

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

Book Reviews

THE MESSENGERS: A CONCISE HISTORY OF THE UNITED SOCIETY FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL. *Margaret Dewey.* Mowbrays, 1975. 158 pp. £3.25.

This book represents by any standards an astonishing feat of historical compression. To cover in 142 pages of text the histories of the three societies—SPG, UMCA and CMD, which make up the contemporary USPG—from 1701 to 1974 while retaining a continuous narrative is an achievement in itself. There is, of course, a price to pay. Often the reader feels himself rushed along by a rather breathless narration of events, factually correct but so baldly stated as to be potentially misleading ('In 1899 Boer hostility and *uitlander* ambition exploded in a three-year Boer War. Boer guerilla tactics evoked from the British a scorched-earth policy and concentration camps. The bitterness of Boer defeat still festers at the roots of Afrikaner nationalism'). Nevertheless, the writer contrives to do justice to the many dedicated and heroic souls who have served the Venerable Society and its fellows, often to the point of suffering, sometimes to martyrdom.

There is a certain imbalance in the allocation of space. The period 1701-1945 receives 100 pages, 1945-1974 has 42. There is, in this later section, a note of self-questioning, understandable in an age when the confident assurance of the Victorian missionary has gone and the legacy of Europe to the rest of the world is everywhere called in question. Nevertheless, in the author's concluding words, 'the ship launched in 1701 is still under sail, now one of a varied fleet going to and fro on God's mission'. Her contemporary crew may take heart from this account of the achievements of its predecessors.

GERALD BONNER

THE PURITAN ORIGINS OF THE AMERICAN SELF. *Sacvan Bercovitch.* Yale University Press, 1975. 250 pp. £8.25.

The author describes his subject as 'the rhetoric of American identity', which he analyses through a study of 'the interaction of language, myth and society'.

An opening chapter on Puritanism and the self is followed by detailed discussion of the New England concept of history—a distinctively American interpretation of Biblical history, biography, prophecy and eschatology.

The unique destiny of the nation was to be the New Jerusalem, 'a refuge for those whom God "means to save out of this general calamitie" as the ark had saved Noah from the flood'. Thus the crossing of the Atlantic had immense symbolic importance—as nothing less than the antitype of the Israelites' crossing of the Red Sea, and carrying baptismal significance in both personal and communal experience.

Using Cotton Mather's *Life of John Winthrop, Nehemias Americanus*, as a focal text, Professor Bercovitch exhaustively analyses the richness of the New England imagination and its persistence in formulating the redemptive meaning of America, in contrast to the less coherent utopian vision of colonists in the southern states and Spanish territories. The last chapter traces the continuity of these ideas in Jonathan Edwards' federal teleology and Emerson's transcendentalism, ideas culminating in 1899 with Arthur Bird's vision of 'the United States of America—bounded on the north by the North Pole; on the South by the Antarctic Region; on the east by the first chapter of the Book of Genesis and on the west by the Day of Judgment'.

The whole book is very closely argued and draws on a wide range of sources, although in discussing the Puritan concept of the self Professor Bercovitch betrays some confusion between self-consciousness and self-assertion and between the purpose of self-examination and its effects.

OWEN C. WATKINS

THE WORKS OF JONATHAN EDWARDS: VOLS 1 AND 2. *Edited by Edward Hickman, 1834. Reprint by the Banner of Truth Trust, 1975. Vol. 1 691 pp: Vol. 2 969 pp. Each £4.50.*

Some years ago, the Banner of Truth Trust began the re-publication of the writings of Jonathan Edwards (some of which were reviewed in this journal) using the 1839 London and the Worcester (US) editions. Unfortunately the increasing expense of the enterprise, involving about twenty volumes, prevented its completion in that form and they have wisely changed their policy to publish now the two volume edition made by Edward Hickman, thus providing most of the writings of Edwards in a handy form. This edition carries with it the long biographical Memoir by Sereno E. Dwight, one of Edwards' descendants, which has been the basis for all later biographies. It contains reflective accounts of his work, writings and ministry and some of his letters especially to Scottish ministers. This edition also carries a number of footnotes with explanations of points in the text, and contains all the material published in the Worcester edition, together with some other works. The format in two volumes looks forbidding, with its small type, double columns and close printing. But at least, a student of Edwards' works will have the nearly complete material in two handy volumes, and here well bound and clearly reproduced. Needless to say, the price is moderate, and it may well be hoped that this publication will encourage a good deal more attention being given to Edwards than has hitherto been the case on this side of the Atlantic in recent years.

Of course, it will be necessary to refer, in any proper study of Edwards, to the new critical edition of Edwards' works by the Yale University Press; to the other writings of Edwards published by A. B. Grosart, together with more recent additions. Beyond these, the growing amount of biographical and critical studies of Edwards and his writings especially in the United

States, have shown that there is much in his work that can be of great contemporary interest. He combined an acute philosophical mind, a well-ordered and discriminating theological equipment together with a scientific if not clinical approach to experience, backed by his interested reading in Newton and Locke. This provided the very considerable resources from which emerged his doctrinal works and those on the revival in which he had so central a place; and much of this of course was written in the context of fierce controversy. Edwards wrestled with profound and far-reaching issues, theological and pastoral and experimental, mostly in combination. Not for him the simplistic polarising of experience versus theology, of the 'spiritual' over against the intellectual—or even, over against the psychological. The social, ecclesiastical, theological and religious situation which formed the background and the circumstances of his ministry, and the stimulus also for much that he wrote offers, together with his life and work and writings within it, not only a fascinating study in itself in historical theology and spirituality, but even more, insights into continuing issues of importance in these matters both for instruction and warning. Edwards unites in himself the developing trends of the new 'modern philosophy' of the era after Newton and Locke; the influence of Protestant dogmatists such as Maestricht and Turretin; the gathering up of intense revival spirituality of the eighteenth century; and, in controversy, the rationalised genteel Latitudinarianism of the same period, which he battled with. These two volumes, at the low cost of nine pounds, will need sustained application in working on them; but they could be the basis for a study that would certainly stimulate the mind and also quickly indicate far-reaching implications for principles and practice in Christian living. Much of this could be seen to have its apt contemporary reference; yet above all Edwards himself, his perceptiveness, clarity of thought, independence, and deep spiritual understanding and balance emerges as the dominant impression, whose significance and greatness has yet to be properly appreciated by the Christian church.

G. J. C. MARCHANT

NEWMAN ON DEVELOPMENT: THE SEARCH FOR AN EXPLANATION IN HISTORY. *Nicholas Lash*. Sheed and Ward, 1975. 264 pp. £11.00.

Recently J. H. Newman's *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine* (1845) has been reprinted by Penguin Books. The *Essay*, written as Newman departed from the Church of England to join the Church of Rome, is not an easy book to read, and commentators on it have not been fully agreed as to what exactly Newman intended. Nicholas Lash, a RC lay theologian (he has recently left the priesthood) and a lecturer in Cambridge, here provides a sympathetic and illuminating analysis of the method and the argument of the *Essay*. For serious students of Newman's thought this will become an indispensable book. Lash works with the third edition of 1878 since it is this edition which has been most influential in the modern RC Church. He seeks to set the individual features of the *Essay* in the context of the rest of the published work of Newman. His discussion of what Newman meant by stating that Christianity is an 'idea' which develops in the life of the church is of particular clarity and help. In a final chapter he looks at 'the *Essay* in 20th Century theology' which, though useful, is perhaps too brief. The bibliography is excellent. In all a fine book!

PETER TOON

THE TRIAL OF BEYERS NAUDÉ: CHRISTIAN WITNESS AND THE RULE OF LAW. Search Press, London/Ravan Press, Johannesburg, 1975. 188 pp. £2.50.

Beyers Naudé, director of the Christian Institute of South Africa, is internationally known for his courageous and outspoken opposition to apartheid. In 1972 the South African Government instituted a Parliamentary Commission of Inquiry into the activities of four South African organisations, all of which were deeply involved in socio-political issues. One of them was the Christian Institute. When called upon to give evidence to the Commission, as required by law, Dr. Naudé refused to take the oath or give any evidence. The trial is the sequel to this refusal. It began at the end of 1973 in a magistrates' court in the Transvaal. Beyers Naudé was found guilty. But the matter is by no means concluded, and at the time of writing this review it is before an appeal court for a third time.

Why did Dr. Naudé refuse to testify or take the oath? There were a number of issues at stake. Beyers Naudé believed that the Commission was incapable of an objective investigation because of statements made by the Prime Minister and the two political parties (National and United) represented on the Commission at the time of its institution. Further, being made up of politicians with views very different in principle from those of the Christian Institute, it could not impartially examine the evidence. Moreover, its investigations into the National Union of South African Students (NUSAS) had clearly led to banning orders of its leaders beyond the normal processes of the law, which seemed to make the Commission more than a fact finding body. And finally, and most significantly, its work was done in secrecy. This, Dr. Naudé believed, would require him to disobey the command of the Gospel. True to his training as a Dutch Reformed Minister, Beyers Naudé referred to the answer of the Heidelberg Catechism to question 112 on the ninth commandment: 'False evidence is much more than just speaking an untruth or just a half truth'; there is also the danger of 'participating in any action in which a person does not do full justice to the truth' (p. 96). No Christian could participate in a 'trial' which could implicate others if it were so conducted that they would be unable to refute any false evidence given against them.

The Trial of Beyers Naudé is an account of what took place in the magistrates' court. But it is more than the record of another case. It contains a confession of faith of one of whom Lord Ramsey writes: 'When I think of the men who have shown me what it means to be a Christian my thoughts will always go quickly to Beyers Naudé.' In his evidence before the court, Dr. Naudé tells the story of his life as he describes the forces which shaped his development as an Afrikaner and a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church. Some of these same influences eventually sharpened his conscience on racial injustice to such an extent that he found himself in confrontation with most of his people and the official stand of his church. He himself claims however that throughout he has been faithful not only to the Gospel, but also to the Reformed tradition, and the confessions of his own church. For more than a decade now, Beyers Naudé has demonstrated this faithfulness as he has doggedly struggled for a non-violent but just solution to the racial problems of our society.

The scene and legal background of the trial are ably presented by Sir

Robert Birley and Professor Allott. There are useful appendices on related trials, and also one which contains Exhibit E, a pamphlet produced by the Christian Institute on 'Divine or civil obedience?' But the heart of the book is its biographical confession of faith. Surely few magistrates' courts anywhere in the world have heard such a clear, theological, and relevant testimony to the meaning of the Gospel. In many respects, the trial itself is a trial of the South African system rather than of Beyers Naudé, and yet, as Robert Birley remarks, it is a trial very different from those of Christians under Nazi 'rule': 'The South African Government regards itself as being a convinced Christian government . . . Dr. Naudé's other opponent was a Christian church, of which he is still a most loyal member.' Indeed, what was at stake was and is a matter of evangelical principle, rather than one of physical life or death, for in spite of the fact that the magistrate took Dr. Naudé's infringement of the law in a serious light, his sentence was R50 (£25) or one month's imprisonment. But the relative insignificance of the sentence should not detract from the weighty issue at stake for the Christian who wishes to obey Caesar, but even more, to obey the God above Caesar.

JOHN DE GRUCHY

THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION: A HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF DOCTRINE. VOL. 2, THE SPIRIT OF EASTERN CHRISTENDOM (600-1700). *Jaroslav Pelikan.* University of Chicago Press, 1974. 329 pp. £8.75.

This is the second volume of a projected five volume study of the development of doctrine. It is the first history of dogma in English which does justice to Eastern Christianity: indeed, it is probably the first history of dogma in a Western language which does justice to Eastern Christianity. Harnack had said that in the 7th Century 'the history of dogma in the Greek Church came to an end, so that any revival of that history is difficult to imagine'; writing a few years earlier Gibbon had asserted that Eastern Christians 'held in their lifeless hands the riches of their fathers, without inheriting the spirit which had created and improved their sacred patrimony . . .'. Pelikan's book may be seen as a successful attempt to counterbalance these assertions which have been so influential in moulding opinion in Western Europe and N. America.

Pelikan deals with the doctrine of the Person of Christ, with the theological significance of icons, and the doctrinal controversies between East and West. He also takes into account the history of liturgy because the iconoclastic troubles and other doctrinal debates only make sense in the context of the nature of the Eastern liturgy.

It is a worthy successor to Volume 1: 'The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition AD 100-600' and like it is beautifully produced. We await Volume 3: 'The Growth of Medieval Theology, 600-1300', with anticipation.

PETER TOON

SACRIFICE AND THE DEATH OF CHRIST. *Frances M. Young.* SPCK, 1975. 150 pp. £1.95.

This is a courageous book. Few scholars today, perhaps, would attempt to rehabilitate the concept of sacrifice, which has always been at the heart of Christian thinking about the cross and the eucharist, in so brief a compass. Yet Dr. Young feels that this is an important task, which she approaches with clarity and enthusiasm. She explores the significance of sacrifice in the ancient pagan religions and in the Old Testament; then she considers

sacrifice in the early church, and finds in the death of Jesus himself the distinctive feature of the Christian spiritual cult. In line with her background investigations, Dr. Young sees the sacrifice of Christ as more than a sacrifice for sin, and its piacular character as other than propitiation. Finally Dr. Young probes the relevance of sacrifice today, and concludes that it expresses the basic gospel of forgiveness in Christ, and its outworking in corporate worship and service.

All this is eirenic, and splendid as far as it goes. But there are areas of this study which seem to demand more attention. Dr. Young deals very cursorily with the New Testament evidence for interpreting the meaning of Christ's sacrifice, and treats the notion of *hilasterion* (for example) without close reference to Romans 3: 21-26. She also claims—possibly with undue optimism—that the idea of sacrifice finds widespread response and expression in modern life and literature, but without justifying this theologically, or discussing the intellectual problems involved in accepting the sacrificial death of Christ as an atonement for sin. It is to be hoped that Dr. Young, having taken us so far, will in the future take us yet further.

STEPHEN S. SMALLEY

I BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS. *George Eldon Ladd*. Hodder and Stoughton, 1975. 156 pp. £1.95.

The relation between faith and history in the matter of the resurrection is a peculiarly subtle one. The resurrection is not a fact of history, provable by historical research. It is an act of God—which has repercussions in the physical and historical world (physical repercussions like an empty tomb, other repercussions like the appearances to the disciples, historical repercussions like the existence of Christian believers); but it is illegitimate to argue back from the visible repercussions to the divine cause. 'What would an observer have seen if he had stood inside the tomb watching the dead body of Jesus?', asks Professor Ladd, and answers that 'All he would have seen was the sudden and inexplicable disappearance of the body of Jesus'. And, as he points out, 'witnessing the resurrection would of itself be no proof of the resurrection. It would only be a bewildering event which would leave the disciples in confusion'. Nonetheless, if these repercussions can be proved not to have happened, then neither did the resurrection. History, therefore, is important. The results of historical criticism could in theory destroy faith, but they can never create it. '*Only those who have reason to believe in the God to whom the Bible witnesses can accept . . . that God raised Jesus from the dead*' (p. 102, his italics). That puts history and faith into their proper perspective. Within it, Professor Ladd believes that '*something happened* to produce the set of historical facts available to us' and that for those who believe in God, the 'only adequate explanation' is that 'God raised Jesus in bodily form from the realm of mortality into the world of God' (p. 141).

In the process of reaching this conclusion, Professor Ladd traverses (with great learning and reference to scholarly debate, but in a very readable and jargon-free way) the beliefs of the OT and inter-testamental Judaism, the witness of the Gospels and Paul, the expectations attached to the titles Messiah and Son of Man, and alternative explanations of the historical facts available to us. On points of detail his exegesis is open to argument—for example, not everybody would agree with him that the Psalter so clearly

spells a belief in the possibility of communion with God after death. There is no such word (at any rate in the *Shorter Oxford Dictionary*) as 'facticity'; Professor Ladd has confused the psychopathic with the parapsychological on page 139 and invented the word 'telepathetic' on page 130 n. 13. But these are footling blemishes. The overall impression is that we should be grateful to Professor Ladd (and to Michael Green, the series editor) for a clear and helpful exposition of the nature and grounds of Christian faith in the resurrection of Jesus.

MICHAEL PERRY

THEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS: VOL. 12: CONFRONTATIONS II.
Karl Rahner, SJ. Darton, Longman and Todd, 1975. 257 pp. £5.00.

If the first volume of 'Confrontations' (vol. 11 of *Investigations*) faced a fairly wide field of interest, in this second one Rahner is much more concerned with issues arising within the Roman Catholic Church itself, and its own mission in the world. Nevertheless, Rahner's catholic interest is wider than simply that of his allegiance, and even with this more decided orientation, there is always material for non-Roman Christians to profit by, quite apart from the important understanding of the development of contemporary RC thinking which he provides. Over two thirds of this book is devoted to themes under the general heading of 'Ecclesiology' and deal with issues of the magisterium, priesthood and diaconate, heresy and schism, with a chapter that returns to Rahner's constant point of interest in 'anonymous Christianity'. The second part, of less than a third, has four chapters dealing with the future of the church, the structure of the people of God, the laity, and the function of the church as a critic of society.

Rahner is seen, again, as exploring the ways in which initiatives taken in Vatican II can be properly developed in the life of the church; and that, indeed, beyond the point where so many have been left. Thus, on the 'Teaching Office of the Church', he is concerned for a teaching authority within the church that overcomes the out-of-date pattern of officials teaching, and the rest of the church passively accepting. So he discusses the interrelation of official teaching authority, including that of the pope, with the active teaching authority of the church as a whole. He castigates, however mildly, the trend of thought (not by any means confined to the RCs) that views human activities of close study, wide consultation, theological expertise, as somehow threatening the faith in the guidance of the Holy Spirit in proclaiming the faith, and, if there is resort to this kind of background work at all, tries to hide it away instead of openly taking part in it. Naturally, this raises the wider issue of 'democratic' methods, and Rahner spends the rest of the lecture urging a contemporary and realistic re-assessment of doctrinal and ethical leading in the church in the light of the theological and ecclesiastical situation in modern society.

It might well have improved the thrust of the book if this first chapter had been followed by six, seven and eight on 'Schism in the Catholic Church', 'Heresies in the Church Today?', and 'Concerning our assent to the Church as she exists in the Concrete' (not too happy a translation!), for they go to deal with the actual problems in the RC Church that both confront the official teachers and also arise from the changing conditions of actual belonging to and participating in its life. Rahner is frank: 'Many Catholics of the present day do have reservations, and very far-reaching reservations at that,

affecting the very substance of the Catholic faith and the nature of the Church herself, calling them in question or unequivocally rejecting them in themselves, without the Catholic concerned feeling compelled on that account to separate himself from the Church'.

In the light of present-day democratic forms of expression, the questions 'When is a schism a schism?' and 'When is a heresy a heresy?' are easily answered, especially as schism may be the practical expression of a heretical bias. The discussion of the matters involved here is painstaking, sympathetic and far-reaching, and the pattern of emerging conclusions towards a policy cannot easily be summarised in a brief review. Four other chapters relate to ministry in this section: 'The Point of Departure in Theology for Determining the Nature of the Priestly Office'; 'Theological Reflections on the Priestly Image of Today and Tomorrow'; 'On the Diaconate'; 'Observations on the Factor of the Charismatic in the Church'. Much of this is a re-assessment of both the priesthood and the diaconate in the light of change in both church and society. Questions of professionalism and lay ministry arise, and the condition of the church in a 'secular' society. Rahner's discussion runs closely parallel to much that has been followed in the Church of England ('full-time'/'part-time') but he has a contribution to make on the diaconate of the future which, while acknowledging that the amalgam of functions exercised in the office can be exercised by a lay member, draws attention to the need for specialising in modern society and sees a deacon, perhaps one of a team, as being given an official task in some such area; while he draws upon a sacramental theme to justify the need for ordination.

The second part of the book is written obviously with an eye to the growth of 'political theology', and a chapter on 'The Future of the Church' arises because 'political theology' argues from the supposed knowledge of the future by individuals. Rahner enters into a theological discussion of the future as itself a question, which arises from the comparison to be made between modern futurology and genuine eschatology. He argues that God alone is the absolute future and while there are to be recognised processes of cause and effect, there is also to be faced that creative factor of the radically new, which together engage in mutual conditioning. He argues with force that the future on any showing cannot be predicted, much less planned for, except by a mind able to see the total cosmic process from beyond; while the very nature of man's own freedom in contemporary actualities opens up varieties of possibility from which, whatever specific outcome emerges, it is less and less predictable.

From this, and much more in a very closely argued chapter, it is a direct step to the last chapter in the book on 'The Function of the Church as a Critic of Society'. After some fairly straightforward points on the main theme, about the right, and the terms, by which the church exercises a critical ministry, there is a final section on problems entailed by a theology of revolution. As this essay was first written in 1968 it will not have precise reference to some recent literature from South America, but in it the issues raised by the frank acceptance of actual physical violence are not dodged; indeed the lead given by some papal encyclicals leads to a conclusion, 'the Christian will not commit himself to the declaration that any application of force, or even one which may lead to human killing, is immoral or un-Christian in any possible situation in society'. Two other chapters on the church's future and structure are important and, with all that has already been referred

to, provide yet another thought-provoking volume for Christians of all allegiances.

G. J. C. MARCHANT

A RAHNER READER. *Edited by Gerald A. McCool.* Darton, Longman and Todd, 1975. 381 pp. £5.00/£2.50.

The prolific writings of Karl Rahner have for some time been demanding some such volume as this. The editor has done his work well, presenting the range of Rahner's philosophical, dogmatic and practical theology in a reasonable compass, and enabling a student to sample his fundamental thinking over the whole spectrum of doctrine. It has the advantage of including in the first three chapters pretty well the whole of a new translation of one of Rahner's works 'Hearers of the Word' which sets out his particular kind of Thomism as a philosophical anthropology, a correlation of Thomism and Heideggerian existentialism with elements of Hegelian metaphysics. After this, the excerpts depend heavily upon *Theological Investigations* (vols. 1-12) and articles in *Sacramentum Mundi*, together with other writings on a lesser scale.

Altogether sixty-two separate subjects are covered in fourteen chapters. The editor sets out to provide in the introduction of 28 pages an account of Rahner's life and work, something of a background to his thought in the writings of J. Marechale, in relation to Kant; and in Rahner's own work on Kant, Hegel and Heidegger (presumably the earlier Heidegger, though this is not specified). His theological and pastoral work are described together with some critical suggestions. It is difficult in the course of so few pages to put a reader sufficiently into the picture for him to be able to see the drift of some arguments particularly when the terms of the discussion assume good acquaintance with Thomistic internal disputation. The exposition sometimes becomes fairly 'muddy' just at the points where it ought to be most luminous, due, almost certainly, to the concern to compress. Consequently there is no felicitous handling of the discussion and the reader—who may well be coming to Rahner from scratch—may find the going hard. However, repeated reading of the introduction, together with the text, will set him on the way to know what significance Rahner has now in the theological scene, and ought also to whet his appetite to go further to avail himself of the actual full works of this outstanding RC scholar.

G. J. C. MARCHANT

THE EXPERIMENT HOPE. *Jürgen Moltmann.* SCM Press, 1975. 190 pp. £3.80.

Eight of these essays have already appeared in English, mainly in American journals, between 1966 and 1974. Six are published in English for the first time. As Douglas Meeks rightly states in the introduction, the essays form connecting links between Moltmann's two major books *Theology of Hope* and *The Crucified God*. The two aspects are inseparable, for 'there is no true theology of hope which is not first of all a theology of the cross' (p. 72). However, as the title indicates, Moltmann also speaks of the experiment of hope. He writes, 'Hope does not guarantee that one will have only the wished-for experiences. Life in hope entails risk and leads one into danger and confirmation, disappointment and surprise. . . . In the experiment of hope the subject at stake is also always one's own life' (p. 188). Moltmann insists that the theme of hope is not merely a momentary fashion. Without

hope life is nothing. His theology of hope has four roots. Firstly, it represents a realistic development and application of the rediscovery of eschatology by Weiss and Schweitzer at the beginning of this century. Secondly, it takes up the notion of 'promissory history' in the Biblical writings, partly in the sense in which history is viewed by such writers as Gerhard von Rad, partly in line with Pannenberg's approach. Thirdly, Moltmann believes that just as the medieval era reflected the reality of love, and the Reformation rediscovered the primacy of faith, so the modern post-Enlightenment era after Kant calls for the theme of hope as being especially relevant to the needs of the age. Fourthly, he engages specifically in dialogue with the philosopher Ernst Bloch whose book *The Principle of Hope* constitutes one of the classics of neo-Marxism.

Moltmann insists that theology must be relevant to the social crises of society. But this does not mean that it should simply be a contextual theology which always assumes the colours of its environment. This 'chameleon theology' is no better than a fossil theology. A Christian thinker should be both Christian and also a person of his own age. Theology must also avoid the thoroughly false alternative of evangelisation or humanisation, as if one did not entail the other. It must also be Biblical, leading 'from the Bible to missionary and practical efforts for liberation. It is difficult to wage a revolution without the Bible. . . . Without biblical theology, theology cannot be Christian theology' (pp. 6-7). The orientation of theology is to be eschatological, thinking within a creative tension between the old and the new, law and freedom, letter and spirit. Finally, it is to be a practical and political theology, for all Christians and not only for clergy; and it must engage in dialogue with other forms of thought. 'A theology that encapsulates itself in its own tradition and its own circles petrifies and dies' (p. 13).

Moltmann's questions engage not only with Bloch's philosophy, but with other philosophical outlooks. For example, he claims that a theology of hope has affinities with the ontological principle in Hartmann and Heidegger that 'Higher than reality stands possibility'. But he draws from Bloch the more detailed ideas about various kinds of possibilities. Enthusiasm about the progress of technology or romantic yearnings for the past, for example, are 'forms of ruined hope, despairing hope, hope without the power of patience' (p. 29). By contrast, Biblical hope places its trust in the creative power of God as *creator ex nihilo*. This kind of hope can from time to time be disappointed, but 'not in the end'. Biblical hope also means abandoning earthly securities. Abraham is here the model of hope and faith. 'He left even his gods, these Aramaic nature gods who guaranteed order, fertility and peace' in the 'eternal return of the same' (p. 47). The promises of God are faithful, but they also leave room for newness and surprise. The promised land held milk and honey, but also blood and tears.

Some of Moltmann's essays deal with specific topics which raise unusual and suggestive questions. For example, he includes a meditative reflection on Dostoevsky and the hope of prisoners. In the prisoner we see the juxtaposition of suffering and hope, and also the redemptive connexion between suffering and guilt. In another unusual essay he challenged Max Weber's thesis that Calvinism goes hand in hand with capitalism. When he examined the Puritans, Weber 'suppressed such themes as responsibility for the community, care for the weak, and education for the common good. . . . In the

economic ethic both of Calvin himself and of the Calvinist traditions one's work and possessions are to serve the neighbour, for "God is an advocate of the poor, the aliens, and the fugitives" (pp. 125 and 127).

The strength of Moltmann's work is his compassion for the suffering and oppressed, his desire for a theology that is socially and politically relevant, and his correlation of a theology of hope with that of the cross. But there are a number of unresolved problems. Firstly, the impression is given that the experience of poverty or suffering is almost a religious 'work' which guarantees salvation. Secondly, the message of the exodus summons man to abandon existing structures, almost regardless of whether the past and present may have built anything worthwhile already. Thirdly, the case is not proven that capitalism is inherently incapable of being combined with sufficient compassion to obviate the need for a totally new social order. Fourthly, it is not clear whether Moltmann has entirely succeeded in striking the balance between Christian identity and contextual theology which he seeks. We cannot simply rest on the paradox that we find Christian identity only when we lose it.

ANTHONY C. THISELTON

A CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY OF EDUCATION. *Rupert E. Davies*. Denholm House Press, 1975. 115 pp. £1.00.

It is good to have a theologian discussing education, and the Principal of Wesley College, Bristol writes from a position of strength in both theology and philosophy. After an opening chapter, which discusses the age-long conflict between the two main views of revelation, he indicates the relevance of theology to education by asking the basic question 'Is a child being prepared for life on this earth only, or for eternal life?' He points out that this question can be dodged if, like R. S. Peters, one takes certain values for granted and then assesses education by whether or not it promotes them; or if, like Rousseau, one assumes that man is born good, and therefore all that is necessary is so to stimulate the child's imagination that he discovers his needs and sets out to satisfy them. Justifiably, he considers that the inadequate results of modern education can be attributed very largely to present day exponents of Rousseau's mistaken theories. On the other hand he affirms that the pessimism about human nature latent in determinism surrenders any attempt to promote the growth of free persons in a free society and leads only to social engineering. In contrast to all these secular approaches, Mr. Davies believes that Christians can offer a 'theology of man' readily applicable to education, and goes on to argue that education is incomplete without the gospel of forgiveness.

But is the gospel incomplete without education, as Mr. Davies also affirms in his chapter on Education and Salvation? Ironically, it is his theology which is here open to question. For, after a preliminary excursus on the Renaissance and Reformation views of salvation, he follows the current World Council of Churches notion of the meaning of salvation. It may be the case, as he argues, that Biblical salvation includes, together with forgiveness, such things as liberation and education, but may we not question his insistence that such things are integral to, and not just applications of, the gospel?

Another contentious issue in the book is that of Christian motivation in education. Few will dispute his condemnation of 'denominational chauvinism'. But can education be rightly used as a means of furthering the Chris-

tian gospel? Mr. Davies thinks not, his argument being that a Christian is an imitator of Christ, Who taught people because he loved them and revered their personality. But does not true evangelism stem from love of God and also love of man, who needs God, and is not witness to one's faith in Christ consonant with reverence for another's personality?

It was disappointing, after an incisive display of the weaknesses of non-Christian motivation, to find him advocating alliance with humanists, Hindus and Moslems, on the grounds that the Holy Spirit is working in and through them as well as Christians. But whatever view one takes of these points of controversy, his conclusions are weighty and valuable, and are ably summarised in his final chapter. Unfortunately, there is no space to detail them here.

H. J. BURGESS

THE CRISIS IN EDUCATION. *Rhodes Boyson*. Woburn Press, 1975. 160 pp. £5.50/£1.95.

Never has this country devoted such a high proportion of its total annual expenditure to education as it does now. Yet never have so many ordinary people felt so unhappy about the performance of our maintained (Local Authority) schools. When, therefore, a man who has been successively, and successfully, headmaster of a Secondary-Modern, a Grammar, and two London Comprehensive schools, undertakes to take stock of the situation, his comments ought surely to be taken seriously.

Dr. Rhodes Boyson is an MP and also Chairman of the National Council for Educational Standards. His book is divided into three parts—'Signs of Breakdown', 'The Reasons for Breakdown', and 'Plan for Revival'. Of these the last is least impressive, solely concerned as it is with remedying the fallacies described in the central part. Part I is incisive and crucial: for the power of this book lies less in the author's arguments—coherent as they certainly are—than in the mass of grave facts collected from unimpeachable sources, and marshalled with clarity and lucidity.

As the reader examines the irrefutable evidence for such things as the decline in adult literacy since the mid 19th century (when denominational schools—mainly C of E—provided the only elementary education available), the deterioration in attainment in the 3R's since 1914, the escalating violence and arson in schools, the increase in teacher-wastage (as much as 33% among men and 80% among women within six years of starting to teach), the lower standard of academic ability in college of education intake, the widespread dissatisfaction of parents both with the low standard of attainment and the lax discipline in schools—as the reader examines the evidence, he begins to see what 'progressive' education has done to a once efficient system.

In Part II is set out the reasons for the general malaise, and, by way of contrast, the writer's own philosophy of education. His chief concerns are the need for authority and for teachers to teach (some trenchant comments here on the Discovery method), the restoration of academic standards (now impaired by no marks, no home-work, no recognition of ability differences, no subjects, and the cults of the integrated day, family groupings, team teaching and open plan buildings), and the educational value of 'elitism' as opposed to 'egalitarianism' (which is the driving force behind both comprehensive education and destreaming).

Admittedly £1.95 seems a lot for a moderately sized paper back, but your reviewer, who speaks from many years of experience of our maintained

system, while still hesitant about some of Dr. Boyson's themes, believes that this book is one of the most timely he has ever read. H. J. BURGESS

TEACHING MORALITY AND RELIGION. *Alan Harris.* Allen and Unwin, 1975. 94 pp. £2.95/£1.25.

Mr. Harris, who lectures in the philosophy of education at the Open University, admits that he does not understand Christianity though he can 'appreciate Christ as a moral revolutionary, as a stern uncompromising teacher'. What a pity he has not given the same attention to the gospel history as to his search for a satisfactory basis for morality without religion! For his search has evidently not been very fruitful. Believing that 'moral education is concerned with the promotion of knowledge and insight into one's own and others' feelings, interests and needs' he assumes that there are moral responsibilities common to mankind. But he omits to consider, in the event of these responsibilities having no religious basis, what motivation for fulfilling them can be found outside religion. What evidence is there that the majority of people without religion are concerned with living a good life?

Mr. Harris' slim volume provides some guidance for teachers on how to approach instruction in morality, but it does nothing to suggest that Moral Education is an adequate *substitute* for Religious Education. At most he has made a not too convincing case for Moral Education as a *supplement* to Religious Education. But with the present pressures on the school time-table, what chance is there that both can secure a place?

H. J. BURGESS

THE ASIAN JOURNALS OF THOMAS MERTON. Sheldon Press, 1974. 445 pp. £3.95.

Thomas Merton, Anglican turned Roman Catholic turned Trappist, died in Bangkok of accidental electrocution on December 10th, 1968. During twenty years of authorship he had gathered to himself a large number of friends in every part of the world, and a number of devotees to whom every word which came from the Master was almost sacred. It is to the devotion of some of these devotees that we owe this book. They have patiently deciphered the almost illegible journals which Merton kept during his Asian tour, have added some poems (not good) and letters and addresses, have provided extracts from books which Merton is known to have been reading at the time, have added a glossary and bibliography which together fill fifty pages, and have appended a multitude of notes to explain anything that could be puzzling to any reader. All this makes up a considerable volume of which some parts are more valuable than others.

The genesis of the book can be explained in a sentence or two. Merton had for a number of years been reading fairly extensively in the field of Asian religions, and desired to have the opportunity of encountering and studying them at first hand. He was overjoyed when his Abbot gave permission for the journey recorded here. Ample funds seem to have been provided, and he found many welcoming friends along the way. Naturally many pages of the journal deal with the trivia of tourist life. An unusual Trappist, surely, who, having committed the solecism of asking to be served with arrack in a respectable hotel in Colombo, found solace in consuming rum in a much less reputable place of entertainment. Merton wins the approval of one reviewer by appreciating the beauty of Madras and by

recognising that what he encountered in South India was much more Indian than anything that he had met elsewhere. Some of the descriptions of Himalayan scenery are those of a careful and sensitive observer. Polonaruwa in Ceylon seems to have introduced him to an almost mystical experience of tranquil beauty.

Much the most interesting part of the record is that which deals with his meetings with Buddhist monks, among them the Dalai Lama (in exile in India), of whom he formed a very high opinion. In spite of the formidable difficulties of interpretation, he seems to have been able to enter into real fellowship with a number of them. He liked the Tibetans best, and passed favourable judgments on the depth of their experiences in meditation, in the search after union with the ultimate reality. His own studies seem to have been directed mainly to the Madhyamika, the school of Mahayana Buddhism developed by the great South Indian teacher Nagarjuna (second century AD). Nagarjuna is credited with the profound saying that *samsara* is the same as *Nirvana*—the world of imprisonment in the corporeal is in reality the same as the world of ultimate deliverance—it all depends on the point of view from which each is approached. The attitude with which Merton approached his monkish friends can be made clear by a single quotation:

I believe that by openness to Buddhism, to Hinduism, and to these great Asian traditions, we stand a wonderful chance of learning more about the potentialities of our own traditions, because they have gone, from the natural point of view, so much deeper into this than we have. The combination of the natural techniques and the graces and other things that have been manifested in Asia and the Christian liberty of the Gospel should bring us all at last to that full and transcendent liberty which is beyond mere cultural differences and mere externals—and mere this or that (p. 343).

This and similar passages raise a number of questions. No one is likely to doubt that value of openness to other traditions. It may well be that in the matter of techniques of meditation the western seeker has much to learn from his eastern brother. But experience is never experience of experience; it is always experience of some Other, even if that Other is defined as *Sunyata*, nothingness or the Void. Mystical experiences may have the same feeling-tone, but the nature of the experience is determined by that of which it is experience. Christian mysticism is always experience of the incarnate and risen Jesus, or it is nothing. Was Merton aware that his amiable monks, for all their expertise in the techniques of meditation, still stood in need of Jesus of Nazareth? One reader would have been grateful if in his writing he could have made clearer his understanding of the situation.

STEPHEN NEILL, *Bishop*

THE SAFFRON ROBE: A LIFE OF SADHU SUNDAR SINGH. *Janet Lynch-Watson*. Hodder, 1975. 157 pp. £0.60.

When Sadhu Sundar Singh, a convert from the sikh religion, visited Europe and America in the 1920's, he made a profound impression on his hearers. Friends of India felt that at last they were seeing a genuinely Indian Christianity, free from the swaddling bands of western tradition, learning itself to drink of the brook in the way, and so to lift up its head in true adoration and worship. It is good that the memory of such men should not be allowed to die out in the church.

Nevertheless it is not easy to understand why this book has been written. The authoress writes enthusiastically, but she has drawn only on well-known books. She has not unearthed any materials not previously known, and has not added new facts to the story. Perhaps wisely, she has not wrestled with the main problem in the career of the Sadhu, the exact relationship between what he experienced and what he said. Many of his friends felt that in his mind the wall between vision and external reality was thin, and that at times he transferred what had been deep experiences in the inner world of his spirit to the three-dimensional world of outer reality. Perhaps with the evidence that we have the problem will remain for ever insoluble.

Robin Boyd, one of our best authorities on Indian theology, is quoted (p. 154) as having written, 'It may even prove ultimately that in the history of the Indian church and its thought Sundar Singh was actually more important for his theology and its method than for his ascetic way of life and his success as an evangelist'. This may be true. Indian theology has been slow to free itself from western incrustations. On the whole the poets have done better than the theologians. It would be natural if India came by the way of *bhakti*, deep devotion, to its own full understanding of the meaning of faith in Christ.

Probably to the majority of young Christians today the very name of Sadhu Sundar Singh is unknown. This book will serve a useful purpose if it draws the attention of such Christians to one whose memory should be kept alive in the Church.

STEPHEN NEILL, *Bishop*

HINDU MYTHS: A SOURCE BOOK TRANSLATED FROM THE SANSKRIT.
Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty. Penguin Books, 1975. 357 pp. £0.80.

This is a very useful book. The writer has cut a wide swathe through the strange jungle of Hindu mythology, and has ordered and classified the spoils that she has brought back. Some of the material is very ancient, going back to the Rg Veda; some is modern; the great bulk is drawn from that shoreless sea of myths the Puranas, the extravagances of which called forth the mirth of that doughty Victorian rationalist T. B. Macaulay. Only myths of gods and demons are included. Many tales in which men play a leading part might have been considered; but these have wisely been excluded, since they belong rather to the world of legend, and the two worlds are not quite the same. The myths are arranged under the names of the gods to whom each particularly refers. Some order had to be imposed on the original chaos; perhaps this is as good a plan as any that could be devised. The only notable gap is South India; this the writer modestly admits she is not qualified to fill, not having direct access to the South Indian languages; she has done well to confine herself to that which she knows and knows well.

The translations, made by the writer herself, read well. But there is truth in the words which she quotes from C. Lévi-Strauss (p. 22), that while poetry may be lost in translation, 'the mythical value of myths remains preserved through the worst translation'. An extensive bibliography and a glossary help to guide the reader through a world that is likely to be unfamiliar to him.

Students of religion are coming more and more to recognise that we cannot know a people unless we know the myths of that people. Here in picturesque and sometimes perplexing form is a reflection of the psychology of each people, of its peculiar understanding of the world. For all their

variety there is a good deal of monotony in these mythological expressions of the Hindu mind. The themes of violence and sex recur endlessly. But the same is true also the myths of the Greeks and of the Ugaritic people. The first impression likely to be left on the mind of the Christian reader is of the immense work of demythologisation carried out in the Old Testament; Tiamat and Rahab are there, but only now as mythical ornament, as enemies subdued and not in any way as rivals to the one God of everlasting glory.

STEPHEN NEILL, *Bishop*

COMBATING RACISM. *Kenneth Sansbury.* BCC, 1975. 78 pp. £0.85.

This is an excellent and carefully argued book about an important subject. The Programme to Combat Racism has provoked a great deal of controversy; strong and powerful support and highly critical opposition. Bishop Sansbury, as would be expected, gives a masterly survey of the issues involved and the points of view expressed. Critics and supporters of the programme will profit from this fair-minded, careful and biblical examination of the issue. The book is in three parts; The Setting Up of the PCR and the UK Scene; PCR and The Struggle for Social Justice—Theological and Moral Issues; and The Way Forward. After a thorough examination of the background and the very different reactions produced he concludes 'in the end of the day, differences, such as they are, concern method and balance rather than the ultimate goal. We all seek liberty for the oppressed, we all recognise that a purely secular understanding of salvation in terms of political, economic and social liberation is not enough. We look forward together for that end when "In Christ, the perfect man, man transcends the limitations of his natural capacities, and as a new man in Christ finds a new dimension for his selfhood"'.
DAVID BRONNERT

THE FOURTH DIMENSION: A CHRISTIAN APPROACH TO THE OCCULT. *Anthony Duncan.* Mowbrays, 1975. 125 pp. £2.75.

The author is concerned with the ignorance about the world of the occult which leads many Christians to unreasoned condemnation. This book will help dispel such ignorance. I found his classification of those involved in the occult most suggestive. He sees three groups. The first contains those who are psychically sensitive and, finding that they are naturally aware of 'the fourth dimension', seek to understand reality from this perspective. The second group are those who use this psychic capacity for the serious practice of magic. The third are the increasing numbers of 'dabblers in the occult' who cause untold damage to themselves and to others and are often in need of the ministry of deliverance.

Duncan's definition of 'the occult' is slightly different from much popular Christian categorisation: 'For the most part, the occult is concerned with the psychic nuts and bolts of creation. Once this fact has been grasped, then a great deal of the aura of darkness and mystery is dispersed and the various hypotheses may be examined in the light of day. In most cases they are no more morally or theologically troublesome in themselves than the current hypotheses of natural sciences' (p. 120). The effect of this is to move the activity of the demonic further down the line than is normally done by Christian writers on the occult. This stems from his basic conviction that 'there is no dimension in all creation which is in any sense the proper domain of the devil and his angels' (p. 122). He believes that Christians give too

much honour to the devil by seeing him behind the majority of practices including magic which come under the banner of 'the occult'. All the psychical experience together with the occult world view is as open to good and to God as it is to the demonic. 'Precisely because he stands where he does, the Christian can be big enough to learn from all disciplines and traditions and put their particular contributions to the service of the gospel' (p. 122).

It is this unwillingness to see anything essentially wrong in the occult analysis of reality that I find most unsatisfactory. He claims that the occult world view is a working hypothesis and, consequently, if it works we can make no other demands of it. It does work, he claims, and we can therefore use the insights of occult meditation in our Christian life. This does not mean that he is unaware of the dangers of involvement with the demonic—he deals frequently with the tragic consequences in his own pastoral ministry. But, at heart, there is a relativism which fails to do justice to the basic disagreements between the biblical world view and the picture of reality painted by the occultist.

A recurring note throughout is his insistence that the psychic is not necessarily demonic. 'The psychic sense is . . . a range of perceptive gifts, a part of ordinary human nature and like the rest of human nature, available for fulfilment and transformation by Grace' (p. 57). While agreeing with his understanding of the humanness of the psychic, to me his assertion on their use is more a question needing much more thought than a basis for pastoral guidance.

D. K. GILLET

MAN'S SEARCH FOR HIMSELF. *Rollo May*. Souvenir Press, 1975. 281 pp. £3.00.

For every individual, sick or healthy, life presents a search for meaning in a personal sense. The discovery of personal significance within oneself or one's circumstances is the touchstone of maturity. Psycho-analysis once was concerned with the supposed influence of the past upon an individual, a point of view that was without therapeutic power often no more than an intellectual exercise. Now concentration upon present existence confers on treatment greater relevance as well as effectiveness. This discovery of oneself was a preoccupation of Kierkegaard and subsequently of existentialists, analysts and others who draw attention to the risks that must be taken as the process unfolds. Without accepting the consequences of such ventures, an individual never fulfils himself and may lose even what he has. The influence or adulation of others may offer reassurance about one's own identity but cannot provide what is a personal necessity.

Dr. May has expressed an individual account of this therapeutic point of view, although stating for the most part truths that are general. He draws upon analysts, neo-freudians, existentialists and imaginary case histories to support his view that a search for inner integration and identity is a necessary foundation for psychotherapy, as well as for the conduct of anyone's life. His exposition of his theme is unnecessarily extended, since the general theme is one with which few could disagree.

I. C. LODGE-PATCH

THE DENIAL OF DEATH. *Ernest Becker*. Collier-MacMillan, 1973. 324 pp. \$7.95.

An important element in the development of the personality is the fear of

death: for Ernest Becker it is central, and overwhelming. At an early age the individual recognises death's external reality, and within his own body the corresponding evidence of dirt and decay. The fear of castration emphasises, as Freud would say, this reality by integrating the fear within the personality. In this sense, the fear of death or destruction is integral to life: while at the same time man seeks to be free of the anxiety that annihilation brings. 'Man is literally split in two; he has an awareness of his own splendid uniqueness in that he sticks out of nature with a towering majesty, and yet he goes back into the ground a few feet in order blindly and dumbly to rot and disappear for ever.' Such an intimidating prospect demands some form of defence—a source of reassurance—repression being the most significant—another is 'heroism', the use of anxiety as an 'eternal spring for growth into new dimensions of thought and trust'.

Otto Rank, to whom Becker attributes much significance, pointed out that the stronger the defence against a fear of death, the more 'normal, healthy and happy' an individual might appear. A man who relies less on defence against a fear of death, who sees the reality behind the defence, is dubbed 'neurotic'—a man who 'suffers from a consciousness of sin just as much as did his religious ancestor, without believing in the conception of sin. This is precisely what makes him "neurotic": he feels a sinner without the religious belief in sin for which he therefore needs a new rational explanation' (RANK).

This book is full of similar interpretations of mental illness or the suffering involved in the maturation of a personality. Although they contain general truths, their claims are immodest and represent what is descriptive as 'scientific' in a tortuous verbose style that discourages even a reader determined to find what lies behind an evocative title. I. C. LODGE-PATCH

HEALTH IS FOR PEOPLE. *Michael Wilson.* Darton, Longman and Todd, 1975. 134 pp. £1.95.

This book is about what it means to be fully human. 'Health' is the word to describe what we mean, despite all the difficulties in defining it exactly. The present day understanding of health as 'wellness' is inadequate and orientated around the curing of disease, as is most of our NHS. Such concentration on removing badness leads to a sanitised view of society and the rejection of deviants. Closely associated is the theological legacy of salvation seen negatively as getting rid of sin.

The heading 'Health is Dead' paves the way for forceful criticisms of present day medical practice. For this section alone I would give the book to any doctors or nurses. Far too much in hospital practice, for example, denies responsibility to patients, fosters the highly paid authoritarian specialist, and regards death as the worst thing that can happen to a man. But we have chosen these values.

The book makes a compelling case for a change in emphasis, a new vision for health. Instead of fighting for the essentials of existence (called 'hygiene') health is not competitive. We can only have it together. The responsible choices and morale of a community are more important than saving one more life. Death is our gift to the growing fulfilment of man, and made positive by Christian hope. In true 'praxis' theology style Wilson reflects that the cross is bearing evil rather than sending it away. Health is through sharing and suffering with others. Consequent changes needed in present day health care are extensively discussed.

To be fully human is to relate intimately to God. Yet for the lecturer in Pastoral Studies at Birmingham this relationship has been swallowed up into the search for health together, albeit health for God. GRAHAM DOW

THE CHURCH'S NEUROSIS AND TWENTIETH CENTURY REVELATIONS. *C. Edward Barker.* Rider, 1975. 272 pp. £1.80.

Those who write books on the basis of failure to success transitions nearly always present a sharply one-sided approach to both 'before' and 'after'. This book takes it to extremes.

The 67 year-old author has come from life as a Methodist minister devoted to 'the old gospel'. Twenty-eight years ago neurosis led to serious illness along with insoluble church problems; the solution he found was through psychoanalysis and recovery of what he considers now to be the authentic message of Jesus. His problems were solved, and he trained to practice analytical psychotherapy.

So the church today is described as crippled with neurosis endemic in the teaching of Paul and Augustine. Redemption by the blood of Christ is a harmful theory; it harnesses men and women to an unnecessary burden of guilts and fears. Sexuality has been repressed. In our masochism we have made an idol of suffering. The teaching of Jesus on the other hand is that man needs new attitudes, and this is much more in line with growth of a firm ego. The answer lies through meditation on God's utter Beneficence, in our response to His reign. To cultivate the growth of loving and forgiving attitudes is Jesus' way out of our social problems.

The writer claims repeatedly that his findings have firm authority in psychoanalysis, psychical research and theological form criticism. I am not qualified to assess the truth of the interesting material under the first two of these, but in the theological field many of his judgments are appalling. All the post-crucifixion interpretations are dismissed as prompted by emotional instability and a manic conviction that wild apocalyptic expectations were fulfilled in Jesus. He never intended to build a church at all.

The value of this book is that it highlights much imbalance in traditional Christian thinking. But I hope that it will not find its way into uncritical hands. GRAHAM DOW

THE JESUS PRAYER. *Per-Olof Sjögren.* SPCK, 1975. 96 pp. £1.60.

This small book commending a way of prayer identified with Eastern Orthodox spirituality is described in the foreword as 'written by a Swedish Lutheran dean, translated by an Anglican, and commended by a Catholic priest'. It aims to help English-speaking Christians to use this way of praying with its long tradition in the East from the sixth century though only listened to with conviction in western Christendom in the twentieth.

The prayer is expounded as a capsule summary of Christian doctrine, setting the prayer firmly within the doctrinal context of divine revelation and human need. Repeated consciously through the day, it can become an unceasing, wordless prayerfulness in the believer. Large claims follow. It is the Spirit's prayer in and through the believer, arising from 'Christ in us'; it links the individual to the praying church; it activates the liturgical prayers; it deepens commitment to and union with Christ; it disposes the whole being to prayer and cultivates the capacity to listen in silence.

For this reviewer there is a growing niggle of discontent for the advocacy

comes over as stereotyped, heavily pietistic and defensive. The practical situations in which its use is presented are those of struggle, danger and defeat, seldom those of joy, love gratitude or the 'strengths' of life. It is such advocacy one questions, not the use or efficacy of the prayer-form. £1.60 seems a lot to pay for 91 pages (plus Biblical index) of simplistic pietism but perhaps it is a good antidote to set alongside the eastern-oriented techniques of prayer so much in vogue today. And many quotable nuggets are to be found here.

PETER R. AKEHURST

MYSTICS OF THE CHURCH. *Evelyn Underhill.* James Clarke, 1975. 259 pp. £3.00.

It is a testimony to Evelyn Underhill's distinctive place in the theology of Christian spirituality in this country that her classic work on *Mystics of the Church* should have been re-issued exactly fifty years after its first appearance. The publishers are to be congratulated on their initiative and on the quality of the production at what, by modern standards, is a very modest price. It is not a book strictly speaking about mysticism but about mystics of the church, that is in the author's words—'those whose greatness is most closely connected with their dependence on, and contribution to, the family life of the household of faith'. There are chapters, therefore, on Franciscan Mysticism, English Mediaeval Mystics, the Two Catherines and Some Protestant Mystics. Those who are familiar with Miss Underhill's work will need no commendation from me; to those who are unfamiliar with it, I commend it wholeheartedly—with one slight reservation. Miss Underhill was not alone in assuming a connection between the mystics of the Church and the prophets of Israel. She may well be right but I doubt whether the connection can be assumed. For the mystics all that matters is union with God; for the prophets all that matters is unhesitating obedience. For the mystics the beatific vision is often regarded as the end of a process; for the prophets it is the beginning of a process. The distinction between prophet and mystic is by no means easy to establish but I have no doubt in my own mind that there is such a distinction and it is not always observed by those who write on the theology of the spiritual life. But who am I to cavil? I have read this book again with the utmost pleasure and profit and thank God for all that Evelyn Underhill has contributed to our understanding of the spiritual life.

STUART EBOR:

CONTEMPLATIVE CHRISTIANITY. *Aelred Graham.* Mowbrays, 1975. 131 pp. £2.75.

Dom Aelred Graham has several distinguished books to his name, all of them drawing in some way on his wide experience of the religions of the East and in particular of Buddhism. His debt to Buddhism is obvious throughout these chapters and I am grateful to him for the many illuminating comparisons he draws with what he calls 'the religion of Jesus'. Yet to me the main value of the book lies elsewhere—in its cool and penetrating comment on the great church institutions of our day. The alternative title he proposes in his preface—'Themes for a Changing Church'—might indeed have been less misleading than the one he actually chose. For he uses the word 'contemplative' in a distinctly unusual sense, i.e. (a) 'a state of mind in which we look calmly and without prejudice at the institutional church' and (b) the process by which the mind is led 'from signs and symbols to the

realities they signify'. It takes an author of Dom Graham's skill and experience to hold two such themes together in one book but he does so (if only just) to the enrichment of both. Contemporary history offers many chilling examples of how a profound concern with contemplation (the realities) may go with an equally profound distaste for what is observed of the institutional church. 'We are faced with an increasing interest in religion combined with a decreasing interest in the church.' It is perhaps because I feel the weight of this particular problem that I welcome the author's 'Themes for a Changing Church', e.g. 'A haven for conformists?' 'The challenge from the East,' 'Seeing Christianity anew,' 'On growing young.' We do not always enjoy the things that are good for us but I enjoyed this book—with its many felicitous utterances and its 'coolness in the heat'.

STUART EBOR:

ENGAGEMENT WITH GOD. *Hans Urs Von Balthasar*. SPCK. 100 pp. £3.25.

The book comprises three main sections—the first a long introductory essay on Dr. Von Balthasar's theology by Dr. MacKinnon which is extremely useful to those who like myself are unfamiliar with the intellectual background against which Dr. Balthasar writes. The other two sections are by Dr. Balthasar himself and are entitled 'The Divine Involvement' and 'Our Involvement'. For the significance of the division which may otherwise be opaque to the reader I quote the author himself—'the Christian's involvement has its origins in God's involvement for the sake of the world; it is grounded in it, captivated by it, shaped and directed by it'. No reviewer of Dr. Balthasar's works could ever attempt a summary (the texture is too close for that) and I merely content myself with drawing attention to certain important matters which rise out of the text for me. Dr. MacKinnon draws attention to one such—'Dr. Balthasar shows an awareness that central to an understanding of Christianity lies the unresolved problem of the relation of the new to the old Israel'. That awareness is strikingly exhibited in his chapters on the Old and New Covenant. I welcome too his insight into the nature of the transformation of the law which was wrought in Christ—'The law appears to Christ as but the expression of the Father's loving will, and is therefore seen by the Son as prescribing what he most of all prefers to do. By this inner disposition, he changes the whole "compulsory nature" of the law'. We would have been spared a lot of empty rhetoric if that factor had always been appreciated. I was particularly interested in what could almost be regarded as a theological comment on our efforts in Call to the North—'the Christian is, of course, committed to taking part in mankind's common effort towards the humanising of the world. He has, however, no clear-cut recipe or solution to offer to this problem . . . it is not for him to attempt to cleave the complexities of the domain of the secular with the sword-edge of some theological argument'.

For those who see—and perhaps even more for those who don't see—the connection between 'God's involvement' in the world and 'Our Involvement' in the world this is a valuable and illuminating study. STUART EBOR:

LANGUAGE, LITURGY, AND MEANING. *A. C. Thiselton*. Grove Books, 1975. 32 pp. £0.55.

Anthony Thiselton's booklet is a plea that the liturgist should pay attention

to the problem of the meaning of the terms he uses in devising his liturgies. He is to pay attention to meaning, not just in the sense of considering carefully the translations he might offer of older terms, but pay attention to the various *types* of meaning with which he must deal. Contemporary philosophy, particularly as it has been influenced by men like Ludwig Wittgenstein and J. L. Austin, has much to teach him here. Thiselton takes Wittgenstein's remarks, to the effect that if we are to understand the meaning of any assertion, we attend to the position it has in its linguistic setting in the historical life of the community; and that, if we are to understand any remark, we do so, not by learning the terms by ostensive definition, but by watching others use the terms. He goes on to argue from this to his conclusion that in liturgy 'narrative Bible-reading performs an indispensable role, in which the use of mere sentences or short biblical allusions cannot be an adequate substitute' (p. 32). The weakest part of the pamphlet seems to be that Thiselton comes to this conclusion too soon, and one is left wondering why extended reading from non-biblical writers could not fulfil this role in some cases.

In the course of his argument Thiselton discusses the work of J. L. Austin, and this is perhaps the most interesting section, where he commends Austin's discussion of 'performatives' as a means of understanding the liturgical significance of confession and absolution. Other topics such as myth and metaphor are discussed, and Thiselton must be commended for drawing such contemporary philosophers as he does, into liturgical debate.

BRIAN A. SMITH

BOOK BRIEFS

Hardback

Banner of Truth provide two more nineteenth century reprints: C. R. Vaughan's *The Gifts of the Holy Spirit* (415 pp., £2.10) and J. W. Alexander's *Thoughts on Preaching* (318 pp., £1.95). They were first published in 1894 and 1864 respectively and while they have much of value to say, inevitably they are somewhat dated. From Souvenir Press comes another book by Erich von Daniken: *Miracles of the Gods* (237 pp., £3.75). Whatever may be said about the author's ideas he is at least getting something akin to religion into the supermarkets! *The Hot-House Plant* (Elek/Pemberton, 190 pp., £6.00) is the autobiographical account of her younger years by the repressed daughter of an apparently 'progressive' clergyman. Theodore M. Hesburgh gives us in *The Humane Imperative* (Yale, 115 pp., \$5.95) 'A challenge for the year 2000' as he calls us to responsible world citizenship. In *The Watercourse Way* (Cape, 134 pp., £3.50) Alan Watts gives us a posthumous introduction to this Chinese philosophy. Graham Jeffery's *The Gospel according to Barnabas* (Mowbray's, 144 pp., £1.95) is an amusing and instructive collection of cartoons.

Paperback

Hodders have provided us with a number of important reprints. They include J. I. Packer's *Knowing God* (317 pp., £0.80), Richard Wurmbrand's *Christ on the Jewish Road* (222 pp., £0.80), and two of Corrie Ten Boom's

books: **The Hiding Place** (223 pp., £0.75) and **Tramp for the Lord** (191 pp., £0.75). In **Hill Ablaze** (127 pp., £0.70) Canon Bill Butler of the Ruanda Mission tells something of his experience in the East African revival. The words edition of the charismatic hymnbook **Sound of Living Waters** edited by Betty Pulkingham and Jeanne Harper (128 pp., £0.50) also appears in normal Hodder paperback format. Two booklets from the same house are **Study Guide to J. I. Packer's Knowing God** (47 pp., £0.40) and **Introduction to Francis Schaeffer** (61 pp., £0.35).

Another very welcome group of reprints comes from Paternoster Press. Leon Morris' classic work **The Cross in the New Testament** (454 pp., £2.60) is outstanding but it is good also to see Roy Coad's **A History of the Brethren Movement** (336 pp., £2.40), F. F. Bruce's **This Is That, New Testament Development of Some Old Testament Themes** (122 pp., £1.30), E. K. Victor Pearce's **Who Was Adam?** (151 pp., £1.60) and a revised and enlarged edition of Dr. Joe Church's well-used aid to Bible study **Every Man a Bible Student** (127 pp., £1.60).

Marshall Morgan and Scott provide under their Lakeland imprint three reprints of books by Mother Basilea Schlink: **My All for Him** (155 pp., £0.75), **You Will Never Be the Same** (191 pp., £0.75) and **Those Who Love Him** (96pp., £0.50). New publications include two short devotional books by Francis W. Dixon, **Living in the Sunshine** (94pp., £0.60) and **Running up the Stairs** (95 pp., £0.60) and Dwight L. Carlson's **Run and Not Be Weary** (220 pp., £0.75), the Christian answer to fatigue.

From John Murray comes another reprint of that dated classic of comparative religion, J. G. Frazer's **The Golden Bough** (971 pp., £1.95). In **Mozambique, Memoirs of a Revolution** (Penguin, 229 pp., £0.80) John Paul gives us some of the observations of an Anglican missionary working in that country until recently. **And He Had Compassion** (Saint Andrew Press, 272 pp., £0.90) is another of William Barclay's Bible Class books on the miracles of Jesus. Coverdale have reprinted Ruth Fowke's **Coping with Crises** (126 pp., £0.70) first issued by Hodder in 1968. The writer is a Christian psychiatrist. From Anthony Clarke come two more books in the Christian Experience Series: both are by Yves Raguin, S.J.: **Paths to Contemplation** (154 pp., £1.50) and **Celibacy for Our Times** (120 pp., £1.20). From them also comes **Christian Consciousness** by Michael Day (123 pp., £1.00). **The Psalms for Worship Today** by Dwight W. Vogel (Concordia, 176 pp., \$6.00) is a Lutheran arrangement of the TEV Psalms. **Does the Bible Contradict Itself?** is the title of another volume from Concordia and it was written by W. F. Arndt of 'Arndt-Gingrich' fame in 1955 (172 pp., \$2.50). The answer seems to be 'No'. **You Can Have a Family where Everybody Wins** is the optimistic title of a book by Earl H. Gaulke (93 pp., \$1.95). From Evangelical Press comes the twelfth printing of L. Berkhof's **Principles of Biblical Interpretation** (169 pp., £1.10).

A Day that Changed the World is the title of a book on the meaning of the Cross by Gordon Bridger (IVP, 96 pp., £0.50). From Falcon comes a booklet **Verdict on the Empty Tomb** (30 pp., £0.30) by Val Grieve and **The Gospel according to Science Fiction** (48 pp., £0.38) by John Allan, which does some debunking of von Daniken. **Faith and Experience** is an introduction to the Christian Faith by R. Pearce (Henry E. Walter, 80 pp., £0.70). Geoffrey Wilson has produced another digest of Reformed comment on the Pauline epistles, this time on **1 and 2 Thessalonians** (Banner of Truth, 124 pp., £0.50).

In *Confrontation* (McGraw Hill, 188 pp., n.p.) Ian Birnie and John Elliott seek to provide students with resource documents for use in discussion of religious controversies. Robert R. Wilson sets crosswords for the parish magazine inset *The Sign* and here he has published a new selection in *The Sign Book of Crosswords* (Mowbrays, £0.75). From Hulton Educational we have *The Way of the Sikh* (60 pp., £0.70). Two interesting topic books from the Cambridge Introduction to the History of Mankind are *Archbishop Thomas and King Henry II* (48 pp., £0.85) by Tom Corfe and *Martin Luther* by Judith O'Neill (48 pp., £0.75). *Let's Talk It Through* (SU, 164 pp., £1.00) is a useful collection of discussion material, and from the same publishers Anne J. Townsend's *Marriage Without Pretending* (95 pp., £0.65) is a most helpful and realistic book. A. C. Krass' *Go . . . and Make Disciples* (SPCK, 218 pp., £1.75) is another volume in the TEF Study Guide series and is based on experience with the church in Ghana. SPCK also provide the second revised edition of the important *Prayers We Have in Common* (28 pp., £0.65) the ICET texts which have been so influential in co-ordinating modern liturgical revision in the different churches. *St. Martin's-in-the-Bull Ring* by Philip Crowe is a splendid example of a guide to a parish church because it tells us what it is doing in the present as well as what it has done in the past. It is published by St. Martin's Church, Birmingham at £0.30.

Shorter booklets include Nigel Yates *The Oxford Movement and Parish Life: St. Saviour's, Leeds, 1839-1929* (St. Anthony's Press, York, 65 pp., £0.55), *John Foxe the Martyrologist, His Life and Times* by Neville Williams (Dr. Williams' Library, 24 pp., £0.40) and *New Testament Interpretation in an Historical Age* by D. E. Nineham (Athlone Press, 75 pp., £0.25). An amusing Roman Catholic book of cartoons is John Ryan's *Rolling in the Aisles* (Mayhew McCrimmon, £0.35).

Most readers of *The Churchman* will be familiar with *Grove Booklets*. The latest to appear in the Ministry and Worship series are *Keeping Holy Week* by Peter R. Akehurst, *Christian Healing in the Parish* by Michael Botting, *Modern Roman Catholic Worship: Baptism and Penance* by Nicholas Sagovsky and *Exorcism, Deliverance and Healing: Some Pastoral Guidelines* by John Richards. In the Ethics series we have *The Homosexual Way: A Christian Option?* by David Field, *God or Mammon?—A Christian Ethic for the Market-Place* by Don Milner and John Wesson and *Censorship and the Arts* by Richard Griffiths. The standard number of pages for each series is 24 and the price £0.30.