in the Holy One no powers but these, or no powers but those we know.' Again in the sermon on 'The Two Natures of Christ', he writes, 'The wrath of God is not an unmeaning term; it was due to us; it was borne by Jesus.'

A particularly moving sermon is that on 'The Hymn of the Eucharist' where he meditates on the fact that Jesus sang. He points out that 'it is only when the death of Jesus becomes a secondary matter that his divinity is denied, that Socinian criticism begins to amend the hymn book ... and weakens or removes all expressions of love to a divine and dying Saviour'.

Again he points out in that same sermon that 'We talk of our need of revival in many things—and justly—but what we greatly need is a revival of the spirit of worship.'

The sermon on 'Communion in Christ's body and blood' is particularly profound. Let a critic read this sermon and he will never again suggest that the Evangelical has a 'low view of the Lord's Supper'. But those who are

Evangelicals will profit greatly from meditating upon the sermon and may then come with even greater reverence to that Holy Table.

This is, then a truly precious book as it speaks so surely and in so fresh a way to our condition today. May it have a very wide circulation.

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JOHN PEARCE

**VIDEO VIOLENCE AND CHILDREN** edited G. Barlow, A. Hill  
 Hodder & Stoughton 1985 182 pp. £4.95 pb. ISBN 0 340 38461 1

To find a review of a work with such a title in *Churchman* may seem odd to our regular readers attuned to works of theological significance, but no apology is made for including it as it is a book of more than passing importance to all Christians who have the opportunity in their daily lives to influence the nurture and education of young children, whether as parents, grandparents, uncles, or aunts. If one includes in this category those who are godparents of unconfirmed children there are probably few regular readers who will be able to ignore in good conscience what is contained in its pages, and to deny its claim for a personal, vigorous and immediate response.

Let me stress at the outset that readers of this book without previous experience of what is politely called a 'video nasty', and unexposed to the routine diet of violence and horror which is served up to titillate the readers of the so-called 'popular' newspapers, will be nauseated by the compelling evidence of what young children *from all walks of life* are suffering through video films which have been hired or bought supposedly for the private gratification of adults with warped minds and which are intended to be kept safely under lock and key for 'adults' only.

Why this book is so important is that it is not written as a Christian response to an anti-Christian threat in our midst. It is not a polemic against screen violence and pornography. It is a painstakingly understated analysis of a research programme, initiated by a group of Parliamentarians and Churchmen and directed by Dr. Clifford Hill, the results of which were published in 1984. That research established for the first time in this country what video films were being seen by children. This book contains an expertly argued and carefully referenced commentary and analysis of the effect which the habitual exposé to what at best can be described as amoral kitchen-sink fantasy, and at worst as a mish-mash of horror, violence and pornography has now, and will increasingly have, on our nation's next generation of parents.

After the peddling of drugs, the mass-merchandising of pornographic material of all kinds is probably the world's greatest growth industry. Because the potential profits from pornography are so enormous there is a multitude of businesses today with some kind of vested interest in its further growth. Just as it has seemed almost impossible to legislate against the abuse of tobacco and alcohol, although the evils to which these products when abused give rise, have been accepted as facts for years past, so it is with pornography and its effect on the young. When the research report was published in 1984 it was given little favourable coverage by the media. Why should it be? If the report had been accepted at its face value and given editorial endorsement by the press, television and film industries, *much of*

## Churchman

*their forward commercial planning would have had to have been abandoned, and some businesses would have failed in consequence.*

As you read through this book there seem to be only three kinds of reaction to the horrors it contains. If it is: 'I just don't believe it', then please consider whether Lord Coggan, who wrote the Foreword, is the sort of man who would associate himself with the publication of unreliable or sensational evidence. If it is: 'It can't be as bad as that', then consider whether it should be allowed to continue, even if the true picture were only half as bad; and, finally, if it is: 'These findings, horrifying though they are, are not relevant to *my child/grandchild/niece/nephew/godson etc ...*', remember that this book, above all else demonstrates that **young and innocent children are most often introduced to these evils by the children of someone else.**

Read the book for yourself first if you need to study the evidence. Then put it in the hands of someone you care for who has a young child; and take every opportunity in the future to protect the next generation from the evil in our midst.

I can do no better than to quote the last four lines of the book:

We do not wish to be melodramatic, but we desire to emphasize the serious social consequences of our findings. We are faced with a fundamental choice concerning the kind of society in which we wish to live. Today we still have the choice. Tomorrow we may not.

Watford, Hertfordshire

MALCOLM BARKER

## In Brief

### **LET THE BIBLE TEACH YOU CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE** J.T. Davis

Paternoster Press 1985 138 pp. £3.95 pb.

ISBN 0 8364 407 1

Having a copy of Torrey's *What the Bible teaches* I thought I would compare this handbook with one published nearly a hundred years ago. In every way it proves superior as it is more compact and yet more comprehensive. The headings under each subject are of more value and the subjects are more objectively covered. This is a book well worth possessing. Written from a conservative standpoint, it covers a vast range of doctrinal points and does so from various points of view. Scriptures are given, for example, for three forms of church government, congregational, presbyterian and episcopal. Sanctification, Perseverance, Baptism and the Lord's Supper are all covered with balanced notes and helpful bibliographies. At no point did I find the Scriptures stretched to meet one viewpoint. As I read the book the more I wished I had had such a compendium earlier in my ministry.

Stamford, Lincolnshire

JOHN R. BOURNON

### **THE LAY CENTERED CHURCH** Leonard Doohan

Winston Press USA 1984 175 pp. £6.95 pb.

ISBN 0 86683 808 2

Those who wish to understand how far the theology of the laity has progressed in the Roman Catholic church will find this book illuminating, not least because it is in a sense an exposition of the Vatican II position on this subject. But Protestants have much to learn here: 'We really do not have a spirituality of all the baptised but a presumed state of perfection (the clerical or religious state) which is presented in a modified form to everyone else (the laity)'. Is this also true for non-Roman Catholics?

34 Milner Street, London SW3

JOHN PEARCE

### **THIS IS OUR FAITH** Maurice Wood

Hodder & Stoughton 1985 165 pp. £1.95

ISBN 0 340 38602 9

Bishop Maurice Wood has made his position very clear with regard to the orthodox faith publicly. Now he has taken the opportunity to do so in print. He does so with little spirit of polemic. As always he writes as an evangelist, longing to point people to the Saviour. Drawing from his experience of 45 years in the ministry, he certainly fulfils what the Archbishop of Canterbury says of his style as being anecdotal, supremely confident and rooted in respect for the Scriptures and love for the faith of this land.

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This is a book that can be handed to any one who is distressed by what is being said by the Bishop of Durham and others. I found it a very useful complement to the book by David Holloway, though obviously intended for a slightly different set of readers.

Stamford, Lincolnshire

JOHN R. BOURNON

### **A SHORT HISTORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH** J. Derek Holmes and Bernard W. Bickers

Burns Oates 315 pp. £12.00 hb., £5.95 pb.

ISBN 0 86012 133 X

Here is a remarkably successful one volume history of the Roman Catholic church. It is objective, reasonably fair and fascinating. It is written from an English point of view as both authors lecture at Ushaw College Durham.

34 Milner Street, London SW3

JOHN PEARCE

### **TO BE A PILGRIM** Basil Hume

SPCK 223 pp. £7.50 hb., £4.25 pb.

ISBN 0 281 04109 1

Basil Hume's 'spiritual notebook' has by now become widely read by Christians of all denomination. As the prologue says, it is not intended to be read straight through but is a series of jottings to stimulate thought and prayer. There is much to ponder on here. This is not a carefully tooled theological work but it is the more valuable for that reason, for we are enabled to overhear the Cardinal at thought and at prayer. For example the Cardinal writes, 'The Mass is always a sacrifice, the Sacrifice of Calvary re-presented, made present for us once again so that we may be in some manner involved in it.'

34 Milner Street, London SW3

JOHN PEARCE

### **THE LION HANDBOOK TO THE BIBLE** edited David and Pat Alexander

first published in 1973

Lion Publishing 1983 (revised edition) 680 pp. £12.95

ISBN 0 86648 320 6

Albatross Books, Australia 1983 Aust.\$24.95

ISBN 0 86780 271 6

Many students begin theological training with little substantial knowledge of the contents of the Bible. They have to contend with 'the assumed results of modern criticism' and manifold opinions about the Bible without an adequate knowledge of what the books are about. The *Lion Handbook* is precisely the book to put into people's hands as a preparation for later serious study.

However, it is also a book which will help any ordinary Christian to acquire a basic understanding of the Scriptures. Here is one of those few hardback books which ought to be available on every church bookstall. There is little attempt to come to terms with the critical problems but, for what it sets out to be, it is superb.

The revised edition is much the same as the earlier one, except that it has been reset and there are minor revisions, mainly in the archaeological field. A particular advantage is the much clearer type-setting.

Quite simply, this is one of those books which it is difficult to put down.

34, Milner Street, London SW3

JOHN PEARCE

**SACRIFICE AND THE DEATH OF CHRIST** Frances Young

first published by SPCK in 1975

SCM Press 1983 150 pp. £3.50

ISBN 0 334 02324 6

This is a reissue of a book first published in 1975 and reviewed in *The Churchman* in July 1976 (vol.90, p.221f.). The reviewer on that occasion (S. S. Smalley), while commending the merits of the book, noted that it 'deals very cursorily with the NT evidence for interpreting the meaning of Christ's sacrifice', and hoped that the author would later make this grave deficiency good. Regrettably she has not taken the present opportunity of doing so. The book is more a discussion of patristic thought than biblical, and it accepts in rather too facile a manner standard liberal interpretations of biblical teaching, as the background to what the Fathers say.

Latimer House, Oxford

ROGER BECKWITH

**JOURNEY TO THE LAKE DISTRICT FROM CAMBRIDGE: A Summer Diary 1779**

**William Wilberforce** edited C. E. Wrangham

Oriel Press/Routledge & Kegan Paul 1983 96 pp. hardcover £6.95

ISBN 0 85362 204 3

paperback £4.95

ISBN 0 85362 205 1

The earliest manuscript of the *Emancipator*, discovered and tastefully edited by a descendant, and illustrated by contemporary prints and maps. The undergraduate Wilberforce was only nineteen years old at the beginning of his tour. He was not yet a Christian, but shows many of his later qualities: love of nature, inquisitive mind, sharp eye for detail, sense of humour. A happy little footnote for the 150th anniversary (1983).

Rose Ash House, South Molton, Devon

JOHN POLLOCK

**STUDYING THE OLD TESTAMENT: From Tradition to Canon**

**Annemarie Ohler** translated by David Cairns

English text: T. & T. Clark 1985 £17.50

ISBN 0 567 09335 2

Originally published in German twelve years ago, the German title of this book *Gattungen im AT* gives a much better idea of its contents and purpose than the English. It is in fact an exercise in form criticism, which it attempts to apply constructively to the Old Testament, in so far as the usual sceptical assumptions and speculative methods of form criticism (which it takes for granted) allow. It is pleasantly written, and will lead every reader to reflect on the setting in which different parts of the Old Testament may have been composed, but it will only be satisfying to those who still regard form criticism as the most adequate tool for biblical interpretation. Despite the English title, it contains nothing of significance on the question of the canon.

Latimer House, Oxford

ROGER BECKWITH

**THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION James Buchanan**

Banner of Truth, Edinburgh 1985 514 pp. £7.59 (cloth)

**THE OFFICE AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT James Buchanan**

Banner of Truth, Edinburgh 1984 284 pp. £5.50 (cloth)

**THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT C.R. Vaughan**

Banner of Truth, Edinburgh 1984 415 pp. £6.95 (cloth)

Banner of Truth have recently reissued these classic works of nineteenth-century Presbyterian theology, for which we must all be grateful. We are apt to forget how rich that period was in serious theological writing, in sharp contrast to our own time, and it is important to have these books readily available at a most reasonable price.

Each volume is quite separate from the others, but the general approach is similar. All are concerned to bring out the rich heritage of Reformed doctrine, and apply it to the lives of individuals. Buchanan's work on Justification has a most useful historical summary of the doctrine, and a fascinating discussion on the position being taken by the Tractarians of his time. On the Holy Spirit he is more pastoral, and includes in his work examples of conversion drawn from the New Testament (Cornelius, Lydia).

Vaughan takes a different approach to the same theme of the Holy Spirit, but he also concentrates heavily on the Spirit's work of regeneration. In a time when 'gifts of the Spirit' tends to conjure up thoughts of the extraordinary, it is refreshing to find a treatment of the subject which is both down-to-earth and applicable to all Christians.

Here are three books which belong on every minister's shelf — an excellent present to anyone who may not have acquired them yet.

Oak Hill College, London N14

GERALD BRAY

**PRAYERS OF ST AUGUSTINE Barry Ulanov**

Seabury Press 1983

Distributed by Geoffrey Chapman 135 pp. £6.50 pb.

ISBN 0 8164 2454 3

Here is a book of devotion which will prove of rich usefulness to a great number of people. Unfortunately this is a paperback and bound in a rather unattractive cover. Nevertheless Mr Ulanov has produced a fascinating volume. Drawing on the various writings of Augustine of Hippo, he has gathered the various prayers and devotions under headings such as 'Trust', 'Insistent Desire' and 'Splendour'. The translations are freely adapted from nineteenth and early twentieth century versions and read with real beauty. The editor asserts that in Augustine, 'Prayer becomes not only a talking to God but a dialogue with self' and it is this which makes him so relevant to late twentieth century man.

Even those who are very familiar with Augustine's writings will find this collection useful. Although published in the USA, the book is available through Geoffrey Chapman in the UK.

34 Milner Street, London SW3

JOHN PEARCE

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## Other Books Received

**Churchman Publishing Limited** P. Mayhew, *Unemployment under the judgement of God*, Volume One Contemporary Christian Social Concerns Series, 1985, £6.95

**Cowley Publications, U.S.A.** M.L. Smith, *Reconciliation: Preparing for Confession in the Episcopal Church*, 1985, \$8.95

**Eerdmans U.S.A./Paternoster Press** E. Routley ed., *Rejoice in the Lord*, 1985 (no price); W.G. Morrice, *Joy in the New Testament*, 1984, £4.95; G. Goldsworthy, *The Gospel in Revelation*, 1984, £3.95

**Hodder & Stoughton** W.A. Heth & G.J. Wenham, *Jesus & Divorce*, 1984, £5.95

**J.S.O.T.** G.W. Coats, ed., *Saga Legend Tale Novella Fable*, 1985, £14.50

**Oxford University Press** R.M. Miller, *Harry Emerson Fosdick*, 1985, £30

**S.C.M. Press** P.R. Clifford, *Politics and the Christian Vision*, 1984, £5.95

**S.P.C.K.** J.A. Walter, *Hope on the Dole*, 1985, £3.95