

Book Reviews

Church History 2: Setback and Recovery A.D. 500-1500. By John Foster. S.P.C.K., London 1974. Pp. 202. Price £1.50 U.K. (Special edition for Africa, Asia, S. Pacific and Caribbean 70p.)

This is the eighth of the 'Study Guides' sponsored by the Theological Education Fund, and like its predecessors is designed specifically for students outside Europe and America for whom English is a second language and whose perspective is very different to that of theological students in the West. Each chapter is provided with a 'Word Study', 'Review of contents' and questions for 'Discussion and Research' in which a valiant attempt is made to meet the requirements of relevance and contextualisation. Clear maps and date-charts are provided, and the publishers have been generous with illustrations.

Sadly, John Foster died before this volume was published, and it may be that he would have made some final alterations. He was faced with the almost impossible task of interpreting the Christian Middle Ages to students for whom not only the historical background but (more daunting) the entire ethos of medieval Christendom is utterly remote and unreal. It is by no means clear precisely what level of theological education is being catered for: in the Indian context it would serve the needs of B.Th. students, in translation, but would perhaps hardly meet the requirements of a B.D. course. Behind this statement lies the much more intractable problem of why, or how, the medieval European experience should be studied in areas of the world where Christians do not *feel* that they have any direct continuity with that experience. Either the Middle Ages must be written off as irrelevant (in which case students will almost certainly misunderstand and misconstrue the Reformation, and remain in ignorance of the fascinating and formative aspects of an autonomous Christian culture, perhaps the most complete and all-round synthesis of Christian faith and environment the world has yet seen)—or, as in the present volume, the author must select the facets of medieval Christianity which seem to have "relevance" today, and risk falsifying the picture altogether. It is salutary to remember that R. W. Southern's *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages*, though unquestionably the most brilliant and original volume in *The Pelican History of the Church*, and a major contribution to the interpretation of medieval Christendom, is almost entirely useless for purposes of teaching 'Church History'. It is an exasperating fact that the millennium from 500 to 1500 A.D. does have an obvious unity; but it defies simplification. It has to be confessed that, in the long run, students will

perhaps grasp the contours of medieval Christian history better by plodding through the Middle Ages in the company of Miss Margaret Deanesly; at least if they are guided by a teacher with imagination, a good selection of 'visual aids' and a volume of source-materials.

It is therefore unfair to cavil at John Foster's Study Guide, which is skilfully organised and never dull. Leaning heavily on Latourette's analysis, he sets the Middle Ages in the global context of the two great 'setbacks' of the Islamic conquests of the 7th and 15th centuries, and the missed opportunities of a Christian consolidation in Central Asia and China. Thanks to his own specialist studies on Christianity in China, these chapters are extremely well done, culminating in that astonishing moment at the turn of the 14th Century when a Chinese monk, using a Syriac liturgy, administered the Sacrament to Edward I of England at Bordeaux: 'This', comments Dr Foster, 'is one of those flashes on the screen of history when one sees things as God meant them to be'. It is all the more odd, in view of the author's determination to correct the usual 'Western' perspective, that the Chaldean Church and its offshoot in Kerala are virtually ignored.

It must be confessed that the book deteriorates towards the end, and the sections on the Avignon Papacy, the Great Schism and the Conciliar Movement are sometimes positively misleading. The intellectual achievements of the 12th Century receive scant attention, the arrangement of sections seems haphazard, and one misses any sense of the spiritual and cultural dynamism which went to the flowering of the 'High' Middle Ages. The Norman achievement in Sicily, with its fusion of Byzantine, Moslem and Latin elements, was as important in its way as the theology of an Anselm or an Abelard. There is almost nothing of the tension between outlooks and attitudes, rival understandings of the Faith and the role of the Church, which make the confrontation between St Bernard and Abelard, Innocent IV and Frederick II, so revealing (and where, incidentally, is Héloïse?). Above all, the book fails entirely to get at the roots of the 'decline' of the Medieval Church in the 14th and 15th centuries which is treated largely in terms of personal failures and 'corruption'. The social, economic and political changes which destroyed the Medieval structure of society—and with it the intellectual and cultural milieu—were vast and incomprehensible to contemporaries (as are similar movements today) and the Medieval Church was caught in a vicious circle from which churchmen could not escape and which they could not even palliate except by shifts and expedients which made matters worse. The decline of the later Medieval Church is part of the disintegration of the entire Medieval complex civilisation: there is little historical sense in implying that all this was just a matter of the wickedness or stupidity or 'worldliness' of popes or prelates, just as it seems paradoxical to pass moral judgements praising Wycliffe and Hus who were *symptoms* of that general disintegration. The attempt to write 'Church History' against such a background is almost bound to be futile.

If this sounds ungenerous, one can only repeat again that Dr Foster was faced with a well-nigh impossible task. One great merit

of his Study Guide is the constant use which he makes of quotations from contemporary sources. Much has had to be left out (the Crusades are perhaps deliberately played-down), though an astonishing amount has been packed in. The Bibliography is bizarre (surely *Lights and Shades of Christendom* could now pass into oblivion! Oddly, its author's name is not given). One hopes that the publishers will never again succumb to the temptation to use anachronistic illustrations, such as the 16th Century engraving of Henry IV at Canossa, which is not only ludicrous in itself but heightens the sense of unreality from which the Middle Ages suffer for 20th Century students.

Bishop's College
Calcutta

I. D. L. CLARK

Towards Involvement: by D. A. Thangasamy. CLS-ISPCK-LPH
1972. Pp. 184. Price Rs 9.50.

Recently I had the opportunity to listen to three devout Christian laymen speaking on 'What it means to be a Christian in my profession'. They came from three different walks of life. Though they did not consult one another, they all spoke in the same strain, how God had wonderfully guided them in their personal difficulties and problems, and in their relationships with their superiors and subordinates. They also testified to the standards of honesty and integrity they were able to maintain in their work; but they had nothing to say of the mission of the Christian in their calling except it be of personal evangelism which they believed had nothing to do with their daily work.

Against this general background of Christian thinking in our country I felt that *Towards Involvement* by the late D. A. Thangasamy is most valuable to create and sustain a deep sense of the calling of the people of God, the laity, wherever they live or work. It may also help the ordained minister to have a right understanding of his special place and function in the Church, as well as to help other members to recognise their role in the Body of Christ. *Towards Involvement* is an attempt to foster laity education. Though there are numerous books and articles on the subject produced under the inspiration of the W.C.C., it is the most comprehensive book on the laity published in India. In the present form, it represents the viewpoint of the author; but the book was planned, and a large part of it written, by men and women of repute in the Church in India. It is valuable, therefore, as representing the understanding of some of our members who are most deeply committed to the mission of the Church in India in this decade.

The book is in three parts. The first deals with the theological background, the second analyses the varied implications of a total lay witness and the third makes concrete suggestions for programmes and organisations. At the end of each chapter there is a valuable list of books for those who want to pursue the study in depth. The book is a resource for those who arrange laity-training programmes.

If it is translated into the regional languages, Mr Thangasamy's lifelong desire to see the growth of the teaching ministry in the Church will be fulfilled to some extent.

K.U.T.S.

V. T. KURIEN

Trivandrum

Value Clarification and Conscientisation in Socio-Economic Development: By Thomas Chakiath. Pontifical Institute of Theology and Philosophy, Alwaye, 1974, Pp. 219. Price Rs 12.

'Development' has become a very vast field of study cutting across the conventional boundaries of subject specialisation; it has also become a concern of academics and administrators, philosophers and politicians. Consequently writing about this theme is not an easy task, especially when one wishes to survey the literature, to present facts and figures, to interpret the statistics and to say what Christians and churches can or must do about it all. It is such a comprehensive treatment of a complex theme that Dr Chakiath attempts in the two hundred pages of this volume. Obviously, it is impossible to attain any depth of analysis in a presentation of this kind. However, while attempting to be broad, the author's treatment has not become shallow. He attains a balance between comprehensiveness and sharpness first by concentrating on a central theme, secondly by limiting himself largely, although by no means exclusively, to ecclesiastical literature on the subject. One gets the impression that documentation was the author's primary purpose; there are over 450 citations in the 200 pages of the text.

I shall let the author summarise his main theme: 'In the course of this study we have come across many enlightening, disturbing and challenging facts . . . One part of humanity enjoys most of the wealth of the world, while two thirds of mankind still lacks many essentials . . . That this state of affairs, namely poverty and underdevelopment, is primarily a social rather than a natural phenomenon, is becoming clearer in our day. The great accumulation of wealth in one part of the world while the major part of mankind lacks even minimum essentials needed for life is not accidental. It is largely caused by human intervention, such as the uncontrolled functioning of the market forces within nations and within international community, the irresponsible and selfish activities of the political authorities, the existence of exploitative systems and structures etc. These have helped the accumulation of wealth in the hands of the already rich individuals and nations, leaving others in poverty and misery' (p. 196). Thus the central theme of the book is the disparity between the riches of the rich and the poverty of the poor—the picture of a 'world community broken by unshared bread'—and it is discussed especially at the international level. The unbridged, but not necessarily unbridgable gap between the minority of rich nations of the world and the vast majority of poor countries is the essential problem discussed.

The gulf between the rich and the poor within nations is also touched upon.

I would strongly recommend the book for the clarity and force with which it puts across this point of view about development. It is not a point of view easily understood within church circles, and some Christians will not even accept it as a 'Christian' point of view. Dr Chakiath has therefore done a major service by quoting frequently from the writings of Christian experts in the field, and more especially from the official pronouncements of the (Roman Catholic) church to substantiate that it is *a* Christian point of view, although it may be possible to produce equally authoritative citations to show that it is not necessarily *the* Christian point of view.

I have some reservations, however, about Dr Chakiath's approach to the development theme as such and about what he envisages to be the role of the church in development. His treatment of development is too much at the global level. A global view of development problems is certainly necessary, but if the intention is to do something about it, the global view is hardly sufficient. The global conceptualisation of development can be terribly misleading when strategies to achieve development have to be worked out. The subtle danger creeps in both at the level of diagnosis and prescription. At the diagnostic level it is worth asking whether the analysis of development as a global problem is enough to deal with the specific problems of development in India, for instance. Or can the Indian situation be expected to be the same as the Latin American case? It is not surprising also that the global diagnosis dictates global prescriptions, even when it is clear that such prescriptions cannot be implemented; a global progressive tax on nations, for instance. The author is certainly right when he insists that the argument in favour of a world tax is at least as sound as the argument in support of progressive taxation within nations. But will a world tax work, and even if it does will it solve the problem of international disparities in incomes and wealth? If the answers to these questions are in the negative what is the point in labouring the soundness of the logic, or even the ethical imperatives of world remedial measures?

It is in this context that the role of the church in development must be viewed. I shall not comment on the author's categorical assertion that 'the people of God have a grave obligation to work to avoid violence as the non-violent principles are so dear to Christian ideology' (p. 182) except that it at least raises questions about the definitions of violence and non-violence and of 'Christian ideology'. I am also not sure whether the author has thought through his statement that there is a 'Christian' solution to development which is 'unlike the solutions offered by capitalism and communism' (p. 199). But these are not the main issues. If the 'church must help human society . . . according to the concrete exigencies of situations and times' (p. 159), how can one talk in abstract terms about the responsibility of the church in development? This is not to deny a universal element in the church's task, but to insist that the universal can find expression only in the specific and the eternal must become evident through ~~the~~

temporal. Is this not the 'historical responsibility of the church', and is it not the meaning of 'the Word becoming flesh'?

Dr Chakiath has given us a painstakingly documented work on the global concept of development. But Christians concerned with development must now move into specific aspects of the problem in space and time.

*Madras Christian College
Tambaram*

C. T. KURIEN

Mystique de l'Inde, Mystère chrétien: by Jules Monchanin (Swāmi Paramārubbyānandam), Fayard, Paris, 1974, Pp. 328.

One of the first things which strikes the reader of this book is that it puts him in presence of a man whose life was entirely commanded by the desire to express the reality of Christ in terms of Hindu theology and spirituality and to lead Hinduism to its own fulfilment in Christ. The book is divided into four parts. The first part *Hinduism and Christianity* is a collection of eleven short essays or articles published previously in French theological journals. The second part *The Trinity Ashram*—which many will probably find the most moving—contains extracts of letters written from 1938 till 1957 to friends living in France. The third part *Indian Meditations* gathers a certain amount of notes on various themes. It differs from the first part mainly by the fact that several of these notes contain mere indications of the direction in which the themes referred to might eventually be studied. The fifth part puts together a few writings about contemporary Hindu personalities. Special mention must be made of the chapters on Mahatma Gandhi and Sri Aurobindo.

The writings collected in this book reveal Fr Monchanin's wide knowledge and understanding of Hinduism and of traditional Christian theology and spirituality. His views are always vigorous and stimulating, they open vistas and are for the reader an invitation to personal study and meditation.

Several points, however, may leave the reader unsatisfied. When going through the book, one looks in vain for a thorough investigation of any particular problem. Much is said about the need of studying matters deeply but finally the task of making such a study is left to others. Several important topics—e.g. Yoga in a Christian perspective, Puja and Eucharist, Indian Spirituality—are dealt with schematically and summarily. In so far as the problem of the meeting of Hinduism and Christianity is concerned one may regret that it should be considered as a problem to be dealt with almost exclusively at the level of high-flying speculation and mysticism. Is this meeting not a task to be carried out by 'ordinary' Christians and Hindus through a *metanoia* which transforms their daily existence into a Christ-existence rather than an intellectual feat to be achieved in monasteries through a contemplation of the essence of Christianity and Hinduism? In the various articles and essays which form this book the Christian mystery tends to be identified with the theological and spiritual language

developed throughout the centuries in the Catholic Church, and the task to be carried out is indicated as that of elaborating a new language more appropriate. It may be suggested that Hinduism as a living reality is fundamentally the manner in which an existing human community realizes itself in relation to Transcendence, that the meeting of Hinduism and Christianity will be achieved *de facto* when this realization has become an authentic Christ-realization, that the main concern of Christians should be that their Hindu brothers may, not first through an intellectual endeavour but through a transformation of their lives, progress effectively towards the liberating summit where the Christ who is already alive in them will reach its full stature. What is lacking in Fr. Monchanin's outlook is the realization that existence precedes essence.

One may also regret that a man whose professed desire was to Indianize himself thoroughly should have remained so much of a Frenchman in his outlook and that his writings should present his life and work in India as a phenomenon taking place exclusively for the benefit of the French-speaking public.

Calcutta

CH. WINCKELMANS, S. J.

Inspiration in the non-Biblical Scriptures: by Ishanand Vempeny, S. J.
T. P. I., Bangalore, 1973. Pp. 255. Price Rs 8.

This book is meant for and addressed primarily to 'theologically minded Christian readers'. In the words of the author himself, 'this book is a modest contribution to the theology of dialogue on the level of "spirituality" (*adyatmikata*)'. All the Scriptures of all religions in one way or another depict man's understanding of the unity of the Absolute and the equality of every man in the Absolute. The Scriptures of different religions, according to Fr Ishanand, are 'the verbal expressions of such experience and are the means and norms for the respective people to enter into such an experience'.

The author firmly believes and testifies that the Bible is inspired and that we can rightly speak of it as 'the Word of God in the words of men'. He points out that there is an ontological connection between the Old Testament religion and the New Testament. This connection is based on the fact that the Old Testament religion is the effect of God's intervention in history and that it is oriented towards Christ and his Church. In the light of this point the author raises an important question, 'if the non-Christian religions are willed by God by his positive intervention in history, if these religions are oriented towards New Testament religion, and if these sacred books are their constituent elements, then God's causality or authorship of these religions must also include His causality or authorship with regard to their books'.

In the first part of this book Fr Ishanand examines this question in the pastoral context. In the second part he follows certain approaches to the theology of biblical inspiration with special reference to

Fr Karl Rahner. He concludes by stating that 'the scriptures of all socio-religious phenomena are their constituent elements'. In the third part he points out that God is the author of the world religions. In the last part he brings together the results of his enquiry and concludes that 'the non-Biblical Scriptures are analogically, yet truly, inspired by God'.

Fr Ishanand's enquiry and elucidation has been prompted and guided by a pastoral concern, as he claims. There is no doubt that it will arouse lively and exciting discussion in theological circles. One of the weaknesses of the book is the failure on the part of the author to establish the historicity of scriptures of the religions which he compares. He uses only selected quotations from the scriptures to deal with selected issues, and they are interpreted according to the methodology adopted by the author. Another serious drawback is that though the title of the book seems to promise a treatment of non-Biblical scriptures, the Quran, the Grandh Sahib, the Dhammapada, the Avesta and the Jain scriptures do not receive their adequate share of treatment. While there is value for this kind of book in the area of apologetics and the Comparative study of religion, it cannot basically contribute to the presentation of the message of Salvation wrought by Jesus Christ. It is recommended that theologically minded Christians read this book and take a sympathetic look at the non-Biblical Scriptures.

Bareilly

EMMANUEL E. JAMES

Good News and Witness: The New Testament Understanding of Evangelisation: By L. Legrand, P. Pathrapankal and M. Vellanickal. TPI, Bangalore, 1973. Pp. 179.

Good News and Witness presents one of the clearest descriptions of the essential meaning of the Gospel and Evangelisation that I have read in recent years. The authors have chosen their priorities well and it is refreshing to find the preeminence which is given to the Scripture. The authors present the Gospel, giving a vivid picture of God's intervention to change things. The message is one of joy for the poor because the Good Tidings of the Kingdom is loaded with efficacy. In the Gospel the power of God breaks into the life of man and refashions it.

Although methods are important, I felt the authors hit a central point which so many miss when they said, 'In Jesus what matters is the Gospel he announced, not the campaign he conducted'. It is the message we should be most concerned with rather than the method. 'The Cross is the supreme act of evangelisation'. The adjustments of the early Church in order to bring this message of joy to the nations had to go through many trials. Jesus spent much of his ministry preparing the Twelve inwardly, in order that they might make this adjustment outwardly so that the Gentiles might hear the Good News. However, it was not until after the experience of Pentecost that these men came to understand the fuller implications of the universal nature

of the invitation. Paul represents most clearly the living Christ, the response of the Spirit, and the challenge of the new worlds which showed themselves more eager to receive the Word than the old Israel. This brought a new dimension. Paul guided the movement of the Gospel and directed the stages of its development by which it became a universal reality.

I deeply appreciated the clear emphasis on the fact that freedom and liberation have their common ground in one's inner being. The growing outwards of this inner experience of freedom and liberation becomes a total way of life. No area of life can be left out. It is from the 'old man to the new, from slavery to freedom and from sin to grace'. It is in John that we find a new insight into the matter of witness. His words open up new understandings. 'Here it is not so much the facts of Jesus' life which need to be communicated to others as it is Jesus Christ himself, who is the "Word" and the "Truth", to whom one "listens", whom one hears, keeps and experiences as "life" and who remains as the interior source of genuine Christian life'.

To me one of the most important statements in the entire book is the following: 'Evangelisation, or the communication of this Word or Truth which is Jesus Christ himself, takes place by means of a genuine Christian life, by a "witnessing", rather than by a merely verbal proclamation'. There is a solid emphasis throughout on the role of the Spirit in the act of witnessing for Christ. The whole missionary commission is tied to the bestowing of the Spirit. This is worked out by a life of love, depicted by a visible community of believers. I heartily recommend *Good News and Witness* for reading and for study.

Allahabad

W. R. HOKB

Buddhist Meditation: by Edward Conze. George Allen and Unwin, 1956. Paperback edition 1972. Pp. 183. Price £ 0.75 p.

Ambedkar and The Neo-Buddhist Movement: Edited by T. S. Wilkinson and M. M. Thomas. C.L.S. and C.I.S.R.S., Madras and Bangalore, 1972. Pp. 163. Price Rs 7.50.

Meditation is a subject of popular interest in the modern world. In particular, the Buddhist system of Vipassana meditation has arrested the attention of modern psychologists who recognise in the former an effective method of mental therapy similar in certain respects to therapeutical methods of modern psychology.

Much has been written on the subject of Buddhist meditation and Western psychology chiefly by Western writers. However, as Edward Conze points out, 'Contemporary psychology is a product of modern civilisation' whose 'aim is to help the mentally disturbed to greater adaptation to the conditions of our society to keep them going within it'. By contrast, Buddhist meditation aims at a different objective and its methods and presuppositions about the structure of

mind, the purpose of mental health etc. differ radically from those of modern psychology. Nevertheless, the points of contact between the two systems cannot be overlooked, nor can one system be belittled because of the different objectives espoused by both.

According to modern statisticians every one person out of four in modern cities is a lunatic or at least a neurotic in need of psychiatric treatment. To the Buddha however, even those who are supposed to be normal from the psychiatrist's point of view are in fact 'deranged' because they do not have the clarity of vision and mental health a meditatively developed person, free from desires, enjoys.

The aim envisaged by Buddhist Meditation is thus profounder and more significant than adaptation to accepted modes of social behaviour. Indeed, the higher techniques of meditation demand a complete withdrawal from all social relationships. There is a tendency among certain writers and instructors of Meditation to ignore this vital point and to lay emphasis on worldly benefits or intellectual progress resulting from preliminary meditation exercises. This is to delimit the objective of meditation. Edward Conze agrees with this point when he remarks while stressing meditation practices, 'It is quite idle to pretend that they do not involve a complete break with the established habits of life and thought' (p. 39).

The method of Vipassanna Meditation is the objective and dispassionate study of consciousness by consciousness. The basic supposition that not only external sense-data but repressed desires and unhealthy states latent in the *bhavanga* (or the *cathexis*, to use the Freudian term) affect the conscious states, and thereby physical health, is the greatest discovery of Buddhist Meditation. In this, Psycho-Analysis is said to be a striking parallel to Buddhist Meditation.

Freud's discovery that the *libido*, as the seat of repressed desires or as the force of emotional drives in man, influences personality, is significant from the Buddhist standpoint. He believed that the conflicting emotions, when resolved, would restore balance of personality disorders, that when the conflicts widen neuroses would be created. Nevertheless investigations have shown that it is not always the case that unconscious motivation ceases when the original causes of it are brought to the surface of the mind (through hypnotic trance). The cure worked out by Freud seems to be effective only at a certain stage or level.

The grouping of the material in Conze's book is modelled on the traditional five cardinal virtues: *saddhā* (faith), *virīya* (energy), *sati* (mindfulness), *samādhi* (concentration) and *pañña* (wisdom). Energy as the driving force behind other virtues has not been separately treated. For the other four virtues separate chapters have been devoted.

Beginning with an introduction running to 41 pages that dwells at length on relevant topics, i.e., the purpose, meaning, range, and divisions of Buddhist Meditation, the author devotes the first chapter to the preliminary devotional exercises that form the preparatory ground for meditation. These are the three formulae on Buddha,

Dhamm and Sangha to which is added a note on visions and worship conducive to the arousing of the faith faculty.

Chapter II is perhaps the most important as a precise, authentic account of the various techniques of meditation. The mindful awareness of the body (*kāyānupassanā*) is shown to be the prerequisite of the meditative monk, and the necessity of correct bodily postures and attitudes is stressed. Breathing Mindfulness (*ānāpānasati*) practised in the correct posture through (1) counting (p. 66) and (2) pursuing (p. 67) in the case of beginners leads to the appearance of the *mental image*. This is the stage of 'access concentration' (p. 69) when the 'hinderances are impeded' and the 'defiling passions are subdued'.

The division of subject in Chapter II seems to be somewhat arbitrary, for here the author has not followed the order of the tradition regarding the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. The four items seem to be arbitrarily interspersed even though the discussion of most of the essential factors like 'feelings', 'the five hinderances', 'the control of the mind' is given a prominent place. While the section on 'The Repudiation of the Sensory World' (p. 78) is eminently useful for any prospective meditator, the one on 'Distaste for the Body' could have been included under the first section on 'The Mindful Awareness of the Body'. This would have infused more order and method and helped easier reading. The Chapter ends with a brief section on the Recollection of Peace (*Nibbana*). In the definition of terms and phrases of scriptural quotations the author shows faithfulness to traditions unlike many modern writers on the subject who tend to deviate from the original meanings.

In Chapter III, while describing the jhanic factors, *vicāra* (p. 115) has been rendered by 'discursive thinking'. More appropriate, however, would be 'sustained thought' which is Nanamodi's rendering (V. Visuddhimagga, Colombo, 1956). I am inclined to think that *vicāra* used for discursive aspect of thought elsewhere does not mean the same here. Discursive thought would, on the contrary, lead to distraction instead of helping the meditative mind to be continually focused on the object. But sustained thought does. The English translation of the eight stages too (pp. 113-16) should have been more accurate.

The subsequent account of devices for subduing hate could have been shifted to earlier sections dealing with the preparation of the meditative mind. The description of social emotions at the stage when the mind has reached the highest and eighth Jhana seems to undermine the continuity of ideas.

In the description of the Four Sublime States (pp. 126-33) *metta* could have been rendered 'compassion' and *Karunā*, 'kindness', to convey the precise Pali connotations. Immediately following this traditional account is an unwelcome intrusion: 'The Evocation of Tārā'. In a book devoted to an exposition of Theravada Meditation the inclusion of Mahayana teachings tends to disrupt the uniformity of treatment. Chapter IV (pp. 140-73) begins with a traditional description of ill, its sixteen aspects, the three characteristics of

existence and conditioned Co-production (*Paticca Samuppāda*). The chapter ends with the relevant accounts of the eight cognitions and emptiness. The description is lucid and fairly documented. If the *Paticca Samuppāda* were treated from the purely psychological perspective, if it were described as a psychological process, it would have fitted well into the subject of Vipassana meditation under discussion. The mere descriptive analysis of it, though not incorrect, hardly accords with the subtle introspective attitude of Vipassana.

The author has undoubtedly taken great pains to produce not only a book digestible by the average reader, but one free from shortcomings common to Western approaches to the subject. His effort to produce a book faithful to the original and capable of fulfilling modern requirements or tastes is seen to be a successful one. To the readers in search of knowledge and to those genuinely interested in ancient Buddhist meditation Edward Conze has produced an excellent source book.

The second book is a brief study of the Mahar Community (to which Dr Ambedkar belonged) in relation to what has been called the Neo-Buddhist movement in India. Dr Ambedkar is admittedly the illustrious leader of this community which achieved a considerable degree of social and political freedom under his leadership. For some time Ambedkar served in the Cabinet of Mr Jawaharlal Nehru as Minister for Law in the Government of Free India.

The book consists of five articles written by five different authors on, The Historical Survey of Buddhism in India, Dr Ambedkar's Religious Quest, Buddhism and Social Change among Mahars, The Understanding of 'Religion and Buddhism' among India's New Buddhists and the Ambedkari Buddhists.

The first writer, W. R. Vijayakumar, himself a Buddhist, traces the causes that led to the emergence of Dr Ambedkar against the background of Buddhist history. He traces the origins of 'untouchability' to the pre-Buddhistic Brahmanic system which inculcated the four social divisions or castes in which the Sudras or 'untouchables' were denied *Upanayana* and religious and social freedom. According to him the first protest against this social injustice was made long before the Buddha. But it was the benign example set by the Buddha which infused a new sense of values into a society crushed under the tyranny of a Brahmanical yoke.

Although Ambedkar's political career began in 1920 his religious quest is said to have begun as early as 1907, after his first acquaintance with Buddhism.

The Yeola Conference of 1935 marks a significant phase in the struggle of the untouchables for social emancipation. In this Conference the following resolution was passed: 'the depressed classes should leave the Hindu fold and join some other religion that gives social and religious equality to them'. In 1936 Dr Ambedkar together with many other distinguished men and women embraced Buddhism but he passed away seven weeks after this momentous event.

Dr Ambedkar, a man from the 'untouchables', yet raised himself to the highest rank as a political leader and social and religious reformer. Armed with a higher education, a keen intellect, a forceful tongue and a mighty pen he fought social injustice and tyranny. After Ambedkar's conversion, the Neo-Buddhist population had risen to nearly 20 million.

The second article by B. A. M. Paradkar (pp. 35-70) is a descriptive survey of Dr Ambedkar's prolonged quest for an ideological and religious framework for the struggle of the untouchables for social liberation and political participation within the context of the awakening of India to freedom. The writer is of the opinion that no necessary steps for the removal of untouchability were taken by Gandhi. Meanwhile the untouchables themselves had started satyagraha movements in Chowdar, Nasik etc., to demand their rights and privileges. Ambedkar was the live figure behind all this activity and his book, *What Congress and Gandhi have done to the Untouchables* (1945) gave a clear picture of the situation.

As regards political convictions, the writer stresses Dr Ambedkar's commitment to Liberal Democracy and his opposition to Communism. After resolving to renounce Hinduism, Gandhi's Neo-Hinduism and Communism, Ambedkar searched for a religious framework within which the Untouchables could find a dynamic to work and participate meaningfully in socio-political life. After a thorough examination of Islam (p. 52), Sikhism (p. 55), Jainism (p. 58), Christianity (p. 59) he chose Buddhism (p. 61). He preferred Buddhism because it 'teaches Prajna . . . Karuna . . . and Samata (equality). This is what man wants for a good and happy life' (p. 62). It was thus the principle of equality that attracted Ambedkar toward Buddhism.

The third article by T. S. Wilkinson (pp. 73-100) is a study of changes in the structures and values of family and society effected by Neo-Buddhists, based on an empirical sociological field-survey of two villages of Neo-Buddhist Mahars.

Adele M. Fiske's article deals with the Neo-Buddhist understanding of 'Religion' and 'Buddhism'. It is a research study based on materials collected through answers to a questionnaire and personal interviews on subjects like:

1. What religion gives to man
2. Reason for Conversion.
3. The Nature of the Conversion Movement: Spontaneity, Faith in Dr Ambedkar, Human Dignity.

The conclusion arrived at is: the conversion is not motivated by expediency, nor is it engineered from above. It is a spontaneous movement kindled by faith in Ambedkar. It is an assertion of, and a claim to, human dignity.

The other conclusions are: The Neo-Buddhist Concept of Buddhism is primarily that of a religion of liberation of the oppressed in society; religion has two dimensions, horizontal and vertical.

The final essay by Richard W. Taylor (pp. 131-63) seeks to interpret the phenomenon as a Sectarian religious movement in relation to its significant symbols, and evaluates Dr Ambedkar's Buddhist Canon.

The Essays on the whole reflect a certain depth of originality, impartial judgement and research skill by the authors who have pursued their subjects on the basis of his or her own academic discipline—philosophy, sociology, history or theology. There are no accepted assumptions or canons of observation and interpretation common to them all. Together, the essays throw invaluable light on different aspects of one of the significant movements of religious and social renewal in India.

NEVILLE GUNERATNE

Colombo

Balthasar on Prayer: by Hans Urs von Balthasar. S.P.C.K. 1973.
Pp. 246. Price £ 2.25.

'To pray and to teach souls to pray—it is all, for given this everything else will follow'. These words of Bede Frost, with which generations of Anglican theological students used to be regaled, may be so one-sided as to distort. Yet the frightening laxity with regard to prayer which he recognised in the church forty years ago is certainly still with us. According to a survey conducted a few years ago, the average ordinand in England spent six and a half minutes a day in private prayer: all day to read about God, to discuss him, and six and a half minutes to address him.

There are, of course, a multitude of aids which could be used as correctives in this situation, and the book under review (a reprint of a book first published in German in 1957, and in English in 1961) may at first repel. The Protestant reader may find himself taken aback by the prominence of Mary and the use, made on one occasion, of the Bodily Assumption. The biblical critic may well decide that the author is unduly suspicious of his trade: 'Those who desire a deeper understanding of the word to which they pay homage . . . will, therefore, only make use of exegetical works which, despite an alleged "exactitude" of research, do not neglect the most important kind of exactitude. . . ' (p. 179). The proponent of dialogue may feel that Fr. Balthasar is narrow and unfair in his criticism of other religions. 'Whatever depths be reached by human contemplation, if they are not, explicitly or implicitly, bound up with the life of the Trinity, the God-man and the Church, they are either illusory altogether or diabolic' (p. 61). 'How barren, how relatively void of originality, the sayings of Buddha and the Koran are by comparison (with the Gospels) once launched on their lines, we could very well continue them unaided!' (p. 138). The 'secular theologian' too may be convinced that he is unfairly represented: '. . . mundane activities are held exaggeratedly sacred, and a kind of theology of the things of earth set up which ascribes to business, technology, material well-being, the State and secular culture, an overriding place among the factors which build

up and further the kingdom of God—this view is currently held nowadays precisely where contemplation is undervalued' (p. 98).

A book, in short, which many people are likely to avoid on sight; and yet a book which has a great deal to offer. This is not a manual about how to pray, a book about technique; but anyone who is prepared to struggle with it—for it is not an easy book—should be greatly assisted in his life of prayer.

First, he will find an uncompromising statement of the necessity of contemplative prayer; an insistence made in the face both of a Protestantism which has a vivid sense of revelation in the Word, but fails to develop this into contemplation and vision; and of a Catholicism which on occasion confines itself to the actual possession of grace assured by the Church and the sacraments. The obvious objections—that this means an abandoning of eschatology; that it involves a flight from the world—are fully and critically met, and the necessity of this form of prayer stands out the more obviously.

Secondly, the reader is given, not encouragement to pray or advice on how to pray, but a whole theology of prayer, which sets it in the framework of the Incarnation and the Doctrine of the Trinity; 'It is by no means a matter of indifference, in regard to the acts performed in contemplation, whether I consider myself as seeking in isolation, though admittedly aided by the grace of God, to gain some understanding of the mysteries of revelation, or whether I am certain, through faith, that my faltering attempts are reinforced by the indwelling wisdom of the Holy Spirit, certain too that my act of adoration, petition and thanksgiving is supported and informed by his own infinite and eternal act, and that this is all the effect of that ineffable union that has already raised up all human action and existence and steeped it in the stream of eternal life and love' (p. 62).

There is, too, an uncompromising, not to say uncomfortable, statement of the intimate relationship between prayer and action: 'it is quite impossible to contemplate the word if one does not seriously intend to let it influence one's conduct. For it calls for love of God and neighbour so imperiously that it would be meaningless to face the demand without the will to comply with it . . . Anyone who practices contemplation must have the courage to face the word, the sharpness of the sword and the burning fire' (pp. 176-7). The lack of readiness for contemplation on the part of so many people, Fr. von Balthasar bluntly, but no doubt accurately, asserts is simply due to their unwillingness to face the demands the word would make.

The sustained argument of the book is coupled with profound and searching wisdom. Time and again a single terse sentence serves to make the point: 'This wonderful discovery (of peace with God) is no licence to go on sinning; on the contrary, it is a most pressing invitation now, at last, to love' (p. 39). 'The person who fixes his gaze on himself in order to know himself better, and so, perhaps, effects a moral improvement, will certainly not encounter God' (p. 94). 'We must never aim at carrying out a prescribed programme in prayer; as soon as God's word makes its impact, we must leave all the rest and follow it' (p. 108).

This is a book which will judge the attentive reader most searchingly; and which will, if he allows himself to be judged, immeasurably enrich him. But then God's grace is always like that.

Bishop's College
Calcutta

M. R. WESTALL

Ideas about Christian Education: by A. Verstraeten, S.J. Theological Publications in India, Bangalore, 1973. Pp. 218. Price Rs 7.

Dr S. Radhakrishnan's Report on Education (1947) was in the then traditional style, whereas the Kothari Report on Education (1966) was more in line with growing concepts of 'national development'. The latter raised high expectations and, perhaps paved a way for increasing frustrations. Probably a little before the Kothari Report was published, but more in the wake of it, a large number of colleges and universities sprang up, mostly (or wholly?) on the strength of funds made available liberally by the Central and State Governments. Few of these institutions of higher learning declared in a systematic manner the *raison d'être* of their emerging into this very vital field of national development. Emphasis, by these bodies as well as by the governments, was almost entirely on statistical data, rather than on *development of man*. If a survey is made, it is likely that it will be found that Christian institutions have been almost continuously examining the role of higher education in India in the development of *man*.

The book under review is a 'Church' publication, and as the author has pointed out in the Preface to the book, this has been done 'in order to put at the disposal of many Christian educators, a large set of references to the *official teaching of the Church* on one or the other particular problem they may be concerned with'. The 'Church' here as well as almost throughout the book refers to the Catholic Church. Protestant Christian agencies have, in their own tradition, expressed their concerns and views as a contribution to the continuing debate on this vital issue, and therefore have not taken the position the book under review has taken. The Catholic Church in India is engaged in a big way at all levels of education, theological as well as secular. The Catholic position is that the secular education in which they are involved is for 'the people of God *and* of the human family in their pilgrimage to the transcendent goal which gives meaning to life. . .' (p. 31), whereas Protestant churches take a wider view of their mission to the world. However, it cannot be denied that since a large proportion of the (Catholic) Church's personnel in India is exclusively or mainly engaged in the *apostolate of education* (chapter 5), there is obviously some reason for the Catholic Church to begin to feel that it is almost an exclusive agent for this national service in the sense in which Central and State governments feel. In fact the author (probably not approvingly) points out that 'in Communist countries the State reserves to itself the complete and exclusive control over every type of education and at all levels' (p. 11). It is therefore natural that

the book should deal with basic definitions of education, for instance, education as 'signifying an initiation into a highly developed and complex understanding of *reality*' (p. 15). This probably gives the author strength to make a plea that in order that planning for development be carried out effectively 'all people must be educated upto a sufficiently high level' (p. 13). Further, in order to ensure the *continuing education* of man along with the formal education ('schooling') there are other factors which he points out, such as *home, the mass media*, and 'associating' of individuals with other people, which compromise the role of the 'school' as a civilizing, transforming agent. At least at a certain stage it ceases to be the exclusive agent (p. 16). Thus the *nature* of education is fairly broad, which tends to bring it back to the fundamental idea of the formation of man, particularly of youth and their introduction into society (p. 17). This has led the author into a detailed discussion of the concept of man (pp. 17-19) and then to extend the generally accepted function of education as developing knowledge and skills to 'cultivating attitudes towards life'.

Accepting the existence of plurality of cultures, the author quotes approvingly the definition of 'culture' as given on page 53 of the Vatican II document *The Church in the Modern World* as designating 'everything by which man refines and develops his many gifts of mind and body, seeks through his knowledge and labour to bring this world under control, makes social life more human, both in the family and in the whole of civil society, by improving manners and institutions, finally expresses, communicates and preserves in his works, in the course of centuries, his great spiritual experiences and aspirations, so that they may serve for the progress of many, even of all mankind'.

Thus he leads the discussion to, and appropriately, the 'liberation for humanization' (p. 20), and then to what is meant by 'Christian' education (p. 22). Since the Church 'presents to the world her conceptions of the different aspects of training for *a complete human culture*' (p. 25), it has a vital role to play in the life of the human person and his education. This he maintains, is what the Catholic university stands for, 'to assure in an institutional manner a Christian presence in the university world confronting the great problems of contemporary society. . .'

The essential characteristics of the Catholic university are a Christian inspiration not only of individuals but of the university community as such; fidelity to the Christian message as it comes to it through the Church, and institutional commitment to the service of the People of God and of the human family 'in their pilgrimage to the transcendent goal which gives meaning to life. . .'

Probably it is here where the debate would begin, which by certain oversimplifications the author seems to have anticipated: For instance, 'All universities that realize these fundamental conditions are catholic institutions, whether canonically erected or not' (p. 31). Again, when a secular education institution is controlled by the official teaching of the Church, it does seem naive that a university community with a Catholic atmosphere 'will be open and receptive to truth from any quarter'!

It would be unfair to comment on this presentation, which is by a Catholic educator for Catholic educators, from a non-Catholic point of view. The Church's right to interpret the role of education cannot be ignored, Catholic or non-catholic. But when the Church relates education to culture, society, politics, and the complex phenomenon of interpersonal and international relationships, views other than those of the Church/Church Bodies need to be taken into consideration. The author has conceded this point in his reference to the mass media and 'association' with *other* people. A recent awakening to the fact that during the past 25 years in all the developing countries, development has been in terms of industry, finance, etc., leaving the development of man severely alone, does point to a need of religious bodies engaged in secular education bringing their insights into the making of man more human, and the society more humane. It is not denied that secular humanism cannot participate in the exchanging of these insights, but secular humanism has yet to appear bereft of its negative attitude to religion. Similarly, insistence, even by implication, that all vital insights in making man more human can come only through the Church will fail to draw together honest intellectuals into a meaningful debate . . . the 'learning to be'.

Satara

J. W. AIRAN

The Good Shepherd: by J. E. Lesslie Newbigin. C. L. S. Madras, 1974. Pp. 175. Price Rs 5.

Many years ago, C. F. Andrews wrote a book under this same title. Even earlier, in 1927 Francis Underhill wrote some essays on Pastoral Theology under the title 'Feed my Sheep'. Those who read these books will remember how helpful they were for those times. The present book by Bishop Newbigin is written for pastors now serving under their Lord and Chief Shepherd in a fast developing country. The conception of pastoral ministry needs careful re-thinking in the light of present circumstances in a busy city like Calcutta, Madras or Bombay. There is an upsurge of young blood in the country; the mind of the younger generation must be understood, and their needs constantly kept in mind so that a meaningful service may be rendered to them. The modern pastor must know what his field of work is, what a 'parish' is. The minister must be well equipped for his work both in personal character and understanding of the techniques of his ministry. Bishop Newbigin deals with such important subjects as, 'Structure of Christian Worship', 'Pastoral Visiting', 'Pastor as Evangelist', 'Pastor as Student'. In fact all these addresses, delivered to pastors working in Madras diocese, are extremely helpful, couched as they are in a language which is not too scholarly for them to understand. Students in our theological institutions will find the book an invaluable guide in their preparation and later work.

Asansol

EMMANUEL SADIQ