

# Book Reviews

## **WHATEVER HAPPENED TO HELL? John Blanchard**

Evangelical Press Darlington 1993 336pp. No price ISBN 0 88234 303 8

Interest in the subject of hell has revived among evangelical Christians in recent years, and not before time. It is a subject nobody likes to talk about, and most of us wish would go away. But evil, and the punishment it deserves, are realities which we cannot afford to ignore, however unpleasant they may be. In this new and extremely comprehensive book, the experienced evangelist, John Blanchard, reminds us of just how important—and how unpleasant—it is.

The style of the book is popular, and there are many illustrations from everyday life. At times it is hard to know whether the author is writing for Christians or for seekers, though undoubtedly most of his readers will be believers who want to find out more about an area of Scripture with which they are not familiar enough. Certainly, there is a great deal of excellent material here for the preacher, and if the author is correct in his assessment that few clergy possess anything on the subject of hell, then here is a book which can be recommended.

For in spite of the popular style, this book is a serious, and at times deep, study of the Bible's teaching. Mr Blanchard shows, beyond the shadow of doubt, that hell is a major theme of Jesus' preaching, which cannot be ignored in any true presentation of the Gospel. The holiness of God and the seriousness of sin are things which retain an awesome power to challenge men and women to turn to Christ. It may be true that these things were exaggerated to the point of distortion by some nineteenth-century evangelists, but if so, that day is long gone.

For as Mr Blanchard points out most effectively, evangelical leaders today are tempted to dismiss the subject almost as readily as their liberal colleagues have done for some time. In particular, he shows how the idea of annihilation after death (instead of eternal punishment) has moved from being the preserve of heretical groups like Jehovah's Witnesses to becoming what amounts to neo-evangelical orthodoxy. In this book we see clearly how feelings have been allowed to take the place of facts, with the result that unpleasant truths are pushed to one side. It will never be easy to preach about hell because it will never be easy to strike the necessary balance between compassion and justice. This book recognises the problem, and sets out to deal with it. The evangelical world owes Mr Blanchard a great debt for reminding it of something which had been almost forgotten, and it can only be hoped that preachers and teachers will take the message given here with the utmost seriousness.

Beeson Divinity School, Samford University, Birmingham, Alabama GERALD BRAY

## **MIRACLES ARE IMPOSSIBLE: YOU DECIDE Timothy Pain**

Battle Books 1994 96pp. £6.99

ISBN 1 898797 00 8

Appalled by the media coverage of Morris Cerullo's Mission to London, Timothy Pain has set out to put the record straight. In a covering letter to the Editor of *Churchman*, he writes:

I found many of the criticisms to be either fraudulent or intellectually flawed. So I decided to produce an impartial pictorial report of Mission to London which told the whole story; which missed nothing out; which placed events in their true context; which tried to report without passing judgement.

This claim sits uncomfortably with the acknowledgement at the beginning of the book that Greg Mauro, Cerullo's European Director, was the man who suggested the book to him in the first place. Timothy Pain has written before in support of Morris Cerullo, defending in particular his fund-raising literature and financial activities, criticisms of which, he alleged, were without 'any foundation in fact'.<sup>1</sup> He has also co-authored a book with Cerullo,<sup>2</sup> and has allowed Cerullo to write the closing section of this book. Pain's impartial stance must therefore be questioned at the outset.

The result is an attractive, glossy production with 77 photographs in 96 pages, nearly half of which are in full colour. It is published under Pain's own imprint as 'none of the main Christian publishers would back the project'.

Pain's letter continues:

MCWE [Cerullo's organization] seem to be satisfied that I have given a fair report of the mission, and have kindly arranged distribution of the book to their own constituency. Hence this package is coming to you directly from them . . .

It is not stated whether MCWE has also funded this lavish production. One is left to assume it.

How well, then, has Pain achieved his objectives? Certainly the photographs are fine and the book provides a pleasant souvenir for the coffee table. But what about the substance?

Unfortunately, the gloss of the photographs seems also to pervade the text. So we learn that at the prayer launch:

Although the crowd was predominantly Black, there were many more Whites than expected. It was the first hint that Mission to London 1993 would be an even more accurate reflection of multi-racial London than expected.

Of the soloist, we learn that:

Dennis' rich voice filled every cubic inch of Earls Court's huge expanse; it rolled up and over the rows of seats, reaching into the heights of the uppermost balcony, massaging the hearts and ears of the people and somehow sucking them closer to God.

Of the preacher, we read that most British people would have read newspaper reports describing Cerullo as 'cajoling, screaming, shouting and chanting . . . whipping up a crowd of susceptible Blacks into a wild frenzy'. However, we are assured, 'His Mission to London sermons were nothing like that'. This is then contradicted by the narrative which goes on to say:

The volume and intensity built towards an extreme crescendo . . . and by the end, the utterly awesome volume. Surely there are few preachers who can match his decibels at the end of a thirty minute sermon!

As for the response, 'The number of people who went forward in response to each appeal was astonishing'. We are told a minimum of twelve hundred new Christians were counselled at length and linked to a church. MCWE statistics from 1992, however, indicated that 94% of those attending were already church members, which means that these meetings were not so much a mission as a pentecostal convention.

This book is ostensibly about miracles. What does he have to say? 'It was impossible to pretend with integrity that nothing had occurred . . . that nobody was helped or healed. But that was absurd.' 'Genuine physical symptoms and pains had been relieved.'

Mr. Pain carried out his own enquiry. He contacted seventy people who claimed to be healed. Of these, nine claimed an immediate, permanent cure. Two of these claimed to be cured of addiction to cocaine, two from cigarette smoking, two from repeated suicide attempts, one from neck pain, one from restricted knee movements, and one from partial deafness. No medical verification was sought. For the rest we learn only of 'improvements', a word used in this book as though it were a synonym for 'miracles'.

I think my own approach had been more satisfactory. I asked Cerullo publicly to make his own selection of his three best cases from 1992 and put them forward for public scrutiny. According to his publicity on billboards all over London in 1993, he had two thousand two hundred and fifty cases from which to choose. In addition, he advertised for cases to come forward from his mailing list and set up his own medical panel to examine the best stories. A year later, he had not a single example of a physical miracle to present to the world. They collapsed like a pack of cards.<sup>3</sup> As one of his own medical panel reported, 'there is no evidence that anything has occurred that is outside the realm of normal clinical experience'.<sup>4</sup> But none of this is so much as mentioned by Timothy Pain.

One further matter needs to be reported. On page 28 is a picture of a rather harassed, balding man. The caption reads 'A TV crew interviews Cerullo's most relentless critic—for the umpteenth time'. His name does not occur in the text, but one is left to assume that it was particularly this man's criticisms that were either 'fraudulent or intellectually flawed'. However, I can testify that at no stage did Mr. Pain consult him in preparation for his impartial report, 'which told the whole story; which missed nothing out; which placed everything in its true context' (p. 13). That in itself speaks bounds about the integrity of this book.

At the end of the book, this mysterious figure features again. Pain writes 'I saw blows which were thrown by one of Cerullo's fiercest critics at the MTL security guard who—rightly—refused him entry to the press box'. In the interests of 'the whole story', perhaps I may be allowed to supplement the details?

Now I just happened to be there with my son at the invitation of a BBC film crew and had an excellent view of what happened. It was I that was being forbidden access to the press box, having been called in by the reporter, and was prevented even from speaking to my son. Security guards barred the way and one of them held a flimsy curtain across the doorway. Eventually, as no amount of discussion would prevail, I pulled at the curtain hard enough to dislodge it from his grip. Several minutes later, to my utter amazement, one of the guards accused me of punching him. I was then physically ejected from the building and was punched by one of his guards in an entirely unprovoked attack on the way. I can categorically say, and if necessary will do so under oath, that no blows were thrown by me

at anyone. If they have evidence that I assaulted one of their staff—and, extraordinarily, Pain claims to be a witness—then why didn't they prosecute me? Instead, they muddied my name in a press release, claiming they had filed assault charges with Kensington Police and that mine was a 'ruthless emotional campaign of a troubled man'. *The News of the World*, *The Times* and the B.B.C. contacted me after receiving this press release. I advised all of them to contact Kensington Police to verify the story. None of them came back to me and I have heard nothing about it since.

When I began my investigations into Morris Cerullo, I was interested only in his miracle claims from my perspective as a doctor. Since then I have learned the way he raises his money, promotes his cause, distorts the truth and hassles his opponents. It has been a very rough and unpleasant ride. This glossy publication is just the latest piece of propaganda from an outfit whose integrity seems to me to be fundamentally in question. *Res ipsa loquitur*.

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PETER MAY

## NOTES

- 1 'Morris Cerullo - the Best and the Worst', Timothy Pain. *Renewal*, October 1992, no. 197, p. 10.
- 2 'Forgiven!' Cerullo and Pain, Kingsway 1993.
- 3 A detailed report of my findings, looking at twenty two of Cerullo's cases, was published in the U.S.A. in the Winter 93/94 edition of *Free Inquiry*, entitled 'Miracle or Mirage?' (Vol. 14, no. 1).
- 4 Report on the Medical Review Group of MCWE, Dr. M.J. Soole, June 1993.

## **MORE THINGS IN HEAVEN AND EARTH God and the Scientists**

**A. van den Beukel, translated by J. Bowden**

S.C.M. Press, London (English Translation) 1991 166pp. £8.50

ISBN 0 334 02504 4

Professor van den Beukel holds the chair of Science in the Technical University of Delft. In this beautifully written book (1990), which it is sheer pleasure to read in this translation by John Bowden, he sets out to confute the *dictum* of a Nobel Prizewinner (Simon van der Meer) that 'as a physicist you have to have a split personality if you are still to believe in God'. In your reviewer's judgment he does this persuasively and convincingly. His style is unconventional and all the more pleasing for that. It moves on the personal and intimate level rather than on that of abstract logical principles; and his points are sometimes made in a way that charms by its almost poetic elegance. But it is rationally impressive all the same. It is difficult to summarize his arguments in a short space, but some of his chapter headings are as follows: 'Understanding Everything', about the unified theory of physics which will explain everything, including us; 'The End of Objective Reality', the Quantum revolution; 'Aspects', the more poetic side of experience; 'Four physicists and God', Newton, Pascal, Einstein and Stephen Hawking; 'Physics: A Way to God?', a devastating criticism of Paul Davies, a noted physicist who has

recently answered 'Yes'; 'How Do We Prove Anything?', the question of testimony; 'Two Ways', science and faith; and 'Intersections', an examination of points where faith and science interact and confront each other, such as belief in miracles, personal behaviour and social policy. It will be seen that the scientific focus is on physics; Darwin, for instance, is hardly mentioned. The author is not a full conservative theologically, but several times he quotes H (not L) Berkhof as 'a real theologian'. His devotional spirit is very evident, not least in the texts he uses to preface his last four chapters: Heb. 11:1, 1 John 1:1, Ps. 139:24-25 and Ps. 119:19. Altogether this is a very thoughtful and worthwhile book, and one I much enjoyed. It would be suitable for lending to any well-informed and open-minded scientific sceptic.

There is a Bibliography of two pages, and an Index of Names of two.

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DOUGLAS SPANNER

### **MEMBERS ONLY?—IS THE CHURCH BECOMING TOO EXCLUSIVE? Ted Harrison**

Triangle, London 1994 £4.99

ISBN 0 281047 09 X

This stimulating book is by Ted Harrison, a former B.B.C. religious affairs correspondent. The church is becoming an exclusive club, no longer open to all. The Church of England is becoming too 'Christian' and losing contact with the nation. This is a bigger threat to the church than fussing over the ordination of women; in a few years' time this will have been forgotten.

If Harrison is correct, the current emphasis on 'commitment' and a confident conversionist mentality is actually creating problems for evangelism rather than solving them.

Harrison is aware of 'The New Folk-Faith', a willingness to explore questions of meaning. All the 'Big Ideas' of this century have collapsed. There is a vacuum of meaning in the nation. We are now 'post-modern'.

Unfortunately the author has an extremely individualistic understanding of Christian commitment. He says that '... not being a clubby person, I am deterred from seeking too close an involvement in a worshipping community'. However it is only when there is a determined nucleus of those who are prepared to get cracking on the practical problems of maintenance and ministry that there can be a church at all. Often churches that are most motivated by the gospel are the most open. A.N. Wilson's criticism of the frenzy of much church life is quoted (Wilson has since opted out of Christianity). I sympathise with this observation, but there might be less frenzy if those who enjoy peaceful prayers in our ancient churches were to roll up their sleeves and join in.

The author's idea of pastoral care is drawn from his parson father. He cannot see that changed times mean that increasingly the rural church will have to be run by its members without the paternal oversight of a resident clergyman. He speaks of the sense of 'timelessness' of old churches. But 'timelessness' is meaningless. It is escape from present realities which Jesus always faced. It is the religion of the ruined abbey, the lost past, the nostalgic desire for the recovery of that which is beyond our grasp, the entombed memories.

Yet there is a timely warning for all who wish to see the gospel preached to our

nation. How can we be 'A church for the unchurched' in Harrison's phrase? Here lies the value of the book—a sharp reminder for all who see the future of Anglicanism as a sectarian group, Christianity as a religious ghetto.

Where is the sensitive combination of confident congregations, openness to community and willingness to listen and learn from those who cannot dot the i's and cross the t's of everything 'we' take for granted? Who is secure enough and sufficient for these things? That is the question asked by this book.

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## **A PERFECT FREEDOM: RELIGIOUS LIBERTY IN PENNSYLVANIA**

**J. William Frost**

Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1990 221pp. £37.50

ISBN 0 521 38546 8

Relations between Church and state have always been a fascinating subject, and perhaps nowhere more so than in contemporary America. There, as we all know, there has been a conscious, and in historical terms unique, attempt to dechristianise public life in the name of religious freedom. Many conservative Christian groups have opposed this trend, but without much success. The paradox, in which the most Christian nation in the Western world (in terms of weekly church attendance) is the one most determined to extirpate any official sign of Christianity, especially puzzles foreigners, who cannot understand why, in a democracy, the majority of the population can be so easily muzzled by a determined majority of atheists and freethinkers.

Some insight into the concept of religious freedom, and the way in which it has been applied in the U.S.A., can be gleaned from this excellent study of the situation in Pennsylvania. Like many of the other colonies, it was founded by religious people for religious reasons, but in this case the people concerned were Quakers. This made Pennsylvania unique in colonial times, when it was one of the few places where Americans enjoyed equality before the law, regardless of their religious profession. This led to conflicts, especially between Anglicans (who wanted a state-supported establishment) and Quakers, but these never amounted to anything. By the time of the Revolution, Protestants of many different denominations were to be found in the colony.

The effects of 1776 were ambiguous. On the one hand, Pennsylvania was taken to be the model for the United States as a whole, and in drafting the first amendment to the Constitution, the legislators had the Pennsylvanian concept of religious liberty in their minds. On the other hand, the Revolution led to an abridgement of that liberty, in that Quakers and other pacifist groups were not allowed to maintain their neutrality in the face of hostilities, even to the point of being coerced (on occasion) into bearing arms.

Eventually an equilibrium was reached in the state constitution of 1790, which remained essentially unchanged until after 1945. All religious groups were free to maintain and propagate their own beliefs, but it was understood that the state was founded on Christian (Protestant) moral principles. These were frequently enshrined in state law, and assent to them was required of office-holders and legislators. This second element gradually faded out, but the fundamentally Christian underpinnings of Pennsylvania society remained unchallenged. Only when the fed-

eral courts intervened to declare various aspects of Pennsylvania practice unconstitutional was the traditional system dismantled, and even then, there was evidence that a majority of the population did not want it.

The author points out the supreme irony—that Pennsylvania, which had been the model for the understanding of religious liberty as enshrined in the American Constitution, became one of the chief offenders against that Constitution as it came to be interpreted in the 1950s and later, even though in fact it had hardly changed at all! The book is also honest enough to show that in some ways Pennsylvanians are less free now than they were in colonial times, most notably in the profession of pacifist ideas.

The book is well researched and clearly documented, though it is not too obscure for a foreigner to be able to follow the main arguments. As a contribution to the study of Church-state relations in the U.S.A. it is a major work, and deserves to be read by anyone seriously interested in that subject.

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**THE AMERICAN HOUR, A TIME OF RECKONING AND THE ONCE AND FUTURE ROLE OF FAITH** Os Guinness  
Macmillan Free Press, New York 1993 459pp. \$24.95

Today in the United States there is not one culture but two—and the two are at war with each other. To identify these as the political right and left is an oversimplification. Certain contrasts are appropriate: one is religious, one is secular. One is traditional, the other is liberal. One focuses on the family, the other on the individual. One finds its justification in responsibilities, the other in rights. One allies itself with middle institutions like the Boy Scouts, the Churches, 4-H, Labour Unions and the Moral Majority; the other allies itself with the universities, the media, aggrieved minorities and feminists. One looks back to America's first faith which was Protestant and evangelical. The other looks beyond America's second and third faiths (generalized Protestant, and Protestant/Catholic/Jew, respectively) to America's fourth faith which is secular humanism.

But which is America? The historic answer has been more the former of the above than the latter. But it has never been that simple, as Os Guinness shows in this book which is the fruit of many years' research at the Brookings Institution in Washington DC. Writing in the spirit of Alexis de Toqueville who recorded his impressions of America after his travels in the 1830s, Os Guinness, a sociologist and the son of British missionaries to China, seeks to unravel the riddle which is modern America, as well as sound a warning that the world's last remaining superpower may be powerless to fulfil its destiny at just that time when it is most needed as the guiding light for would-be democratic societies.

*The American Hour* is being praised by people as diverse as John Cardinal O'Connor, Archbishop of New York, and James Sire, Editor of Inter-Varsity Press, not only because of its comprehensive critique of modern American society, but also because the author answers C.S. Lewis's call that what is needed today is not more Christian people writing about Christianity, but more people writing Christianly about other things.

America has lost faith in its own ideals. Openness, dynamism, self-reliance,

egalitarianism, toughness, risk-taking and enterprise all had their roots in a matrix of democratic experiences which arose out of convictions surrounding faith, freedom, the flag and the family. These defined the American character and underlay American institutions. They made America simultaneously morally conservative and socially dynamic.

Tested and strengthened in the first three crises that America sustained—the Revolutionary War, the Civil War and the Great Depression—they underwent a seismic shock in the 1960s which was America's decade of cultural revolution. Contrary to most people's view, the Sixties did not see a triumph of liberalism over conservatism. It was rather a reaction against a liberalism which had been gradually gaining ground, but which was perceived to be void of moral legitimacy. From every corner—the drug culture, rock music, the Anti-War movement, the sexual revolution, the movement for racial equality, the new awareness of multiple social problems (ghetto violence, pollution, the deterioration of the black family, *etc.*), the God-is-dead movement—it seemed that the world was coming apart. Society was turned upside down.

Urban America was now dominant over rural America, secular liberalism had trounced orthodox Protestantism, and the hedonistic life-style had relegated the Puritan ethic to museums.

Guinness surveys the Fifties ('The bland leading the bland'), the Sixties ('Rich kids' radicalism'), the Seventies ('the Me decade') and the Eighties ('Self-indulgent optimism') as a way of showing that for all the apparent reaction to the Sixties, they were the most aggressive rejection of dominant values that any society had ever permitted. Their legacy is the Nineties in which all the clashes and counter clashes of the three previous decades have led to a showdown phase in the crisis of cultural authority.

What has been lost is essentially the right of faith to be heard in the discussion of national issues. The triumph of secularism has relegated the religious voice to the private sphere, and has turned the public square into the scene of a series of divisive and bitter disputes (school prayer, the sanctuary movement, textbooks, abortion, homosexuality) in which any viewpoint informed by religious conviction is inherently disallowed. And yet, paradoxically, America remains the most religious nation in the world, and a living contradiction to the widely-held notion that industrialisation and education inevitably lead to the gradual erosion of religious belief.

Pitted against each other in the current culture wars are the absolutists against the relativists, the fuming fanatics versus the intolerant tolerants, the fundamentalists versus the secularists. Neither understands the other, nor are they capable of talking civilly to each other. Guinness, who headed the Williamsburg Charter Foundation—a multifaith group which produced the influential secondary school course on religion entitled 'Living With Our Deepest Differences'—believes that only when secularists see that their brand of humanism is as much a religion as the fundamentalism they castigate, and only when evangelicals accept principled pluralism and give up their desire to restore the past, will there be any hope of a creative dialogue which could lead to a recovery of national ideals.

The urgency with which Guinness writes arises out of his conviction that modernity has presented us with a set of problems to which secularism has no answers:

modern cities make people closer yet stranger at once; modern weapons bring their



users to the point of genocide and impotence simultaneously; the modern media promise facts but deliver fantasies; modern education introduces mass schooling but fosters subliteracy; modern technologies of communication encourage people to speak more and say less, as on the telephone, and to hear more and listen less, as on the television; modern life-styles offer do-it-yourself freedom crowned as the winner in the All-American value contest just as the notion of the self has all but disappeared; modern rejection of restraints has ended in addictions; modern styles of relationships make people hungry for intimacy and authenticity but more fearful than ever of phoniness, manipulation, and power games; modern therapies multiply the promise of cures but make people ill with the frantic pursuit of health; modern control of the planet leads directly to the sense of the world out of control; modern humanization of life deepens a spreading feeling of existential despair.

Guinness concludes with a look at four possible scenarios for the future. First, a triumphant secularism in which faith will remain a socially irrelevant relic. Should this happen, then he sees no intrinsic reason why long-surviving American characteristics such as self-reliance, equality, voluntarism, communal trust and public confidence will persist. Secondly, America will enter a slow but definite national decline. With spiritual and moral underpinnings shot out from under, subjectivism, luxury, weariness, superstition and preoccupation will set in like *rigor mortis*. Thirdly, there will be a reassertion of authoritarianism either from the socialist left or the nationalist right. It will be semi-religious in nature although it will hardly conform to the Total Church nightmare so feared by liberals. The fourth possible outcome is a genuine revitalization of American life through a movement of decisive spiritual revival and reformation. Citing Mark Twain who said of revivals in America that 'the rumor of their demise has been greatly exaggerated', Guinness considers that while the first scenario is probably the most likely the fourth is the wild card factor which just might surprise us all.

To this American transplant living happily on Canadian soil, Guinness resonates with the moral urgency of a prophet and the lucid clarity of a seer. Whether the civility for which he pleads is still possible in a nation where such irreconcilable divisions set brother against brother, remains to be seen. But with so much at stake, it should drive us all to our knees.

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### **CREATION AND THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE** Christopher Kaiser

Marshall Pickering, London 1991 316pp. £13.99

ISBN 0 851 02008 3

This is Volume 3 in *The History of Christian Theology* series whose general editor is Paul Avis. It is a book I have much enjoyed reading. The author writes with an easy grasp of his subject. He is 'qualified in both natural science and theology' the cover says; it would have been interesting to know more about him. His subject matter can best be expressed in his own words.

An operational faith in God as creator was a vital factor in the development of all branches of science until the late eighteenth century. It constituted a tradition—the creationist tradition—which provided the matrix of faith for the professional endeavours of Western European scientists from Bede to Dalton. Major contributors to the sciences during those twenty-one centuries were frequently inspired by the belief that

God had created all things in accordance with laws of his own devising, laws which made the world comprehensible to humans and gave the world a degree of unity and relative autonomy, and that God had sent his Son and poured out his Spirit to initiate a worldwide ministry of healing and restoration.

One God, the Creator, and man made in his image and thus able to understand his works—these were the two main *motifs* which underlay and inspired a great deal of scientific effort. This is the author's thesis, and he enlarges on it with an abundance of historical evidence and illustration. (The 'matrix' of my first quotation he often refers to as 'creationism'. This is not to be identified with the current meaning of this term from America.)

The story is an involved one, and often turns on the relative roles assigned to God's arbitrary power, his *potentia absoluta*, and his power understood as natural law, his *potentia ordinata*. Put in another way, this is about the relative autonomy that God has bestowed on nature. To what extent does God act on or in nature outside and above this autonomy? This not only involves the question of miracles, but, perhaps even more importantly, how far it has been given to the scientific approach to trace back the phenomena of nature to antecedent phenomena. For instance, as is well known, Newton was able to ascribe the motions of the planets to a universal attractive force of gravitation, and this was exerted between material bodies *at a distance from each other*. But how was this force communicated? The case is clearly much more mysterious than that of bodies in contact exerting a *pushing* force on each other. Newton felt he must attribute the force of gravitation to a supra-mechanical principle related directly to God; and that put an end at once to any further scientific enquiry. But clearly the question of 'action at a distance' could be (and was) answered differently. Again, the extent to which nature is *really* autonomous is open to question; the Bible justifies us in taking differing but complementary views on this point. The author pursues this and many other matters in a fascinating and sure-footed way, all the time emphasizing how much the viewpoints taken owed to the theological background provided by belief in God and creation.

There are five chapters: *The early church and Greco-Roman science (through the twelfth century AD)*; *The medieval church and Aristotelian science (thirteenth to the fifteenth century)*; *Renaissance, Reformation and early modern science (fifteenth through the seventeenth century)*; *The heritage of Isaac Newton: from natural theology to naturalism (the eighteenth century)*; *The creationist tradition and the emergence of post-Newtonian mechanics (nineteenth and early twentieth centuries)*. Throughout there is an abundance of information and the interest never flags. A point that surprised me is that there is very little on Darwin, and rather less than one would expect on the new physics. But the periods on which the author concentrates are those for which it is less easy to find good coverage, and for that he deserves our gratitude. 'The study ends', the advertisement says, 'by pointing to the challenge of the new age in which scientists no longer operate on creationist presuppositions'—more's the pity for them, most of us would say.

Each chapter ends with a considerable bibliography of Additional Reading. There is a Subject Index of three pages and a Name Index of the same length.

**SCIENCE AND RELIGION Some Historical Perspectives****John Hedley Brooke**

Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1991 422pp. £27.50 hb. £10.95 pb.

ISBN 0 521 23961 3 (hb.)

ISBN 0 521 28374 4 (pb.)

This is a volume in the Cambridge History of Science Series, and the author is Senior Lecturer in History of Science at the University of Lancaster. A brief preface describes the book as

an introduction and critical guide to one of the most fascinating and enduring issues in the development of the modern world: the relationship between scientific thought and religious belief.

This is a very fair indication of its scope and treatment. The author is nothing if not dispassionate and judicious; time and again he discusses an issue and points out the arguments and counter-arguments, first on one side and then on the other. As a result he rarely if ever gives his own sympathies away. His style is pleasant and undemanding, and the text is enlivened with about forty five apt black and white illustrations selected with care from notable historical works. His conclusion is that 'science and religion have been mutually relevant in so rich a variety of ways that no simple generalizations are possible'.

After some Preliminary Considerations the author plunges directly into the world of Copernicus with 'Science and Religion in the Scientific Revolution'. 'The Parallel between Scientific and Religious Reform' follows, a very interesting chapter about the effect of the Protestant Reformation on the progress of science. 'Divine Activity in a Mechanical Universe' considers the impact on religion (by no means straightforward) of the realization that the workings of nature can in many ways be regarded as machine-like. Then comes 'Science and Religion in the Enlightenment' and a chapter I found very interesting (in part because of the current resurgence of the subject in the writings of, for instance, John Polkinghorne), 'The Fortunes and Functions of Natural Theology'. Then of course come the historical sciences with their immense impact on faith in the Bible as divinely-given. These are dealt with in two chapters: 'Visions of the Past: Religious Belief and the Historical Sciences', and 'Evolutionary Theory and Religious Belief'. Finally there is a postscript that brings the work up-to-date: 'Science and Religion in the Twentieth Century', a short but well-informed account of the significance of post-classical physical theory (Relativity and Indeterminacy and all that).

I liked this book. It is quite different from Kaiser's *Creation and the History of Science* which I have also reviewed in this journal. It picks up the story much later, of course, and paints on a broader canvas, the approach being in general less concerned with detail. It concludes with a long (fifty-five pages) 'Bibliographic Essay'. This provides a brief running commentary on what is an intimidating list of publications relevant to the present study and which extends down as far as 1989 (an index to this would have been useful). There are three pages giving the sources of quotations incorporated into the text; and a general Index of fourteen pages.

**FOR THE UNION OF EVANGELICAL CHRISTENDOM—The Irony of the Reformed Episcopalians** Allen C Guelzo

Penn State Press 1994 336pp. + notes and index

ISBN 0271 010003 7 (pb)

ISBN 0 271 010002 9 (hb)

If the basic requirement of any book is its readability, then this book, dealing with the vagaries of the history of the Reformed Episcopalians in the United States, most certainly achieves it. The author, writing from a detailed knowledge of the Reformed Episcopalians, sets out the history of Episcopalians on a broad canvas which includes social, political and economic factors as well.

For an Anglican not well versed in the particulars of American Church History the book is specially illuminating, relating how after the War of Independence which devastated the Church of England with its privileged position in the Colonies, the Episcopal Church grew out of the ruins until it seemed set fair, not to dominate, but to be a leader among the Protestant denominations with their strong Evangelical emphasis.

Perhaps it is at this point that we may offer a gentle criticism, bearing in mind the ecumenical theme of the book, that there is insufficient comment on the reason for this, which was the Great Awakening followed by the Second Awakening after the War. But revival was followed by a revivalism which especially in the ministry of C.G. Finney created considerable disorder in the Protestant Churches, but which the Episcopal Church because of its structure and liturgy was much better placed to deal with. If that suggestion is correct, it does go some way to explaining the otherwise inexplicable comment that other Protestants might well look to the Episcopal Church for a lead.

However, that lead was not forthcoming because of the internecine struggle between Evangelicals and Anglo-Catholics which began to marginalise the former, leading eventually to Bishop Cummins' secession after what appears to have been a prepared trap when he assisted in a Presbyterian Church at a Communion service! The threat of discipline, clearly contrary to any spirit of ecumenism let alone the formularies of Anglicanism, led to the formation of a new Episcopal Church in which an evangelical ecumenism was at the centre.

It is at this point that the warnings to well meaning seceders begin to flow. After the initial shock there is a time of success and even euphoria but from then problems multiply. As at the Reformation, when many were agreed that much was wrong with the mediaeval Church, the problem arose as to what precisely should be done. There is no doubt that some who joined did so in order to gain power; others had a hidden agenda leading to internal controversies over Prayer Book revision and the use of vestments. The machinations in England are particularly shocking. Such problems which were in the main under control in Cummins' life time became more acute after his early death.

Those problems are by no means unique and are in some way mirrored in the Church of England in South Africa which also retained its episcopal status. In both countries Evangelicals came under strong Anglo-Catholic pressure creating the problems of the large and comprehensive denomination, and the resultant Churches were an attempt to answer those problems from a biblical and evangelical perspective in an attempt to retain a loyalty to episcopacy and liturgy. In brief, the problems which the Reformed Episcopalians faced after the division were those of the small denomination.

There are several references to Princeton and one comment upon it being 'arch-

Calvinist' in the context of the teaching that no injury is done to the human will by divine grace. That is the teaching of the Articles of Religion and that was the teaching of Bishop Cummins. However, it would be difficult to find a Princeton divine who maintained the contrary. There is a difference between moderate and high Calvinism which is a question of degree rather than of kind and high Calvinism is not hyper-Calvinism.

There is one reference to the first Reform Bill of 1832 in England as reorganising 'voting apportionments to give more adequate representation in Parliament to the new industrial districts where . . . Dissenters were the overwhelming majority'. In the long term this was true and so perceived by the early English Tractarians, but the 1832 Bill was very limited in its widening of the franchise. Even in 1928 Parliament overturned an attempt to change the basic doctrines of the *Book of Common Prayer*. However, these are minor criticisms and in no way detract from an excellent book which is highly readable, and it is no surprise to learn that the author was the winner of the 1993 Albert C. Outler Prize in Ecumenical Church History from the American Society of Church History.

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DAVID STREATER

**DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE Biblical Principles and Pastoral Practice Andrew Cornes**

Hodder & Stoughton 1993 528pp. £15.99

ISBN 0 340 57434 8

This is a formidable book. There is much in it that is helpful for pastors as they minister among those who are single (whether before marriage, widowed, separated or divorced) and those who are married.

Divorce and remarriage (Cornes always carefully distinguishes between the two) is an area where parochial clergy have to have some kind of practical policy, yet often it is a policy that has been worked out on the hoof rather than as a result of careful reflection and application of Scripture. This book will challenge pastors to reconsider how their attitudes, policies and practice compare with the biblical material on this subject.

The 500 pages (in large inviting print) are practical, pastoral, argued from the Bible and compelling in their logic. There is some good material here for preachers.

After a brief survey of divorce and remarriage in this century, we are given two chapters expounding biblical texts on marriage and singleness. Then follow expository chapters as follows: 'Divorce and remarriage in the OT'—never encouraging either divorce or remarriage, and often limiting them; 'Divorce and remarriage in the teaching of Jesus'—allowing divorce only for adultery (and possibly cruelty), and prohibiting re-marriage with no exception except the death of a spouse; 'Divorce and remarriage in the teaching of Jesus and St Paul'—an examination of 1 Corinthians 7, allowing a deserted spouse to accept a divorce (but not allowing remarriage). Then we are treated to a fine chapter on 'Singleness after marriage' from Bible material, followed by 'Biblical Conclusions' to key questions. The book ends with nearly 180 pages of compassionate though robust handling of the issues from a pastoral perspective.

Some main features of the book:

Singleness (before and after marriage) and marriage are both to be seen as posi-

tive and fulfilling, though of course recognising that people can be extremely unhappy single (as they can be in marriage).

Marriage is not just a contract between a husband and wife, but it is given by God and cannot be undone by consent or even by legal divorce. It continues until death. Therefore remarriage is prohibited, not because of the divorce but because of the original marriage.

We are called to be different in our attitudes and practice from the society around us, which is increasingly sharply at variance from the Bible and traditional Christian morality in these and related areas.

Many arguments in the book, both for and against, are poignantly and powerfully illustrated by extracts of letters from parishioners to their pastor. Sometimes I wished we could see more of the pastor's replies!

Questions that I find myself asking after reading the book: Does God recognise that *anything* has happened when a couple establish a legal divorce?

Are we in danger of importing our modern Western legal understanding of marriage back into other centuries?

Did Jesus use words about marriage and divorce so precisely that he never meant to include re-marriage when he said divorce? And is Jesus speaking as a legislator or is he depicting Christian character, and should it make any difference as to how we understand his words?

In the Bible record, God so often continues to work for and with his people when they have gone against his revealed will, eg when they insisted on having a king, or in the polygamous marriages of the Old Testament. How should this behaviour of God inform the church in its practice on divorce and remarriage?

The writing is crystal clear. This is a book well worth reading, and a useful reference on the subject with good indexes.

St Matthew's Rectory, St Leonards-on-Sea

ROGER COMBES

**BUSINESS AND RELIGION IN BRITAIN** Edited by David J. Jeremy  
Ashgate Publishing, Gower 1988 £30.00 ISBN 0 866050 96 X

This is a rather disappointing book, which is a pity, because it deals with an important topic, particularly in view of the furore which has followed the Prime Minister's 'Sermon on the Mound' to the 1988 General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. An authoritative and readable book on the subject would have greatly enriched the current debate on the relationship between business and religion in Britain.

Unfortunately the essays which make up this book too often seem either to bog down in a mass of historical detail (as in John Briggs on the Ridgeway family) or to stray from the historian's role into that of the moral philosopher (as in the Editor's chapter with its apparent faith in the ability of historical research to answer normative questions such as 'how, for Christian men and women, should profits be made and distributed').

Nevertheless there is good material in the book, and it is a pity that one has to work so hard to find it, for it is by no means an easy book to read. Outstanding among essays which—perhaps inevitably—tend to concentrate on such evidence of Christian commitment as building churches and serving on their governing bod-

ies, Professor R.H. Campbell's addresses the much more fundamental issue of wealth creation. He argues cogently that 'the efficient creation of wealth is worthy of the highest Christian endeavour'. To those who would criticise this view he points out 'how many of the policies advocated (by them) require the creation of wealth for their fulfilment'—a much needed emphasis indeed.

Eminently more readable than most is David Jeremy's essay on John Mackintosh. Not only is it a fascinating story, well told, but the generalisations drawn out and the conclusions arrived at show more convincing evidences of the historian's art. Unfortunately those authors who attempt to chronicle the influence of more than a single individual or of a whole denomination are less successful. Garrett and Howe's piece on the cotton masters of Victorian England, drawing as it does on no less than 109 references, suffers from a lack of adequate structure and draws few generalisations from a mass of detail. Clyde Binfield's essay on 'The Congregational Ideal' is a brave attempt to overcome these deficiencies, but it suffers from a somewhat convoluted style and an occasional strange use of language. Is it really necessary, for example, to use phrases like 'mutuality of responsibility mediated through personality'? The essay is saved by the fascinating paragraphs dealing with W.H. Lever, that complex character who, as the author puts it, was 'unable to join the Church which he could never repudiate'. If this essay does no more, it certainly provides a salutary warning against confusing overt Christian activity with real Christian commitment.

The criticisms voiced in this review should not deter readers from acquiring the book, although at £30 it is probably more likely to be borrowed than bought. It deserves to be read and if its inadequacies serve to stimulate further research and writing on this most important topic, its publication will not have been in vain.

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NORMAN HUNT

### **THE BELGIC CONFESSION AND ITS BIBLICAL BASIS** **Vallensis Lepusculus**

Inheritance Publications, Neerlandia, Alberta, Canada 262pp. \$C15.90 (pb)  
ISBN 0 921100 41 8

This is an English translation, with scriptural proofs, of the Belgic Confession, which is the historic confession of the Dutch Reformed Churches. The Scripture proofs are explained by using the marginal notes from the Dutch Staten Bijbel, which came out in 1637 and occupies the same place in Dutch history as the Authorized Version of 1611 does in ours.

The translator accepts that some of the exegesis is out of date, but he continues to regard it as worth considering for the life of the Church today. Apart from the more conservative members of the Dutch Reformed Churches, the book will interest mainly students of the Dutch Reformation, who now have available an annotated primary source which is otherwise difficult to obtain.

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GERALD BRAY

Churchman

**THE CROSS & CHRISTIAN MINISTRY** An exposition of passages  
from 1 Corinthians D.A. Carson

Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester 1993 137pp. £7.99 pb. ISBN 0 86110 986 1

Some of us are now in the habit of buying anything by Don Carson which we see. This little volume is no justification for breaking that habit. Originally given as talks, it contains five chapters which cover 1 Cor. 1-4 and 9:19-27. As the title properly suggests, this is very important material for a true understanding of Christian ministry. Each chapter also includes some questions for further discussion.

Carson is always a reliable guide to understanding the text and picking a path through the maze of modern commentaries on a biblical book. However although we can be sure that such research lies in the background of this work, its main focus is on applying the biblical truth today. It is therefore easy to read and should be accessible to a majority of the Christian community. If any of us are inclined to forget the central place of the cross in authentic Christian spirituality then here is a powerful antidote to such an attitude.

52 Elm Road, London E11

MARK BURKILL

**ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE LAND OF THE BIBLE 10,000-586 BC**  
**Amihai Mazar**

Lutterworth Press, Cambridge 1993 576pp. No price ISBN 0 7188 2890 3

The interpretation of ancient remains requires a full understanding of the basic archaeological information which is available. The presentation of such information can appear rather monotonous and boring but it is essential if archaeological theories are to withstand much scrutiny. This book is an excellent source of good information about the archaeology of the biblical lands during the period mentioned in its title. As such its intended users might well be students undertaking degree courses in the subject.

However any Christian who wishes to acquaint himself with the basic archaeological information which lies in the background to the biblical record would find this work most valuable. It has good subject and Scriptural indexes to assist such research. There are plenty of plans and illustrations too. The Christian might be most interested in the latter half of the book which covers the material from the days of the Judges onwards.

The reader should be warned that the author has no conception of the Scriptures as being God's infallible Word. The biblical text is treated as just another source of information which may or may not be discounted. With that proviso, this is a most useful reference book which contains a wealth of information, including that from recent discoveries.

52 Elm Road, London E11

MARK BURKILL



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