

Book Reviews

Paul: Libertine or Legalist?: by John W. Drane. S.P.C.K., London, 1975. Pp. 194. Price £ 6.50.

Yet another volume has been added to the spate of literature on Paul that has come out in recent years. Dr Drane after careful study and original research has come out with a provocative book. He has made some interesting suggestions, some of which may be possible, but not all of which are convincing. The book is well documented, and the author seems to have consulted most of the titles in Pauline studies.

One might broadly agree with Drane that Paul cannot be called a 'libertine' or a 'legalist' in an exclusive sense for he was neither, or both to some extent, depending on how one interprets it. But Drane's attempt to explain away the enigma of Paul by showing him as an 'anti-legalist' in Galatians and a 'pro-legalist' in 1 Corinthians (these terms are mine), as each situation demanded such a stance, seems to be an oversimplification. While Galatians has been treated well by Drane in his exegetical analysis, the same cannot be said of the other epistles, though the subtitle of the book claims that it is a study of the theology of the major epistles of Paul. Such a careful analysis is particularly lacking in his treatment of 2 Corinthians. Since it is fairly obvious that the opponents of Paul in 2 Corinthians 10-13 were people who had something to do with Judaism or its Jewish-Christian expression, even if they were not Judaizers, it is certain that Paul was addressing himself to a people of a 'legalistic' background. And yet he sounds neither libertine nor legalist in dealing with that situation. It was yet another unique situation in the Church at Corinth. It is hard to concur with Drane that the situation in 2 Corinthians was more like that of Romans (p. 77).

Drane's assumption that the Galatian converts were people of Jewish background rules out the possibility that they were formerly Gentiles (as suggested by Lütgert, Ropes, Munck, *et al.*), while he is not able to give a satisfactory explanation to such passages in the Epistle as 4:8-10; 6:12, which would go well with Gentiles. Drane's thesis that there were two groups among the Galatian Christians, who were all from Jewish tradition, namely, an educated elite as well as a less sophisticated group does not carry conviction (p. 84).

To assume that Galatians was written earlier than the Corinthian letters on the presumed theological stance taken by Paul in each of these epistles is like building on quicksand. Drane's comment—'If we are to see. . ., it is preferable on theological grounds to see Galatians as the thesis, 1 Corinthians as the antithesis, with the synthesis

coming in 2 Corinthians and Romans' (p. 98)—seems to be so precisely stated as though Paul was writing with a definite pattern in mind or as though one can discern a theological development in his epistles. It is rather the 'anti-legalistic' ring of Galatians which attracted Marcion and other Gnostic interpreters rather than the incipient Gnostic trends in it as suggested by Drane (pp. 110ff., 119, etc.).

Lastly, Drane's attempt to chart the theological diversity in Paul's letters has only yielded an artificial or make-believe effect. The only legitimate explanation one could offer for the diversity and multiplicity in Paul's theological and practical views is to recognize the fact that Paul was reacting to specific problems and situations in the Churches (except perhaps in Romans), never realising that his letters would be subjected to critical-exegetical analysis by posterity. By making another blast in that inexhaustible quarry of Pauline studies, Drane has succeeded in extracting a few basketfuls, if not a whole truckload, and to that extent the student of the New Testament has to be grateful. And yet the quarry remains very much there!

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The Humanity of Man: by Edmond Barbotin. Orbis Books, New York, 1975. Pp. 345. Price \$ 12.95.

The Humanity of God: by Edmond Barbotin. Orbis Books, New York, 1976. Pp. 310. Price \$ 12.95.

The aim of the first book is to understand man. In making this his objective the author is employing Dilthey's distinction between understanding and explanation. To explain is the business of the scientist. His standpoint is detached and objective. Many aspects of man's structure and behaviour can be explained scientifically. The biologist, psychologist, the economist, the sociologist and others all have a view of man. They all have valuable information about man to give us. But even when all these studies are taken together they do not add up to real man. Something is missing. And the ordinary man feels that what is missing is the most important element: the central self. The real I is the self-conscious self with its intentions and aspirations and endeavours. It is this self which gives meaning to the world. Without it the scientific studies would never even begin. And yet they are always tending to reduce man to something which lacks the central self. It is the full man with his intentions and meanings that the book wants to understand.

The method adopted is phenomenological description. The facts of our daily life and the meaning they have are described in detail. The author takes various aspects of life and makes a careful description of what is involved. What happens, for example, when I hear a knock at the door, open it and find someone standing there I do not recognise? What goes through my mind? What goes through

his mind? Shall I stand on one side and let him in? What do we mean by welcoming someone? As against the naive view of many biologists and sociologists Barbotin shows the immense complexity involved in such human situations.

Little of this comes out in scientific studies. The basic method of science was worked out in the seventeenth century by Bacon and Descartes. It has needed revision. But the fundamentals have remained and have served us very well. What modern scientists do not always realise is that limits were deliberately set to the scope of science. They exclude the possibility of grasping the subjectivity of man. It is therefore overlooked or denied. The meanings we create and the intentions we have the scientist as such knows nothing about. So the real humanity of man is lost. Man is reduced to something else and something much less than real man as he exists in the concrete situations of life.

What is it to be human? It is to be bodily spirit. This does not imply either a Platonic or a Cartesian dualism of body and spirit. Spirit penetrates every aspect of a person including every part of the body. We sometimes say of someone, 'He is a gentleman to his finger tips,' or, 'He is every inch a soldier.' These are wise observations: a man's spirit comes out in unconscious gesture as much as in deliberate action. There is no human spirit that is not bodily. We live as material beings in the material world. The essential I is not a transcendental ego. It is my whole person and that includes my body. The scientist is right in treating us as objects among other objects in the world. Only we are more. There is no part of us which is not object and no part which is not subject. The body is as much a component of the mysterious I as is the spirit.

It is by means of categories derived from the body that we learn to apprehend the world. We have to introduce order into the strange world that meets us in experience. In doing this the primary categories we make use of in ordinary life are drawn from the body. One illustration of this is the fact that in many languages, French or Hindi for example, the basic human duality of male and female is imposed on things. So also it is the case that the basic divisions of space, up and down, in front and behind, right and left, come from the body. The up of the world is the part above my eye level; the down is earth on which I stand. These are examples of the concrete categories by means of which our experience of the world is organised.

Again, the body provides us with many of the symbols we need for thought and expression. We speak of the heart of the matter, the head of the state, the director's right hand man, the mouth of the river, the foot of the mountain. There is nothing surprising in this. We are bodily spirits living in the world with other people. It might have been expected that some of the symbols made use of in thought and expression would be anthropological.

In time will the subjective language of everyday life be replaced by the objective language of science? I think there is a distinction

here which the author does not bring out. In so far as our ordinary language expresses the interests of the subject, with its freedom and its appreciation of aesthetic, moral and religious values it cannot be reduced to the abstract language of science. Both have their functions. A similar point about the irreducibility of the ordinary world to the world of science was made by Gilbert Ryle with his well known parable of the college auditor. The auditor maintains that the objective truth about the entire college is to be found in their account books. But there is another kind of ordinary language. It represents not our nature but our standpoint. We say, for example, the sun rises every morning. This can be reduced to scientific language. Nevertheless the author's main point holds: we are likely to go on using this kind of ordinary language as well. It is understandable in all ages. It is also well adapted to convey moral and religious ideas.

It is a lucid book drawing, as one would expect, on the French philosophical tradition. It is also a modest one. I expect that is why there is no index. That is a pity, for there are many acute observations that one would like to have ready access to. In an increasingly technological world we need to be reminded by actual examples of what it means to be human. By the extensive descriptive analyses of personal situations in daily life the author holds steadily before our eyes what is central in human life.

About the second book it is important to be clear what the author is not doing. The book is not a reconstruction of the doctrine of God or of Christ, as the title might suggest. It does not question in any way the orthodox teaching of the Church. Certainly this has to be done. We do not live in the cultural situation of the Fathers, for example. We cannot always accept even their logic. We do need to relate the Christian message to our own situation. But this book makes no such attempt. It accepts the incarnation as a fact requiring no supporting argument. Its Christology is Alexandrian in sharp contrast to much recent writing. If the author thinks there is a place for theological reconstruction nothing like that comes out in this book.

His aim is a different one: to understand the Christian message as it is set out in the Bible. It was the opinion of Bultmann that the message of the Bible could not readily be understood by modern man; it was obscured by the language of myth. Under this term he included a variety of themes: cosmological theories invalidated by modern science; the incredible theology of Jewish apocalyptic; ideas about interference with the normal processes of nature; attempts to speak of the Divine in terms of this world. These are different things and require to be treated differently. To lump them together and prescribe one method for dealing with them all does not make for clarity. This book is concerned only with the last theme: the use of anthropological language to speak of the Divine. The failure to recognise the way in which anthropological language works has led to its confusion with out-dated ideas about the universe. The author's claim is that the Bible is not difficult for the man of today to under-

stand; we still use the common categories of everyday life that the writers of long ago used.

Of course we live in a different climate of thought and with an immense range of knowledge that former ages did not possess. But we are still men and still make use of anthropological categories. Daily life is full of them. The Bible uses the same categories. Certainly it is possible to pick out many passages in the Bible which are dependent on the world view of the time. But it is possible to pick out many more where universal bodily and therefore anthropomorphic categories are used. They are self-evident in meaning and no problem to anyone. What is strange, and perhaps offensive, in the Bible is what it has to say, not, for the most part, the way it says it.

The Biblical writers have the literary skill to use anthropological terms to convey a non-anthropological meaning. Language derived from our experience of time is used to express the divine eternity. For instance, 'Him who is and who was and who is to come' (Rev. 1:4). The divine transcendence is expressed in many ways. One example is the story of Moses being hidden in a crevice and allowed to see only God's back and not his face (Ex. 33:21ff.). This is thoroughly anthropomorphic. But it brings out God's transcendence with a force that the use of abstract categories could not command. Again, John writes of the Son being in the bosom of the Father. The metaphor gives expression to the perfect communion in life and love between the Father and the Son. A mastery of the resources of ordinary language, with its everyday categories, enables the Biblical writers to transmit clearly a message about the Transcendent.

Barbotin is not saying that anthropological categories are sufficient in religious discourse. Clearly they are not. He himself makes free use of abstract categories: transcendence, omniscience, eternity, duration and many more. What he says is that the use of anthropological categories to speak of the Divine is perfectly reasonable and perfectly understandable. We make use of them in our daily life; that is what the previous book demonstrated. In this book he demonstrates, with many examples, the range and power of the concrete categories supplied by daily experience to speak of the Divine.

It may be that Barbotin overstates his case. Maybe the Biblical writers were not always aware that the anthropological language they used was symbolic. That might be so in the example quoted of Moses in the crevice. But what people today do not always realise is that almost all the language we use about God is symbolic. The abstract categories also are derived from experience in this world; they cannot be applied univocally to the Divine. Anthropological categories at least have the advantage of not allowing ourselves to be deceived by our language. In one way the more evidently anthropomorphic our terms are the better.

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La Religione dei Patriarchi: by Antonio Ammassari, Roma, Città Nuova Editrice, 1976. Pp. 305. Price Lire 4,500.

The book consists of a collection of seven essays of diverse character and length. The title of the book is taken from the last essay which is neither the longest nor the most important one. This is unfortunate. As a matter of fact, the title of the book is misleading. The reader might expect to find a study of the belief or worship or socio-political life of the patriarchs as influenced by their religious ideas; instead the essays are restricted to the history of the text and its exegesis, and to some questions of the relationship of these texts to non-biblical texts, contemporary or later. The biblical text is studied from its origin through translations and interpretations up to the NT and even the patristic age, with the purpose of establishing the perennial dynamism of the Word.

The last essay, on the religion of the patriarchs, is a study of the historical character of the religion of the patriarchs, based mainly upon the fact that the divine name is connected with the name of the patriarchs. This feature, it is noted, is not restricted to the time of the patriarchs; the 'God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob' is also the God of Moses, David, Ezekiel, etc. In that way God's identity somehow comes to depend on the history and the name of the patriarchs; but this history reveals God's transcendence over all other tribal and local deities of Canaan and Egypt.

Nearly half of the volume is occupied by a critical and historical study of Ps. 132 (pp. 9-135). Ps. 132 exalts the transfer of the Ark to Jerusalem in the beginning of David's reign. Ammassari studies the history of the transmission of the text, and parallel texts (biblical and non-biblical) which may throw light upon the Psalm. There follows a detailed analysis of the Psalm and a sketch of the history of its interpretation, both Jewish and Christian. The poem, a model of ancient Hebrew poetry, dates from at least the 10th century B.C. Ammassari rejects the opinion that the Psalm depends on 2 Sam. 6-7; he also does not admit the modern common view that the Psalm is essentially cultic; the occasion of the Psalm was a military expedition. He emphasizes that there is a lay/popular dimension in the biblical world and its expression which goes against the general tendency of connecting the whole literature of the psalms with the cult and the Temple. In any case Ps. 132 is considered to be Davidic and Messianic.

The author further notes that differences within the OT literature are due not only to geographical factors (North and South), or historical events (Exile, Return to Israel, etc.); we are forced to admit a real 'pluralism' in Hebrew and Judaistic times. This fact is brought out especially in a study of the Code of the Covenant (Exod. 20; 22; 24: 3-8) viewed in relation to the style of the Aramaic documents of Elephantine. Over and over again the author refers to a Hebrew and Judaistic 'pluralism' with regard to both the text and its interpretation.

Unfortunately we are nowhere given any valuation or criticism of the importance of this pluralism.

The study of the prophecy against Babylon in Jer. 50-51, analysed in the light of Sumerian and Egyptian parallels, leads to the conclusion that ch. 51 decidedly dates from before ch. 50. In Ps. 23 the idea of God as shepherd is studied against the background of history and geography. Ps. 22 is analysed from the point of view of its exegesis in Qumrân.

The author takes pains to analyse the texts from all possible angles not only by means of the historico-critical method but also by taking into account the various traditions, Jewish, Christian and even Islamic. The work offers many interesting insights. One regrets the more some inaccuracies with regard to Hebrew grammar (e.g., mixing up 'nomen regens' and 'nomen rectum', or absolute infinitive and construct infinitive, or again subjective genitive and possessive genitive); there is also a marked lack of consistency in spelling (e.g. JHWH next to YHWH or Jhwh, Zadockite next to Zadokite, Sadokiti or Sadoqiti, etc.).

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Lord of the Air: by Tal Brooke. Lion Publishing, Berkhamstead, Herts (England), 1976. Pp. 189. Price 95p.

'India is a gigantic supermarket of spiritual commodities; whatever you want you can get,' an American professor of Sanskrit once remarked to me rather irreverently. The North American and European *bhaktas* clad in velvet pajamas, who come to sample this country's religious delicacies, more often than not baffle both Westerners and Indians alike. Certainly I, too, even though brought up and educated in the same milieu as these connoisseurs of the spiritual, have misunderstood them, assuming that my generation suffers basically from facile adherence to movements of thought bearing such names as empiricism, existentialism and Marxism, all of which in their own measure emphasize reason and rejection of authority. I would not be surprised, however, if such supporters of intellect are outnumbered by those who are anxious to 'escape from reason' (as theologian Francis Schaeffer put it), who favour unfettered eclecticism, and who yearn to submit themselves to some authority. One of the interesting conclusions to be drawn from the book under review here, *Lord of the Air*, is that after Westerners have dabbled (as many do) with ouija boards, spiritualism, hypnosis and astral travel, and then turn to more risky pursuits such as psychiatry and LSD, it is only natural for them to make a pilgrimage to India's ashrams. The author, Tal Brooke, a young Anglo-American, has recorded for us in lively, often humorous prose his adventurous passage from an accomplished

eclectic embodying all of the occult, psychedelic and other practices mentioned above to a Christian believer. Worthy of note are the following: (1) Readers with an interest in the sociology of modern Indian religious movements will appreciate this book's sensitive and candid portraiture of individual ashram-wallahs. (2) Further allegations about sexual abnormalities practised by Sai Baba upon his closest disciples are detailed. Sensitive readers are forewarned that several explicit sexual descriptions may offend their sensibilities. (3) For any committed Christian in India, Brooke's last pages will be a serious disappointment both emotionally and theologically. He left (or one might even say fled from) India as a xenophobic new believer, that is to say, as a Christian but also as an unmitigated cultural chauvinist; so much so, in fact, that at times his belief in Christ seems like a mere appendage to his inordinate fear of the occult.

After listening to Timothy Leary discourse upon the capacity of LSD to trigger 'spiritual experiences', Brooke took a massive dose of that psychedelic. This experiment left him not only dazed but also with an apparently superior insight into the 'ground of being'. A kind of hybrid pop-vedanta such as the following began to pour forth from his lips (vegetarians will shudder at the setting for this reflexion): 'Right now, while I'm eating these eggs, there is an underlying consciousness at work inside them that makes their existence possible' (p. 29). Soon afterward we find Brooke beginning his Indian pilgrimage starving for spiritual experience, which first of all led him to Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's ashram in Rishikesh, where he was initiated and given a *mantra* in the Maharishi's private cave. Yet in this situation especially we discover that Brooke is not an easy man to characterize, for he combines the tolerance of an eclectic with the skepticism of a cynic. After struggling to concentrate on his *mantra*, for instance, he wondered if 'what was happening with my *mantra* was elevating an insignificant sensory will-o'-the-wisp into a cosmic super-nova' (p. 43).

Looking for more dramatic signs of God, Brooke desperately turned to Sai Baba, whom he found in 1970 at Ananthapur and described with these words, 'God or no God—Sai Baba resembled a big happy gollywog' (p. 52). Within seventeen months this description would be reworded in the ominous sense of the book's title, but not until Brooke had ascended to Baba's right hand, performing such tasks as leading thousands of Indian devotees in rousing Sanskrit and Telegu *bhajans* during *satsang*. During his first year with Baba, Brooke was thrilled with the thought that he might in fact be in the presence of God incarnate. Baba's own claim to deity, supported by his 'spontaneous access to people's thoughts' (p. 50) and by his ability to materialize objects, was something to which he dearly wanted to submit. Whether it had come to tempt him into sin with Baba or against Baba by doubting his deity Brooke at first did not know, but a serpent had crept into his garden in the form of an homosexual encounter. Here we have a candid account, which should not leave us unmoved,

of the tribulations of the present western generation trying to believe in their phantasms of love, knowledge and integrity, and instead experiencing sour guilt. During an extraordinary session, Brooke and the other western disciples reveal to each other their various sexual encounters with Baba. The evidence, Brooke claims, points to one incredible conclusion: Baba is an hermaphrodite.

There are two difficulties with Brooke's account: the veracity of his claims about Baba's abnormalities and his xenophobic conversion with its unchristian attitude toward the occult. The first is a simple matter of justice; the testimony of one witness (we do not know if Brooke's companions would agree with his account) is not enough to substantiate an accusation. A skeptic could raise the spectre of malicious slander by pointing out that prior to Brooke's defection his position at Baba's right hand had been usurped by other aspiring devotees, an event which provoked no little resentment in him. There are madmen as well as saints among the gurus, but certainly also among their devotees! It would be injudicious for Christians to read Brooke's book and then conclude that where there is smoke there is fire. There may and there may not be a fire; that can be our only position until there is irrefutable corroboration.

Readers will be justified in wondering whether or not a deep sense of repugnance for India, developed after months of debilitated health, played a significant role in Brooke's conversion. It is startling to find that a single Christmas Eve spent in the home of American missionaries near Baba's ashram amidst familiar bric-a-brac and in feasting upon traditional foods could deflect him from Baba towards Christianity. It is not surprising that Brooke would be temporarily hostile toward the country in which (if true) he had been sexually assaulted by a man who claims to be God, but it is inexcusable for him to maintain this attitude several years later when able to reflect calmly upon these events. At the end of the book, however, we find him uttering such unsound judgments as the following: 'The travail of the land was not proof of a higher spirituality, but a warning that something was amiss' (p. 185). Notwithstanding its limited validity, this remark is historically blind, especially for one whose own countrymen bear much responsibility for what is 'amiss' here and for one who was originally compelled to come to India by the West's immoral prosperity. But the most disappointing words are these: 'Now all that remained was to get out of India successfully' (p. 185). This attitude suggests that the heart of darkness ruled by the lord of the air is located east of Istanbul, and that the kingdom of God is to the other direction. Christians in India ought to remind Tal Brooke that 'You, my children, are of God's family, and you have the mastery over these false prophets, because he who inspires you is greater than he who inspires the godless world' (1 John 4:4 NEB).

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God's Word Among Men: Theological Essays in Honour of Joseph Putz SJ: edited by George Gispert-Sauch SJ. Vidyajyoti, Delhi, 1973. Pp. 384. Price Rs 40.

Personality cult is in bad odour at present. Indeed for priests and Religious it would seem to be not just wrong, but pernicious. St Teresa of Avila was following a long line of tradition when she condemned it unequivocally among her Sisters.

So when one sees a book 'in honour of...' one or more Religious persons one understandably hesitates. But a *Festschrift* is not that kind of book. And the man, or rather men, in whose honour it is written, are not only eminent theologians but are far beyond being moved by any cheap flattery. Indeed the editor has taken advantage of the occasion of the diamond jubilee of Fr J. Putz and the golden jubilees of Frs J. Bayart, J. Volckaert and P. de Letter in the Society of Jesus to produce a book which cannot but be a remarkable contribution to the theology of the Word of God, with especial reference to India.

Just to rehearse the list of contributors is to show the quality of the book. Indologists—Pannikar, de Smet and Lacombe—jostle with biblicists—Legrand, Wijngaards and Luke (though here he writes as an Indologist)—and theologians—Rahner, Neuner and Dupuis. And these are only a sample.

The book begins with tributes to the jubilarians. Carefully and judiciously written these show up these remarkable men and their invaluable contributions to the development of theology. Two of them, Frs Bayart and de Letter have specialised in Indian studies. Fr Butz, the diamond jubilarian, is celebrated as the scholarly and gentlemanly editor of *The Clergy Monthly* for thirty-four years and the writer of the little book *My Mass*. As such he is known by name at least by almost every Catholic priest in India. It was always a pleasure to submit an article to Fr Putz for *The Clergy Monthly*. Whether it was accepted or refused you were always treated with gentleness and courtesy. I know of no other editor who, on refusing an article, would write a long personal letter explaining why precisely it could not be accepted and adding a few words of encouragement. As someone remarked it was almost better to get a refusal from him than an acceptance from some of the others. Fr Volckaert is less well known but no less distinguished as a biblical scholar and, latterly, the most obliging librarian of Vidyajyoti, Delhi.

The common approach of the contributors is the 'belief that the Word (of God) was present in India (and indeed among all genuinely religious men) from the earliest dawn of her religious life as the Seed of the Word' spoken of by Vatican II. It becomes manifest in a unique manner in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. 'How does Jesus' mission affect religion in India?' is the question which, basically, each of the eminent scholars has attempted to answer, each in his own discipline.

The contributions fall into four main sections: Listening to the Word, Reflection on the Word, Contemplation in the Word and Proclamation of the Word. In the first section Dr Pannikar, with his usual vast erudition, but with much more clarity than usual, treats of the Word in Vedic religious consciousness. Fr K. Luke writes on the Rig Vedic conception of *dharma*. His study is mostly philological. He traces nine different meanings of the word in the first Veda. Some of these are secular but most have profound religious connotations. In the end one feels that *dharma* can encompass any form of rule or discipline including those governing animals and gods. Fr de Smet deals with the understanding of faith in Indian traditions. Fr Legrand studies St Paul's Areopagus speech from the missiological aspect. It does not fit either into the category of fulfilment or that of challenge. Rather Fr Legrand sees it as perhaps the first effort at genuine dialogue.

Surely the most readable article in the book is that by Daniel O'Connor, describing and analysing the (as yet unpublished) correspondence between C.F. Andrews, the unwavering Christian, and Munshi Ram, the extreme Arya Samajist. Here is dialogue in practice. If any proof be needed that such dialogue can be fruitful one has only to read the last paragraph of Munshi Ram's last letter to Andrews. '... I am convinced that my heart has already found a response in your own. . . I thank our Divine Mother for having given you the strength to act with true Aryan (in other words Christ-like) patience. . . I believe that the Loving Mother herself has joined our hearts which no human instruments can rend asunder. . .'

The next section concerns 'Reflection on the Word of God'. The Word is eternal but its inexhaustible mystery can and must be expressed in ever new language and symbolism to suit each group of men it encounters. This brings in the problem as to how Christ can be present in non-Christian religions. Karl Rahner tackles the question as a dogmatic theologian. Basing himself on the classic text 'God wills that men be saved' and then going through Heb. 11:1-40, especially v. 6, demanding faith and hope, he postulates the 'Spirit of Christ' even in the non-Baptized. He concludes, after much argumentation, that since the Christ-event is the final cause of the communication of the Spirit to the world, 'therefore we can say in all truth that this Spirit is from the outset and always the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the Word of God become *man*.' Sister Sara Grant attempts to put Rahner's theories into practice by trying to see how Sankara's concept of relation impinges on the mystery of Christ. James Dupuis returns to reflecting on the Holy Spirit. He tries to show the relationship between the cosmic influence of the Holy Spirit and his precise influence in the New Testament. This is a delicate and difficult ground of enquiry but one in which the Council Documents, *Lumen Gentium*, *Nostra Aetate* and, less directly, *Gaudium et Spes*, have opened up several new avenues of enquiry. Joseph Neuner attempts to answer some pointed and vital questions: Is the Church necessary? If so

should every man be linked to the Church? If so in what does this link consist? It is impossible to summarise his answer in a sentence but basically it is that the answer must be seen in terms of 'implicit membership' and 'orientation'.

The third section: 'Contemplation in the Word' collects studies of personal and community experiences of contemplation. Ramana Maharshi and Jules Monchanin are the individuals studied—the first by the great French Indologist M.O. Lacombe. Fr Luke, with tremendous erudition, shows that all the constitutive elements of genuine prayer are to be found in the Rig Veda. But he is careful to distinguish between the prayer of Vedic man and that of Biblical man. The latter prays 'to a free and personal God who has intervened in history and through the medium of history has made himself known to mankind; the specifically Christian prayer will, of course, include a reference to the person of Jesus, the risen and glorified one who is man's sole mediator with God.' Such elements are, of course, absent from Vedic prayer.

Fr J. N. M. Wijngaards, with characteristic lucidity, shows that adaptation to and adoption of non-Christian rites in worship is by no means new. Indeed most of the religious customs of the Israelites, though necessarily purified, were adopted from the religious practices of surrounding tribes. He draws some concrete conclusions regarding modern adoption and adaptation. Whereas Wijngaards' study is mainly scriptural, Abel studies the matter from the liturgical angle and shows that even in such well known liturgies as the Ambrosian, the Gallican and the African Liturgy at the time of St Augustine non-Biblical readings were incorporated into the liturgy. The next section of Abel's article is, necessarily, less historical and more theological and speculative and, I felt, less satisfactory.

The fourth broad section of the book has been, somewhat loosely one feels, called 'Proclamation of the Word'. For the first article in this section is a study by the great Hindi pandit and lexicographer Camille Bulcke on the *bhakti* of Tulsidas. Edward Hambye shows, through some recently discovered documents, that Roberto de Nobili not only studied and knew Indian religious culture but, contrary to what was hitherto believed, respected and admired the *sruti* of Hinduism: 'These laws can be retained in so far as they proposed moral ideals and social subjects—are they not saying things that are compatible with the true Religion. . .?' He even contemplated the possibility of 'transferring some of these into the realm of Christian piety.' Fr Amalorpavadass closes the volume with a study of catechesis in the Indian context and shows what he and his team have already done to make the catechetical process a richly Indian thing.

In this brief review I have not been able to do more than to offer a glance at and a sip of some of the riches of this remarkably rewarding book. Obviously in an anthology like this the book is uneven. Not all the contributions are of equal value. Most are difficult to read for the ordinary thinking Christian. Yet the book must find its place on

the shelves of any person seriously interested in the development of mission theology. Not only does it summarise and coordinate several different approaches, but in some cases it marks a definite advance on anything previously published in those fields. The editor needs to be congratulated on the tremendous effort that must have been involved to get such a book together. One only regrets that he did not spend a little extra effort and give us at least a general bibliography and if possible an index. These would have considerably enhanced the value of the book.

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The Cathedral, Ajmer

Jesus Christ in Asian Suffering and Hope: edited by J. M. Colaco. C.L.S., Madras, 1977. Pp. viii+95. Price Rs. 9.

This book was intended as source material for the Sixth Assembly of the Christian Conference of Asia which was held in June 1977 at Penang, Malaysia: the title of the book under review gives the theme of the Assembly. As Mr Alexander John states in the Introduction, the Assembly was intended not only to promote thinking in the Churches on this theme but to lead towards concrete action.

The book contains eight chapters of which the first and the last deal with the Asian situation, the second, third and fourth with the Indian context (the third chapter being a specific case study of an Indian village). The remaining chapters deal with suffering and hope in the context of non-Christian religions, and of the Old and New Testaments.

The case study of a village (eight miles away from Bangalore city) reveals that in a practical situation Christian landlords behave in the same way as others. Paulos Gregorios, in his biblical exposition (ch. 7) reacts against those who put their sole emphasis on social action: 'Salvation does not mean liberation from neo-colonialism and the establishment of social justice through change of government. . . God's action in history is a pious theological phrase. . . It is not for a classless society in history that Christians hope.' The balancing emphasis over against that of social action is 'transcendent hope' and the author advises us that with this hope we Asians should identify with the manifestation of the Kingdom wherever it appears and whatever form it takes. This is a much needed corrective to those whose sole emphasis on the social Gospel leaves no scope for hope beyond this present life.

Dr Premasagar's paper on the application of this theme to the Church in India outlines some contemporary pilot projects and thinking on themes such as a financially viable ministry, practically oriented theological education, women's ordination, dialogue with other faiths. This is an encouraging pointer to the direction in which the Indian Church must move.

Bible study outlines of the CCA at the end of the book are well worked out. Of the many challenges thrown out by these studies, one exposed exactly the kind of courageous rethinking which our Church leadership requires: 'We do not want to suffer with our fellow Asians, but set our eyes on the affluence of the West. . .Until we who belong to the leadership of the Churches can take up the Cross of poverty and want, we will not carry much conviction to our people' (p. 92). I hope this honest expression will lead to concrete action.

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