

Book Reviews

The Human Presence: An Orthodox View of Nature: by Paulos Gregorios. World Council of Churches, Genève, 1978. Pp. 104. Price Sfr 10.

This book by Metropolitan Paulos Gregorios of New Delhi is a timely contribution from the Orthodox Christian point of view to the current debate provoked by the ecology and resource crisis and the search for a new understanding of the relation of man and nature provoked by that crisis. The author contends that the present day environment crisis, the economic crisis, the crisis of justice, the crisis of faith and other contemporary crises are all symptoms of humanity not becoming what it ought to be, that it is trekking along a wrong track. He strongly pleads for an intellectual renewal that will correct our world picture and also for a genuine international community effort to face some of the ethical problems that confront us today.

Mar Gregorios states that a wrong or at least imperfect understanding of nature largely contributed to the present impasse. So after posing the problem he analyses the various understandings of nature from the biblical, the Indo-Hellenic and the Patristic traditions. The discussion on science and nature leads him to evaluate the contributions of a number of authors. While recognising the relevance of Theodore Roszak and his writings, Mar Gregorios strongly repudiates his position as immature, unbalanced and uninformed. Examining Whiteheadian metaphysics and Process theology, Mar Gregorios dismisses them as assumptions and not as scientifically demonstrated truths. Then he turns to the palaeontologist-biologist turned theologian Teilhard de Chardin. He admits that Teilhard's vision of the universe is definitely a unitive one, but his inclusive view of humanity and nature needs to be placed within the context of the trinitarian economy of creation-redemption.

At this point the author finds the classical Christian cosmology of Gregory of Nyssa extremely relevant and interesting. In his characteristically erudite, but at the same time lucid way, Metropolitan Gregorios ably summarises the profound thought of the Fourth Century Cappadocian Father emphasising the unity of all creation and the unity of all humanity. The mediatory and participatory role of humanity in relation to God and the world is stressed as the human vocation in time and space. He concludes the chapter by saying, "If all human activities and abilities, including the development of science and technology, were subordinated to and integrated with the quest for justice, freedom, peace, and creative goodness, the

human rule over the creation could mean a blessing for the whole universe." The eastern tradition is further traced in the writings of Dionysius the Areopagite and Maximus the Confessor. Recent eastern Christian reflection on the human role in God's creation is also brought out with examples from the works of the lyrical prophet of humanity, Vladimir Solovyev, and a few articles of still more recent writers.

The chapter on "Mastery and Mystery" drives home profound Christian insights on the subject. The author declares, "Humanity has a special vocation as priest of creation, as the mediator through whom God manifests himself to creation and redeems it... Christ has become part of creation, and in his created body he lifted up the creation to God, and humankind must participate in this eternal priesthood of Christ." He further expounds the relation between technology and sacrament. In doing so, he blames science and technology for alienating man from reality, giving him the two options of either standing apart from it and knowing it objectively or manipulating it technologically. As a result, man has lost the capacity to respond with his whole being to the being of the Wholly Other who presents himself to man through the created universe. He explains "mysticism" as participatory union, in and with Christ, with the *energeia* of God as it gives existence to man and to all other reality in creation. "This union with God and with each other, in Christ," says the author, "is the true meaning of the eucharist, and the only authentically Christian mysticism." He calls for the subjection of the mastery of the universe to God by giving nature into the loving hands of God in the great mystery of the eucharistic self-offering. As Christ, on the Cross, gave himself, with humanity and nature, to God in self-denying love and thereby saved humanity and nature we are called upon to participate in that eternal act of sacrifice and love. He warns that the mastery of nature must be held within the mystery of worship, otherwise we lose both mastery and mystery.

The closing two chapters together unfold his vision for the future. He laments that humanity has become a victim of science and technology, the prevailing educational and training systems making man transcendent-vision-blind. He affirms that science is not as objective a system of knowledge as it was thought, to be. As such he invites man to make amends for the past mistakes of creating a system based on science and technology. In proposing alternatives, he asserts that man needs to create images for the future not subservient to scientific-technological creativity but on the basis of a new spirituality. Finally he pleads for immediate Christian ethical reflection and action taking into consideration the essential freedom of man. Seizing the technological-ecological crisis, he says, we have to devise and practise a new way of life. A new pattern of civilisation is to be evolved in which humanity can grow towards the fullness of its God-given vocation. In this context he discerns the significance of an international participating reflecting community of charismatic persons covering a wide

range of competence, cultures and different religious traditions. From such a community, the author hopes, new reflection and new patterns of living may emerge which could provide models for the wider society to adopt and assimilate. He emphatically affirms that only a new civilisation and a new world grid of economic and political power can lead humanity forward.

Running to 104 pages this book provides substantial material for deep thinking and reflection. It stimulates our intellects, refreshes our minds and widens our visions. Theologians and theological students will certainly find this book most exciting, enriching and ennobling. With the present volume Metropolitan Gregorios has further enriched the theological thinking of our generation.

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Israelite and Judaeon History: edited by John H. Hayes and J. Maxwell Miller. S.C.M. Press, London, 1977. Pp. xxxii+736. Price £ 15.

For almost twenty years the histories of Israel by Martin Noth and John Bright have been the standard works on the subject. Of more recent works that of Herrmann may now be placed alongside these two. Sad experience shows that B.D. students find these books (perhaps Herrmann less so) highly indigestible: the demand for an "easy" book comes up annually. It is difficult to know what to recommend. Ehrlich's *A Concise History of Israel* is probably the best possibility, but it is too brief for any serious study.

The book under review will hardly fill that gap. At over 700 pages and 1020 grams, all but the most persevering of students are likely to find it somewhat daunting. And a certain opacity of phraseology in some of the essays will do little to encourage. (How about "semi-nomadic transhumance and gradual sedentarization"?) But bulky and not particularly easy to read though it is, the book is likely to prove essential not only for scholars, but in the classroom, for packed between these covers is "the current state of the debate" for all important aspects of Israel's history, at least as it was in the second half of the 70s.

There are eleven chapters, some of them with more than one author (there are fourteen contributors). The eleven chapters cover the whole period of Israelite prehistory and history from the patriarchal narratives to the Roman destruction of Jerusalem. (There is also a first chapter on the history of the study of the history of Israel from Hecataeus of Abdera to Wellhausen.) In each chapter emphasis is given to the identification and evaluation of sources and the different

interpretations of modern scholars are carefully weighed. Each separate sub-section is preceded by a bibliography.

Some might argue that, in a book which is on *Israelite and Judaeon History*, it is disproportionate to devote nearly half the book to pre-history. (For the authors history proper can only be said to begin with David.) This, however, is to involve oneself in a semantic quibble. History or prehistory, the pre-Davidic period abounds with difficult questions and one can be grateful that such a tortuous path has been so clearly sign-posted.

Particularly useful in this respect are Maxwell Miller's summary of the various sociological theories of what was taking place in the movement of the Hebrews from the desert to Canaan and Andrew Mayes' discussion of the problems involved in reconstructing the period of the Judges. Less "survey" in form, but no less useful are William Dever's discussion of archaeological evidence and its relationship to biblical traditions and Dorothy Irvin's treatment of folk-tale motifs in the biblical narratives, a theme which is likely to be unfamiliar to many biblical scholars.

The second half of the book on the period from David onwards is, on the whole, equally balanced and sane.

The book contains minor irritations. Apart from the language already alluded to, it insists on referring to BCE and CE instead of the familiar BC and AD. (This was no doubt to avoid apparent Christian prejudice, but it seems to be carrying fairness unnecessarily far.) More trying is the habit of avoiding all footnotes and including all references within brackets in the text. This does not make for easy reading.

The irritations, however, are minor when compared with the overall usefulness of this book. No theological library should be without it.

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Christian Ethics. A Presentation of Special Moral Theology in the Light of Vatican II: by C. Henry Peschke. C. Goodliffe Neale, Alcester and Dublin, Vol. I, 1977, pp. xxi+293; Vol. II, 1978, pp. xv+627. N. p.

The publication of a handbook of Catholic moral theology is a rare event in recent times. C. H. Peschke has met this long felt need of such a systematic work in the present generation. The double volume work is a treasure of knowledge for theological teachers and students and religious educationists, not only in the Roman but also in the non-Roman traditions, because it opens the door for discussions by restating issues and problems of Christian ethics and morality with a touch of modern perspective.

The author claims the work to be one on Christian ethics, as the main title of the book suggests, though in actual treatment he is limited to Catholic moral theology, as the sub-title indicates. Now, the distinction between Christian ethics and moral theology may be subtle and it may be debatable whether there is such a clear distinction at all. However, a difference at least in emphasis seems to be undisputable. There is, for example, a broad distinction between philosophical ethics and theological ethics. Christian ethics on the whole must be both philosophical and theological, whereas moral theology, in its true tradition, subjects itself to the dictates of the scriptures and the dogmas of the Church, although faith-inspired reasoning is an operative principle seeking generalisations as well as application to particular circumstances or cases. Monogamy, for instance, is the only right pattern of sexual relationship. But why? Mk. 10: 5-9 is the basis of authority, which is supported by Old Testament passages. The text is taken to be conclusive by itself. But what about other Old Testament evidence of divinely sanctioned polygamy? The indissolubility of marriage is also absolutised on the basis of the Scripture text alone. The questions and the ethical and moral problems involved have not been analysed from their various angles.

A close study of C.H. Peschke's work will reveal that it is more of the character of moral theology than of ethics. For he appeals to the authority of the Scripture in place and out of place, and does not feel free to deviate from the official position of the Church. In chapters 1 and 2, he treats the "Biblical Foundations" of "Christian Ethics" and in chapter 3, the "Historical Development" of "Christian Ethics." But he is actually more interested in the moral precepts of the Old Testament and New Testament than in expounding the ethical principles upon which ethical norms are to be built and rebuilt and moral theology to be ever renewed. The strain of prophetic tradition in the Old Testament is very much neglected, with the result that the legalistic strain gains predominance. The difference between the legalistic concept of justice and the law of love, a contrast that Jesus Christ so sharply made in his teachings, has not been sufficiently brought out. But he leans on Scripture in every section and almost at every point, not always taking the context into consideration adequately.

This is not, however, to deny the fact that the author invariably tries to reason out every conclusion so as to base it on some principle, whether scriptural or traditional or magisterial (ecclesiastical).

Nevertheless the author tries to integrate modern thoughts from various disciplines such as sociology, psychology and cultural anthropology. The best example of this is perhaps his treatise on conscience, where he tries to bring in outstanding psychologists like Freud and Jung (cf. vol. I, part II, ch. 3). Obviously he departs from Freud and leans on Jung (pp. 155f.).

Peschke's total approval of the Augustinian position with regard to many points of moral ethics seems to be due to an uncritical bias; however, he fails to do justice to the critics of St Augustine. In connection with the morality of marriage and sexuality, he has taken Augustine as an unquestionable authority; many will not agree with his approval of St Augustine as "a psychologist of the first rank" (vol. I, p. 47).

Regarding sexual life and marriage, it appears that Peschke views procreation and propagation as the total purpose of God, although he makes a concession to accommodate as a secondary motive the expression of love through conjugal union, which he fails to treat dialogically; his main tendency seems to be to reiterate the Augustinian position (cf. vol. II, pp. 379-80, 443-44). Preoccupation with the legalistic approach results in frequent use of legalistic terminology such as conjugal right, conjugal debt, etc. The burning contemporary human problems involved in the questions of divorce, birth control, homosexuality and the like are not confronted and studied seriously; instead, the traditional conservative dogmatic positions are reiterated without opening dialogue with other progressive, contemporary theologians and ethicists.

Matt. 5:28 is taken literally and legalistically and is applied to condemn sexual fantasy as adultery in the heart. But psychological as well as wider theological discussion is not attempted. The author's theology of the Natural Law appears to be inconsistent here. If emotional arousing is natural, how can it be evil or immoral? (Cf. vol. II, pp. 397-98.) For in vol. I, pp. 112 ff., the Natural Law is accepted as created by God and hence good. If, then, Natural Law is implanted in man and man's knowledge of good and evil is presupposed, how can what comes out of him defile him? Therefore, the presence of something unnatural also must be presupposed. This fact of sinfulness has to be taken more seriously and explained more adequately. The author's main definition of sin as rejection of God and disregard for His will emphasises the objective dimension but not the intrinsic nature of man as a sinful being. Sin as rejection of one's own being has not been adequately dealt with.

Nevertheless, the author's attempt to deal with the various shades of a vast subject systematically and comprehensively in a double volume of rather limited number of pages might be one of the reasons for omissions of certain aspects of Christian ethics from adequate treatment. The psychological dimension of conscience, for instance, has been almost entirely neglected in volume I and insufficiently treated in volume II.

The omission of dialogue with non-Roman Catholic theology and ethics might be because the author limits himself to the exposition of the accepted Catholic teachings. However, one would expect a post-Conciliar work on Christian Ethics to be more open to dialogue. But as a matter of fact Peschke has not made an appreciable advance from

pre-Conciliar conservatism. Whereas the opinion of G. Lobo, S. J., that the double volume is the "best presentation of Catholic Moral Theology, ever since the classic *Law of Christ* of Bernard Haring"¹ is well founded, his remarks on the author's traditional tendency to casuistry and failure to treat love and justice as foundations of Christian ethics ought to be noted as valid observations. Moreover, the book has many outdated ethical doctrines such as the natural rhythm method as the only morally upright means to family planning. However, Peschke deserves our thanks for providing us with a much wanted handbook on Catholic moral theology which still has the potentiality to suggest more ecumenical discussions and dialogues.

The recent reprint of the work, produced by TPI, makes it more easily available in India at a lower cost. The format of the double volume is good and the cover attractive. But the many intermediate divisions would have been less problematic if the chapters were serially numbered from the beginning to the end. The lack of a bibliography must be pointed out as an omission. The footnotes tell that almost all the references date before 1969; to this extent the work falls short of up-to-date scholarship. Does this help us to anticipate that a revised edition or even a fresh treatise will come out soon, which will take into account progress during the remaining last decade also, with greater openness to the post-Conciliar dynamics in Catholic moral theology and wider views of Christian ethics?

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The Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement: Documents and Statements (1902-1975): edited by Constantin G. Patelos. World Council of Churches, Geneva, 1978. Pp. 360. Price \$14.95.

This book, at least partially, opens out a window on the experiences, struggles and thinking of the Orthodox Church. The so-called western Churches both Protestant and Catholic have looked at the eastern Churches with pity and have occasionally condescended, sometimes aggressively, to correct their "errors" and ignorance. Seldom has there been a realisation that Orthodox Churches have a wealth of knowledge and experience which can significantly enrich the western traditions. We owe it to the ecumenical movement which has drawn the eastern and western traditions closer to discover each other's heritage for mutual enrichment. This book seeks to draw attention to this particular aspect of the East-West relationship.

¹ See the review in the *Vidyajyoti Journal of Theological Reflection*, Vol. XLII, January-December, 1978, pp. 529f. and 512.

However, the real value of the book lies in the fact that the documents in it let the voices, both authoritative and personal opinions, speak for themselves. Unlike some earlier documentations like those of Bell and Kidd, which include selections from eastern Churches, the selections in this work are made by a scholar belonging to the Orthodox tradition itself. Obviously, this is of invaluable help to a student who wishes to know the varied ways in which the Orthodox Churches have contributed to the building up of the ecumenical fellowship.

The editor, Dr Patelos, does not make any pretensions about the book. He states, categorically, that the book is neither a history of the Orthodox Church nor of its contributions to the ecumenical movement. The book was written following discussions at the Assembly of the World Council of Churches held at Nairobi in 1975. It was decided at that Assembly to include a section on functions and purpose in the Assembly constitution: to call the Churches to visible unity in one eucharistic fellowship; and to express the common concern of the Churches in the service of humanity.

The preparation of such a document naturally raised questions regarding the contribution and role of the Orthodox Church in "unity, service and mission." This book was written to provide a "documentary chronicle" illustrating the witness of the Orthodox Church. The documents in the book have been selected to show how the Orthodox Church has interpreted the ecumenical movement, and they represent the reaction of the Orthodox Church to contemporary issues and problems raised through the ecumenical movement. The documents portray that the desire for unity was not new to the Orthodox Church, but what makes history in recent years is its participation in common effort with Churches and traditions which are vastly different from itself.

The documents in the book have been classified into four sections:

1. Encyclicals of Patriarchates on the ecumenical movement. These include the Patriarchal and Synodical Encyclical of 1902, and the responses of the various Patriarchs of the autocephalous Churches. The first encyclical issued in 1902 very succinctly summarises the Orthodox position on the ecumenical movement. While they firmly hold on to their faith and traditions, they are open to consider and listen to the position of others.
2. Section II contains the decrees of the Pan-Orthodox conferences on the ecumenical movement.
3. Section III contains a selection of Orthodox statements on ecumenical conferences held under the auspices of the World Council of Churches.
4. Section IV contains various personal statements and reflections on the World Council of Churches and the ecumenical movement.

The selection of documents begins with the Patriarchal and Synodical Encyclical of 1902 and ends with statements relating to the Assembly of the World Council of Churches, 1975.

The Revd. Philip Potter, General Secretary of the World Council of Churches, has, in the Preface of the book, listed a number of contributions which the Orthodox Church has made to the ecumenical movement. These include the ecclesiological significance of the World Council of Churches, the trinitarian nature of the Christian faith, the question of religious liberty and proselytism, the value of the liturgical traditions and patristic reflections on problems of the Christian faith. Of course, the book is limited in its scope, confined to the ecumenical movement, and more specially to the World Council of Churches and its related functions. Otherwise, some more vital contributions of the Orthodox Church could be added. The lessons we could learn from the eastern traditions, particularly the Orthodox tradition, could include:

1. Ability to co-exist with political authorities who are not always Christians, and sometimes hostile.
2. Adaptation to local cultural situations while still retaining fidelity to their faith and maintaining their identity.
3. The fellowship of autocephalous Churches as an important lesson in maintaining unity in diversity.

This unity in diversity was reflected in welcoming other Catholic and Protestant traditions, sometimes as "missions of help," even though in a number of cases these led to proselytisation and further divisions. Still the ecumenical genius of the eastern traditions is displayed in keeping an open door, and participating in movements where their cooperation has been sought. Some members of the Orthodox Church were cooperating in the Student Christian Movement, even before the SCM officially opened its doors to students from traditions other than Protestant in 1911.

While it may be too much to expect the editor of this book to include documents related to irenic attempts since 1054 A.D., it is imperative that documents relating to earlier "ecumenical" efforts be put together to place the documents included in the present selection in their proper perspective, i.e., the background against which the Orthodox Church has evolved its current perspective on the ecumenical movement. It is necessary to remember that the World Council of Churches has come into being as a result of historical events extending far back in history. The World Council of Churches is not the only and final event in the ecumenical movement. It is a means to an end—the unity of the Church, nay, the unity of mankind. Therefore, in order to maintain a true proportion, it is important to study the Churches in their proper perspectives. A book like this could be misleading.

The title page of the book is beautiful containing a reproduction of an icon. However, the print in the book is too small and not too easy to read, specially when the reader has simultaneously to try to digest complicated and unfamiliar theological and ecclesiological statements.

The editor has provided some notes to explain the immediate background of the statements, but more editorial notes explaining concepts and positions generally unfamiliar to Protestant readers could be more helpful.

The book certainly needs to be commended as having great source value for the Orthodox position *vis-à-vis* the ecumenical movement. It has provided an important tool of research, which was not available so far. However, the editor himself calls it a "first step" and it is hoped that either he will continue to compile documents which will put the present selection in their historical perspective, or others will take the cue from him.

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Debate on Mission: edited by H.E. Hoefen. Gurukul Lutheran Theological College and Research Institute, Madras, 1979. Pp. xx+470. Price Rs 10.

Service and Salvation: edited by J. Pathrapankal, C.M.I. Theological Publications in India, Bangalore, 1973. Pp. xii+623. Price Rs 12.

In the first collection of essays, some of the work done at Gurukul between 1976 and 1978 is now made available to a wider audience at a very reasonable price made possible by the Lutheran World Federation. There are 41 papers by 30 different authors, plus four unsigned reports and a useful editorial introduction to the three sections of the book. The first of these, "Issues of Theology in the Indian Mission Context," is the most general and longest (296 pages). It contains 25 papers which take the reader from historical perspectives on mission in Europe and India, through a consideration of biblical principles, and via the current interest in inculturation and social action, to a summary of theological foundations for mission today. Some of these essays are very brief, and more than half occupy less than ten pages, which does not really allow for the development of an argument. There are, however, longer and more satisfying treatments of several topics, amongst which might be mentioned the following.

"Liberalism and the Mission of the Church: an Evaluative History" (H. E. Hoefen), "The Church-Planting Approach to Mission"

(R. E. Hedlund), which has a useful bibliography and some sobering statistics on evangelistic needs, "Theology of Inculturation and Mission" (I. Hirudayam), and "Mission in Cross-Cultural Context" (H. Parkin). L. W. Meinzen compresses a great deal of material in his presentation of "Theological Foundations for Mission" (pp. 263-84) which is well worth pondering over, whilst Professor Hans-Werner Gensichen's three reasoned and judicious essays on mission and development (pp. 206-42) are alone worth the price of the book.

The middle section of this collection entitled "Issues of Baptism in the Indian Mission Context" is mainly concerned with the question of the place of unbaptised believers in the Church. The first 67 of these 105 pages give the background to this problem, outlining general Christian attitudes to baptism and the different approaches taken by Indians (which have combined and sometimes confused the question of the relationship between Hinduism and Christianity and the tensions between individualism, institutionalism and sacramentalism), finishing (pp. 363f.) with a list of the cultural, theological and practical questions to be faced today. These five papers are then complemented by seven brief but salutary testimonies from the field, five from workers amongst Hindus or Muslims, and two from individuals who had faced the issue for themselves. One had decided to ask for baptism, the other had not. The latter posed three urgent questions, one theoretical and two practical. Was baptism necessary for salvation? If baptism cut him off from his family and community, how was he to witness and minister to them? Finally, if he had to leave his Muslim community, could he be sure of finding a Christian fellowship to support him? This latter question was felt by the seminar that considered it to be the most poignant, indicating as it did that the problems lay not so much with baptism as such, but with the community into which one is baptised: "As long as the church is unrepentant, there will always be non-baptised believers," was one participant's comment (p. 402).

Church reform is not dealt with specifically anywhere in this book, but there is much that is appropriate to it in the final section on "Issues of Church Structures in the Indian Mission Context." For although "Structures do not themselves get work done... they can easily obstruct work and activity" (p. 422). This remark comes from the key essay by Meinzen on "Congregational structures suited to Ministry and Mission" (pp. 416-30), which combines application of the general principles relevant to the functioning of any organisation with consideration of the theological presuppositions about the Church's origin, nature and purpose which must be taken into account before any changes are initiated. Some practical suggestions about implementing change conclude this paper, and the same practical note is sounded in the next essay which gives details of the Andhra Pradesh experiment in four-fold ministry (but not, alas, any evaluation of it), and in the two discussions on education in the rural parish. The

latter of these, which expounds Freire's combination of literacy training and conscientization, needs to be read in conjunction with Hoefer's argument that "the most pervasive and powerful forces in the formation of values in society are unconsciously received by the people and often unconsciously exercised by the implementors" (p. 461). The connection between this finding and the baptism and community issue will not escape the reader.

In conclusion, *Debate on Mission* is a very useful and thought-provoking collection of essays which are carefully constructed, easily followed, and which combine the theoretical and the practical, the historical with the contemporary. It is not the place to look for fire and vision, but it does not set out to inspire in that way. Instead, the constant conjunction of reasoned theory with reflection on practical application today or in the past is a more restrained but enduring pointer to action. It is a little disappointing that a book of this calibre has not been provided with an index, but this is only a passing criticism. There are far more significant differences between *Debate on Mission* and the collection of essays with which it is perhaps most natural to compare it, *Service and Salvation*, to which we shall now turn.

The report of the Roman Catholic International Theological Conference on Evangelisation and Dialogue held at Nagpur in October 1971 seems to have escaped notice in this *Journal* at the time of publication, so a brief outline of its contents will be given before comparisons are made with the Gurukul essays. Thirty-seven papers by as many authors fall into five groups. Two papers on "Mission Theology Today" are followed by eight on "Biblical Missiology," and complemented by two sections on the relationship between Christianity and other religions. Seven of these essays come under the general heading "Theology of non-Christian Religions" and four under "Evangelisation and Dialogue." The sixteen papers in the final section on "Evangelisation in the Indian Context" are classified in four sub-sections: "Evangelisation in the Secular Context of the Modern World" (two papers), "Apostolate of the Presence and Evangelisation" (three), "Evangelisation in the Social and Religious Centres of India" (eight), and lastly "The Role of Priests, Religious and Laity" (three). The whole set of papers is prefaced and summarised by the 53 paragraph Conference Declaration (pp. 1-16).

It will be noted that Nagpur devoted a lot of attention to certain issues which Gurukul deals with only briefly. *Service and Salvation* besides, as one would expect, making constant reference to the new perspectives on mission stemming from Vatican II, lays a much more detailed biblical foundation, and discusses the possibility of revelation and salvation in non-Christian religions and the relationship between evangelisation and dialogue at greater length (in 200 pages as opposed to 23). On the other hand, whilst the question of baptism and changing community seems only to have merited one paper in 1971 (*Service*

and Salvation, pp. 487-501), it has become a major theme in the Gurukul essays which date from 1976 and 1977. Again, whilst the Nagpur discussions on the role of the laity in mission were rather tentative and general, *Debate on Mission* is concerned with the implementation of practical, congregational and educational structures which will help develop that role.

If it is tempting to attribute these differences not only to the passage of time, but also to the Lutheran concept of the priesthood of all believers, it must equally be observed that there is one related and vital aspect of Luther's theology, his concern for prayer, which is as absent from the Gurukul essays as it is the serious concern of *Service and Salvation*.

Not every reader will share the functional assumptions underlying the papers on the roles of missionary priests and religious (pp. 547-74), but these essays should be considered carefully along with the other three essays on "Apostolate of the Presence and Evangelisation" in order to appreciate the place of prayer in mission.

Abhisiktananda and Ratus write from their Indian experience, whilst Voillaume writes from experience in the West which grew out of the currents of French and Spanish spirituality which were united in the life of Charles de Foucauld, which in turn inspired Voillaume's foundation of the Little Brothers and Little Sisters of Jesus. The essence of this spirituality, which is also very persuasively expounded by Thomas Merton (*Contemplation in a World of Action* [Doubleday Image, New York, 1973]), is contained in the section "Contemplation in the Church" of the Conference Declaration (pp. 12f., especially paragraphs 45 and 47). As it is commonly believed that, whilst Hindus can learn organisation and efficiency in social service from the Church, spirituality is something that the Church must learn from them (pp. 572f.), the Indian Church needs to develop and maintain its understanding and experience of contemplative awareness of the immanence of God. This, the Declaration maintains, is the role of renewed religious communities which should be smaller than previously, and so able to be "more integrated into the life of the people living poorly like them and more easily accessible to them" (p. 13). In addition, "A deep contemplative experience will provide a source of inner strength which will enable them to meet difficulties and even failure with faith and serenity."

The Declaration admits that there are still some problems to be solved as the current Christian contemplative life in India "has not had the appeal that one would expect" (p. 15) and calls for the identification and establishment of genuinely Indian forms. But perhaps an equally necessary task is to discover how the values of religious communities can be developed in lay groups or families. Is it too much to hope that the Gurukul Institute will make this the subject of one of their future seminars?

From the fact that the above discussion on spirituality arose from just one small section of the Nagpur report, it is clear that while many of the essays are not easy to read and there is not the same overall balance and coherence that characterises the Gurukul essays, it has its own value as a theological diamond mine which for the return of a suitable investment of energy produces gems of real worth. It is perhaps regrettable that this review has only been able to examine a facet of one of them, but it is hoped that this will encourage the reader to take down his copy of *Service and Salvation* from the shelf and go out to purchase *Debate on Mission*, so that a profitable triangular dialogue may get under way.

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Parables of Jesus, Insight and Challenge: by J. Lambrecht, S. J.
 Theological Publications in India, Bangalore, 1978. Pp. 346.
 Price Rs 15.

It is meant as a compliment to say that, apart from explicit statements, there is nothing in this book to indicate that its writer is a Jesuit. He writes as a scholar, objectively, and with a wide knowledge of the published literature on his subject. The book is in fact written as a text book, and as such is one which can be unhesitatingly recommended to all students.

Fr Lambrecht explains in his Preface that the book has its immediate origin in a series of lectures which he gave during an intensive one week course in July 1975 and 1976, organised by the American College Theological Institute of Louvain. It is intended especially for the clergy, for religious teachers and for catechists.

The parables in the Gospel of St John are excluded from consideration, and not quite all the parables in the Synoptics are dealt with. Footnotes have been omitted, but a good bibliography is provided. The author pays special attention to the writings of C. H. Dodd, J. Jeremias, and the earlier A. Jülicher. This fact will give a good idea of his general approach to his subject.

At the outset, Fr Lambrecht explains the fundamental object of the studies which he seeks to help forward. "In Acts 8:30 Philip asks the Ethiopian: 'Do you understand what you are reading?' This question will recur as a driving force through all the chapters of this book. Our aim is to reach a fuller understanding of what we read in the parables. For, in fact, the reproach which Jesus made to those asking him to explain the parable of the Sower, can also be applied to us: 'Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the other parables?' (Mk. 4:13)."

The author therefore begins with an introductory chapter dealing with, first, the different meanings of the word "parable"; then the task

of tracing the original form of the parable back from the evangelist's record to the words of Jesus himself. Thereafter he deals with the parables themselves in a series of chapters averaging 40-50 pages each. One on the parables in Luke 15 is followed by another on the Good Samaritan; then we have two more on the parables recorded by St Mark; and finally three chapters dealing mainly with the parables in Matthew 25.

Fr Lambrecht is clearly an experienced teacher. He sets out his material systematically and clearly, and is easy to follow. His book is not a dry-as-dust in terms of the parables but brings new insights into and deeper understanding of the greatest Teacher of all time. We must all be grateful to the Roman Catholic authorities of TPI who have made this book available to Indian students at a reasonable price. Perhaps we are asking for too much in suggesting that the binding might have been stronger.

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Pandita Ramabai: by S. M. Adhav. C.I.S.R.S./C.L.S. Madras, 1979.
Pp. xi+242. Price Rs 19.50.

The C.I.S.R.S. has done a useful service to those concerned with the history of Christianity in India by the publication of this book on Pandita Ramabai. It is one of the series on Confessing the Faith in India, and in the hands of Mr S. M. Adhav we know that the subject is being handled by an expert. On the other hand the author is such a devoted admirer of his subject that his writing is not as objective as some would wish. The general impression one gets is that the Pandita Ramabai is above criticism. None would wish to deny that she was one of the greatest women produced by India, and particularly by the Church, but she was also a person of strong opinions, not to say prejudices. In spite of her earlier connection with Fr Nehemiah Goreh and the Wantage Sisters it is clear that her bent of mind was strongly towards a more evangelical and individualistic understanding of the Christian faith.

The book is divided into two parts. The first, consisting of fifty-three pages, is an outline of the Pandita's life which, while it is convenient to have at hand, does not really add much to our previous knowledge.

The second and more valuable part of the book consists of extensive extracts from the writings and letters of Pandita Ramabai. A good proportion of this material is not available to the ordinary student elsewhere and in making these first-hand sources available to historians Mr Adhav has done them a real service.

This book, in fact, provides indispensable material for the serious student.

R. W. BRYAN