Book Reviews

THE NEW OXFORD ANNOTATED BIBLE (New Revised Standard Version) Bruce M. Metzger and Roland E. Murphy

Oxford University Press, New York, Pages: xxxvi + 1,237 (O.T.); x + 432 (N.T.); 14 double page colour maps $34.95/£19.95 ISBN 019 528355 4
(Also available with Apocrypha)

This is a beautifully produced volume, printed on thin but almost opaque acid-free paper, bound to last, with good legible print and clear verse numbers. It is just a pity about the contents.

The New Revised Standard Version has been out for two years now, and has won many friends. This reviewer is not one of them. The texts used are *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (1977/1983) and the U.B.S. *Greek New Testament* (1966/1983). I am certainly happy with that, although some would prefer to see greater use of *Textus Receptus*. By and large the translators adhere to the principles of the earlier R.S.V. (1952), seeking to follow the traditions of the Authorized Version but 'to introduce such changes as are warranted on the basis of accuracy, clarity, euphony, and current English usage': so far, so good. They have shown the consistency and courage which the earlier R.S.V. translators lacked in addressing God as 'you' in psalms and prayers: even better. But they have also aimed at removing 'linguistic sexism' as far as possible 'without altering passages that reflect the historical situation of ancient patriarchal culture.' So we have the astonishing rendering: 'Let us make humankind in our image' (Genesis 1.26), and the regular use of the plural instead of the singular: 'Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked' (Psalm 1.1); 'I will raise them up on the last day' (John 6.40). 'Humankind' is ridiculous; the plurals are not so bad, but can hardly be right in a professedly accurate study bible. Bear in mind, too, that this is an American edition, complete with American spellings. The odd occasional conservative touch creeps in, such as the continuation of inverted commas in John 3 up to verse 21. On balance, the bible text is readable, slightly formal (especially in the Old Testament), and about as accurate as the R.S.V.

The introductions to sections and books are distinctly one-sided; liberal critical scholarship is paraded with very little recognition of other positions. So we are told: that the pentateuch was edited by priestly writers 'perhaps during the Babylonian exile', that Deuteronomy 'purports to be Moses' farewell address', that Genesis 1–11 reflect a 'prehistorical or mythical view', that 'only chs. 1–39 [of Isaiah] can be assigned to Isaiah's time', that the author of Daniel 'was a pious Jew living under the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, 167–164 BC. The experts assure us that the exodus took place in the 19th Dynasty (about 1350–1200 BC), that Job is a 'folktale', and that the story of Jonah is 'from the realm of popular legend'. The New Testament note writers are less sure of their doubts, telling us of different opinions concerning the authorship of assorted books.

The notes are neither as extensive nor as reliable as those in the *New International Version Study Bible*. There are no cross-references marked in

the text, but some in the notes. The maps are clear and helpful, with a full index of place names.

The Rectory, Depleach Road, Cheadle, Cheshire DONALD ALLISTER

SCRIBES AND SCHOOLS IN MONARCHIC JUDAH J.S.O.T.S. 109
(Social World of Biblical Antiquity, No. 9) **D. W. Jamieson-Drake**
Sheffield University Press, Sheffield 240pp. £30.00 ISBN 1 85075 275 3

For a long time there has been more to archaeology than setting out, spade in hand, hoping for the best. Though it is very much more, Jamieson-Drake's book is certainly an eye-opener to the degree of specialization that archaeology has reached, the science of survey and data collection, the statistical methods which have been developed for assessing finds and the discipline of deduction. His command of all this field makes him an archaeologist's archaeologist rather than a populizer – in the present book at least. His aim is to uncover the nature and extent of social support groups in Judah and to this end he reviews evidence on settlement, the carrying out of public works and the extent and distribution of luxury items since these, in turn, imply the presence of trained and educated administrators. He finds 'little evidence that Judah began to function as a state prior to the 8th century'. Tenth century Judah was really a chiefdom – as indeed the biblical portrayal would suggest. Solomon did no more than organize the support needed by an inflated monarchical establishment, while also setting in motion 'the institutional forces which eventually resulted in state bureaucratic controls'. Jamieson-Drake does, of course, allow that this conclusion is in measure dependent on the definition of terms. To the end, however, Judah was too Jerusalem-dependent, and easily vanished with the fall of the capital. Ties with Jerusalem brought a corresponding rise in literacy and literary skills.

The book is supported by most illuminating tables, diagrams and charts and builds up into a fascinating array of the sort of material rarely glimpsed in the heavily king-centred biblical history.

10 Littlefield, Bishopsteignton, Devon ALEC MOTYER

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN D. A. Carson
Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester, William B. Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan
715pp. £19.95 ISBN 0 80283 683 6
ISBN 0 85111 749 X

Here we have a magnificent commentary, submitting itself to the text and its clear evangelistic purpose, excelling in both scholarship and helpfulness.

Some will be offended by Carson's preparedness to abandon conservative or ultra-conservative shibboleths. In fact, refreshingly, he seems to be more compelled by evidence (both internal and external) than by prejudice. He is sure that John 7.53–8.11 is not original to the gospel, though equally sure that it is a true story. He argues that both 3.16–21 and 3.31–36 are the comments of the evangelist rather than the words of Jesus. On the other hand he contends that the original gospel did include both the prologue (1.1–18)

and the epilogue (21.1–25). He suggests a date of 80–85 AD, but is not dogmatic about it.

Carson's introduction to the gospel (108 pages including preface and a huge list of abbreviations) is good: clear, helpful, reverent and stimulating. But the commentary itself (576 pages) is outstanding: characterized by great knowledge of history and of other writers on John, but above all by a deep respect for the text itself. He is fair to the other authors with whom he interacts, and fair to the author of the gospel. He is also eminently readable. Carson's learning does not obscure John's writing, but illuminates it. In this commentary, more than in any other I have seen on John, it is scripture which speaks rather than the commentator.

The commentary is based on the *New International Version*, though where necessary it refers to the original (helpfully transliterated, so in no way off-putting to those who cannot read Greek). It is clearly printed and strongly bound, which is just as well because it will be much used.

The Rectory, Depleach Road, Cheadle, Cheshire DONALD ALLISTER

THE INTERRELATIONS OF THE GOSPELS Ed. D. L. Dungan

Leuven University Press, Leuven 1990, xxxii + 677pp. c. £50 ISBN 90 6186 391 1

This volume represents the climax to a period of intense re-examination of the Synoptic Problem at a series of international conferences stretching from 1970 to 1984. 1984 saw the convening of a two-week symposium in Jerusalem, for which most careful preparations had been made over a period of four years. It was reckoned that, in addition to a large number of views propounded by individual scholars, there were three hypotheses current which had attracted schools of adherents. There was the Two-Source Hypothesis, which held almost exclusive sway for much of this century: it posits the independent use of Mark and Q by Matthew and Luke; the Two-Gospel (or Griesbach) Hypothesis which sees Matthew as the first gospel and Mark as derived from Matthew and Luke; and the Multiple-Stage Hypothesis, which posits a very complex redactional process. (Responsibility for this last was entrusted entirely to Boismard and it is doubtful whether Boismard can be said to head a school comparable with the other two.) Papers from the three groups were circulated and responses made well in advance. The number of participants was restricted to twenty-eight and it was stipulated that all should attend for the complete fortnight. The collected papers are assembled in this book.

It has to be confessed that by the end it is not at all clear that progress has been made towards *solving* the problem. An attempt was made to find areas of unanimous agreement. These in effect boiled down to two: 1. All evangelists used earlier traditions. 2. They are involved in literary relationships. The latter is somewhat surprising in that one of the participants, Bo Reicke, published a book in 1986 entitled *The Roots of the Synoptic Gospels*, which argued the precise opposite, maintaining that the Synoptics had no literary relationships, but that all used oral sources independently. My own view is that the verbal likenesses are seldom due to one evangelist redacting the work of another. The verbal likenesses and differences are best explained by the common mode of instruction which was given by the apostles in

Jerusalem before their dispersal in AD 42. Each evangelist tells, and then writes, the story in his own customary way. We need a new paradigm which abandons the twentieth-century reliance on literary hypotheses. This great volume is a monument to the literary fallacy which has produced our present *impasse*.

55 Bainton Road, Oxford JOHN WENHAM

TRUTH UNTOLD Meditations of the Gospel Leslie Houlden
S.P.C.K. London 1991 81pp. £4.99 ISBN 0 281 04488 0

Leslie Houlden is Professor of Theology at King's College, London, and this little book presents nineteen short meditations, 'mostly sermons', he says, each taking about six or seven minutes to read. One gets the impression that the educated congregations to whom they were addressed had not much appetite for the spoken Word! unless indeed the pieces have been shortened; but there is no indication of this. Professor Houlden writes, of course, as a definite liberal; to him the Word of Scripture has the authority of early and no doubt theologically intelligent followers of Jesus, but no more. In his own words, 'these sermons seem all to be saying: Let's face the Bible with candour and with no forcing or fudging, and then let's see how Christian faith looks to us.' It is one of the commonest claims of liberal scholars that they (and often by subtle implication only they) possess intellectual integrity, and that note certainly seems to be here. What is the result? To your reviewer, these meditations are profoundly unsatisfying, even threadbare. To be told that the introduction of references to John the Baptist into John's prologue 'seems an error of both taste and logic' and that it is 'hard to say why they are there' means that Prof. Houlden has, I suppose, ruled out *a priori* the possibility of predictive prophecy; and the suggestion that Mark's story of the Syrophoenician woman is 'even offensive' and that it means apparently no more than that salvation is for Gentiles too is to miss lessons for which generations of humble believers have thanked God. Your reviewer cannot therefore underscore the Publisher's claim on the back cover that this 'is one of those rare books which enables the reader to see well-known Gospel stories in a fresh and often unexpected light, and to respond to the grace and truth they reflect with both the heart and the mind'.

Ivy Cottage, Grove, Wantage, Oxon. DOUGLAS SPANNER

FROM ADAM TO CHRIST Essays on Paul Morna D. Hooker
Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1990 198pp. £25 ISBN 0 521 34317 8

Morna Hooker is Lady Margaret's Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, and this volume collects together some of her essays on Paul published over the last thirty years. They are grouped in four sections: *Interchange in Christ; Adam; Wisdom;* and *Old and New*. They are written in a pleasant style, and Prof. Hooker wears her scholarship lightly. Like the great majority of scholars (even conservative evangelicals) she writes about great biblical

themes in a detached way, as if such things *could* be adequately discussed from a purely objective point of view and without commitment. One should be inured to this, but I am afraid I find it no easier!

Her first section is organized around the idea of *interchange*, an idea which 'though very useful' she agrees is 'not entirely accurate'. As a formula it is 'incomplete'. Unfortunately, while she puts a lot of emphasis on this idea she never adequately defines it. It is interchange between Christ and mankind, but its limits and mode are indefinite. She sets her face however very firmly against the notion of 'substitution'; (I counted no less than ten occasions, all told, where she speaks against it.) To me, this accounted for many of the difficulties she finds in exegesis; the notion of Christ 'being made sin for us', or 'becoming a curse', for instance. She remarks earlier on that we have come to realize the 'thoroughgoing Jewishness of Paul's thinking', (and she later luminously amplifies this comment). Of course too, she recognizes the place of the Passover in his understanding of the meaning of the Cross. This makes it all the more surprising that she rejects the notion of *substitution* so uncompromisingly: what is the meaning of the Passover ritual expressed, for example, in Exodus 13.13ff. if not substitution? To insist on this is not to deny that in other aspects of his work, of such exhaustive perfection, our Lord acted as our *representative;* but to deny it is to throw away the key to much of great significance and to imprison oneself in an exegetical maze. One fears that Prof. Hooker has fallen into the trap she warns others against, of allowing one's theological convictions to influence one's interpretation of the text. This procedure may be defensible when one's convictions are founded on the wholeness of the biblical testimony as God-given; but it is suspect when one allows oneself to decide to what in the Book one submits one's thinking.

There is much in the rest of the book which is thought-provoking. Prof. Hooker interprets 1 Cor.11.10 very interestingly. 'Far from being a symbol of the woman's subjection to man . . her head-covering is what Paul calls it – authority: in prayer and prophecy she, like the man, is under the authority of God', and in this context 'there is neither male nor female'. Her treatment of the supposed Colossian heresy is reasonable and balanced, the conclusion being less positive than the usual one. Her last chapter, however, I found quite unconvincing, though forcefully argued. It concerns the interpretation of the phrase *pistis Christou*; is this an objective or a subjective genitive? Does it mean 'faith in Christ' (as assumed in all modern translations), or does it mean Christ's own faith or faithfulness? This is a point of great theological significance, surely, and the author opts for the latter meaning. To me this recalls her rejection of the idea of substitution. It chimes with it, and it left your reviewer feeling very unsatisfied.

However, it would be ungracious to fail to mention that Prof. Hooker says many things here which need to be said, and she says them with power and clarity. I particularly enjoyed her reproof of the new 'prosperity gospel'. It may come from ostensibly evangelical circles, but it is no part of the evangelical faith. It is a cuckoo in our nest, surely! It cannot be too strongly repudiated. It is granted to us on Christ's behalf to *suffer* as well as to believe.

I noticed misprints on pp.90 and 96, the latter of a whole word.

Ivy Cottage, Grove, Wantage, Oxon. DOUGLAS SPANNER

AMONG GOD'S GIANTS J. I. Packer
Kingsway Publications, Eastbourne 1991 447pp. £9.99 pb. ISBN 0 86065 452 4

I can think of only one word to describe this volume – magnificent. Its value and importance should not be under-estimated. The fruit of a lifetime of study and prayer, it is a tract for our times.

Although many of its twenty chapters began life as lectures (at least ten were given at the *Puritan and Reformed Studies Conference* between 1956 and 1969) or whole chapter contributions to other volumes (the most recent of which is dated 1986), there is a freshness and timeliness to them. In his usual and, by now, well-known and well-loved style, the author packs in both information and trenchant analysis. He certainly lives up to his own self-description, 'Packer by name and packer by nature'. What he says in the pages of this book is precisely what the church at the end of the twentieth century needs to hear.

Dr. Packer's starting point is that the Puritans were spiritual giants. They were 'Englishmen who embraced whole-heartedly a version of Christianity that paraded a particular blend of biblicist, pietist, churchly and wordly concerns' (p. 433). Like the Redwood trees of California, 'the mature holiness and seasoned fortitude of the great Puritans tower over 'the stature of the majority of Christians in most eras, and certainly so in this age of crushing urban collectivism, when Western Christians sometimes feel and often look like ants in an anthill and puppets on a string' (p. 11). Compared with us, he says, they are 'giants whose help we need if ever we are to grow' (p. 18).

In some nineteen chapters he puts flesh on the skeleton we are presented with in the *Introduction*. The great men of faith of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the John Owens, Richard Baxters and Jonathan Edwardses of this world, are paraded before us. Their strengths, and where necessary weaknesses, are highlighted and illustrated. We are introduced to them as characters as well as to their convictions. We learn much about their *humility* ('the cultivated lowliness of a sinful creature who is always in the presence of a great and holy God, and can only live before him by being constantly pardoned'), *receptivity* ('openness to be taught, corrected and directed by one's discoveries in Scripture; and willingness to be disciplined'), *doxology* ('the passion to turn everything to worship and so glorify God') and *energy* ('the spiritual energy of the true Protestant work ethic whereby laziness and passivity are damned as irreligious, just because so much remains to be done before God's name is hallowed in his world as it should be') (p. 436). We discover that they were *thinkers, worshippers, hopers* (they had a grip on the biblical teaching about the hope of heaven) and *warriors* (they saw that the Christian is engaged in an unending fight against the world, the flesh and the devil). We learn what they believed, how they preached and how they evangelized. Above all we see that they were biblical Christians. That is what we are called to be in our generation. And that is what the Puritans of old will help us to be as we approach the dawn of a new century.

It is a shame to find spelling mistakes on pp. 168, 170, 201 and 324, and the use of an inappropriate personal pronoun on p. 442.

Notwithstanding these defects sufficient words of commendation for this

excellent volume just cannot be found. It is undoubtedly the most important book to have come off the 'popular Christian presses' in the 1990s. It is my conviction that that will be said not just at the beginning of this decade but also at the beginning of the next.

St. Stephen's Vicarage, Low Elswick, Newcastle upon Tyne GEORGE CURRY

THE BIBLE TELLS THEM SO The Discourse of Protestant Fundamentalism Kathleen C. Boone

S.C.M. Press, London 1990 137pp. £9.50 pb. ISBN 0 334 00117 X

Kathleen Boone, the author of yet another book on Fundamentalism (there have been quite a number recently) is an independent scholar from the State University of New York at Buffalo. The recommendation on the cover describes this as 'a challenging book, and the most important study on fundamentalism to appear in recent years'. It is characterized in the same place as an examination not so much of the authority of the Bible as of that of the fundamentalist leaders who interpret it to their followers. This is a fair description, and it means that the theological dimension of her treatment is quite minimal; rather, it is the psychological and sociological ones that dominate it. It is clear, however, that the author is quite liberal in her own convictions, and has little sympathy with 'fundamentalists'. Her case-studies make a good deal of leaders such as Jerry Falwell, Jim Bakker and Pat Robertson; and she emphasizes frequently the dominant influence of the original and new Scofield Bibles with their extravagant dispensational teaching. She quotes Jim Packer and Francis Schaeffer too, but never comes to grips with them theologically, and to your reviewer at any rate, leaves the impression that they are not widely different in theological literacy from the former group. I think this is a major disappointment in a work of this kind; it leaves it almost entirely without constructive value in the continuing liberal-conservative debate. Dr. Boone makes a great deal of use of the controversial literary theory of Stanley Fish (that the meaning of a text is not 'determinate', inherent in the text itself, but depends on the 'interpretive community', so that the meaning must change with time), and also of the somewhat idiosyncratic ideas of the philosopher Michel Foucault, whose conception of 'discourse' she finds so useful in her analysis. She says many things that are true enough (*e.g.* fundamentalists are 'bound by the rules of fundamentalist discourse') but I do not think that she realizes how many of them are equally applicable to the liberal community! nor how positively these two authorities seem, (at least to your reviewer) to say things with a tendency to 'deconstruct' her own argument. If it is so hard to be sure what a biblical text means, how is it so easy to be sure what a fundamentalist's assertion means, especially when one does not belong to their interpretive community? She may have an answer to this objection, but it does not spring readily to my mind.

Let me sum up my impressions of this book. It is perceptive of many of the serious foibles of fundamentalists, and hits them hard. They would do well to take notice. But *mutatis mutandis*, so would even academic liberals; Clifford Longley has written in *The Times* of '*liberal* fundamentalism' as a present-day phenomenon, and I am sure he is right. As a sociological and psychologi-

cal study its tone is hardly objective enough, and it sometimes descends to what is a little cheap. Finally, and disappointingly, it never systematically addresses the abler advocates of the conservative position; like many liberal scholars, it ignores them. Dr. Boone does on one particular occasion engage Prof. Jim Packer, but her comments seem to me ill-conceived, even inept. That is a pity. She has an acute mind and the result could have been constructive. Liberals will really have to give more serious attention to conservative arguments than this if they do not wish, in their turn, to be left behind.

Ivy Cottage, Grove, Wantage, Oxon. DOUGLAS SPANNER

HOLY TIME – MODERATE PURITANISM AND THE SABBATH
John H. Primus
Mercer University Press, Mercer 1989 184pp. No Price ISBN 0 86554 350 X

Within the last 20 years the Sabbath has come once more into the forefront of academic study. The aim of the author is to re-examine the relationship between the emerging Puritan movement and the phenomenon of Sabbatarianism, in order to shed light on the 'complex dynamics of the Church of England'. The book is intended not only for the specialist. Its aim is to explain Puritan Sabbatarianism to those in disciplines other than the theological. Primus begins with the notable modern study by Kenneth L. Parker (1988), who followed the lead given by Whittaker (1933). Parker suggests that the Sabbath is not a Puritan invention and to talk of the Puritan Sabbath as if the terms were interchangeable, as was once the case, raises serious problems. Parker suggests that Peter Heylin (1636) understood Sabbatarianism to be an expression of suppressed Presbyterian Puritanism rising against Erastian authority because the Puritans were unable to achieve their reforms within the Church of England. Initially, Thomas Rogers took up the attack against this Puritan-Presbyterian-Sabbatarian conspiracy and, subsequently, the battle was picked up by Heylin. The battle was on to discredit the Puritans and 'Sabbatarian' became the theological swearword with which to accuse them.

Whatever the case, the origin of Sabbatarianism has been reopened and the even more critical issue of its relationship to Puritanism. What was the Continental influence? Was it a departure from the English theology? What was the relationship with the later English Reformation? What was its purpose and function in the Church and Commonwealth? What precisely was its relationship to Puritanism? These are some of the complex issues which the book seeks to explore.

Part One deals with the historical context and rise of Sabbatarianism, both from within the English tradition and then in the further developments which took place after the Dedham Conference. This led to the publication of Nicholas Bounds's two volumes which together form the classic statement of English Sabbatarianism. The influence of Bounds was extensive and profound and Primus elaborates upon the effects of those works with a clarity and thoroughness characteristic of the whole book. Full use is made of original sources and the subsequent rise of an angry Anti-Sabbatarianism is charted. The Establishment reacted and Anti-Sabbatarianism was born. As a

result Sabbatarianism was driven completely into the Puritan camp. This polarization led to Sabbatarianism, Puritanism, and Presbyterianism being virtually interchangeable terms by the end of the Seventeenth Century. Both views were important movements in the series of events leading to the English Civil War.

Part Two examines the theological basis for Sabbatarianism, how the continental Reformers understood the teaching of Scripture, and the relationship between them and the English Reformers.

The theological matrix of Sabbatarianism is examined with special reference to the exposition of the fourth commandment. Calvin's view is carefully examined and that of his successor, Beza. It was the views of Beza which eventually predominated and as a result of his views of sanctification and assurance the child of God began to look at the sanctified life as the basis for confidence of salvation. This led to law-keeping as the test of a living faith and, consequently, the stress on the law grew in strength. Assurance came by knowledge of law-obedience. This emphasis is traced very clearly through other theologians, both English – for example, William Perkins, who places the Decalogue firmly in the context of election – and continental. This includes a discussion of the place and function of the law as ceremonial and/or moral. Again, full use is made of key theologians and their views. A final chapter looks at the Puritan vision of the Sabbath, the Holy Time which is a preparation for heaven and the day above all days.

This is a fine study written with a firm grasp of the issues, complex and interwoven as they are. Extensive use is made of the Puritan and Reformers' writings with full bibliographical detail included. The Puritans are allowed to speak for themselves and their historical context is presented with balance and a sure tread. Primus has not only mastered the sources but with his lucid style he has given us an abundant treat in the study of English Sabbatarianism. The book marks a real step forward, being an excellent study of Puritan and Reformed theology. It is a superb blend of theology and history. In this day of increasing secularization careful study of this volume would repay handsome dividends to us all as well as guiding us through many of the complex issues of this area.

73, St. Luke's Avenue, Ramsgate, Kent JOHN DUNN

THE ACHIEVEMENT OF JOHN HENRY NEWMAN Ian Ker
Collins, London 1990 209pp. £14.95 (cloth) ISBN 0 00 599200 1

NEWMAN THE THEOLOGIAN: A READER Ed. Ian Ker
Collins, London 1990 280pp. £7.95 pb. ISBN 0 00 599208 7

NEWMAN: A MAN FOR OUR TIME Ed. David Brown
S.P.C.K., London 1990 168pp. £5.99 pb. ISBN 0 281 04486 4

These three books each deal, in their different ways, with the figure of John Henry, Cardinal Newman, the centenary of whose death was celebrated in

1990. Given that 1989 marked the 500th anniversary of Archbishop Cranmer's birth and that 1991 marks the bicentenary of John Wesley's death, it is all the more remarkable that there should be a flood of publications dealing with Newman and virtually nothing commemorating the two giants of English religion. One of the reasons for this is undoubtedly the dedication of Ian Ker, the Catholic Chaplain of Oxford University and a leading Newman scholar, whose biography of the Cardinal, published by Oxford University Press in 1988, is universally recognized as a masterpiece.

Another reason is that Newman makes a special appeal to the Oxford mind, and it is from that source that his achievement has been commemorated. He was brilliant, persuasive, an accomplished speaker and writer, and so full of different ideas and perspectives on things that most people can find something in him to admire, and even to imitate. It is easy, and to a logical mind may even be necessary, to create one's own Newman – a lesser figure than the man himself, but one which can be absorbed by other lesser figures, and transformed into a model and guide for our own age.

Newman had a kind of Evangelical conversion at the age of fifteen, though it is Ian Ker's great merit to have pointed out that this was not genuine, because it lacked both the deep sense of conviction of sin, and the profound awareness of assurance, given by the in-dwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. The result was that Newman was effectively innoculated against Evangelical faith, and spent the rest of his life seeking an alternative to it. That alternative led him into a joyless sense of legalism in his religious life, and a belief that the only true assurance was the one provided by the Church of Rome. It is especially significant that he never really understood the Holy spirit – as far as he was concerned, spiritual guidance was little more than sanctified commonsense!

In expounding his religious opinions, Newman was guided more by his own inner light than by any deep attachment to logic. For him, orthodoxy and Rome were realities given in visionary experiences, often at moments of deep personal crisis, and little to do with anything which might be termed 'fact'. This made him impervious to argument, but at the same time it guaranteed that he would never win the Church of England to his viewpoint. What these books reveal is that Anglicanism contained Newman far longer than might have been expected, and that it would have done so longer had he himself not decided to go over to Rome.

All his life, Newman was a child of Trinity and Oriel Colleges in Oxford, and that can be seen throughout his career. When he went to Dublin to start a Catholic university, it was to found a new Oxford across the Irish Sea. Such a vision quickly foundered on reality, and left Newman deeply disappointed, but it gave the English language a beautiful book. *The Idea of a University*, which remains Newman's greatest achievement, and the one closest to his heart. Later, when the prospect of returning to Oxford to found a Catholic college became a possibility, Newman jumped at it, and was bitterly disappointed when Rome told him he could not himself be part of the enterprise. Oxford was where his heart lay, and it is fitting that it has been there that he has been most honoured.

Ian Ker brings all this out beautifully, and the commemorative volume edited by David Brown adds the wider perspective of contemporary English life to Ker's assessment. The contributors to Brown's volume must be among

the most distinguished ever to have been assembled in a collection of this kind, and it is fascinating to discover that they are by no means all theologians, or even believers. This shows the wide range of Newman's appeal, but it also provides us with some salutary warnings. For while many of these men may be prepared to admire Newman, it is only a certain type of theologian who is actually prepared to follow him. Why? Newman himself, quoted by Ker in his *Reader* (pp. 255–6), may provide us with a clue. This is what he has to say about Galileo:

> Galileo might be right in his conclusion that the earth moves; to consider him a heretic might have been wrong; but there was nothing wrong in censuring abrupt, startling, unsettling, unverified disclosures, if such they were, disclosures at once uncalled for and inopportune, at a time when the limits of revealed truth had not as yet been ascertained. A man ought to be very sure of what he is saying, before he risks the chance of contradicting the word of God.

These are fine words, perhaps, for a theologian concerned to protect the honour of Mother Church, but hardly a point of view likely to commend itself to those more concerned with the search for truth than with the susceptibilities of the religious establishment. Inevitably, it seems, Newman will continue to fascinate; to attract but also to repel; and that whilst he will remain alive amongst Oxonians, he is liable to leave the rest of the world somewhat perplexed and dismayed by what seems to them to be his major flaws and inconsistencies.

Oak Hill College, London N.14 GERALD BRAY

MISSION AND MEANINGLESSNESS The good news in a world of suffering and disorder Peter Cotterell

S.P.C.K., London 1990 332pp. £12.95 ISBN 0 281 04449 X

Peter Cotterell is Principal of the London Bible College and a former missionary in Ethiopia. In addition he has held visiting professorships in the States and is currently President of the British Church Growth Association. He is therefore well-qualified to write this magisterial book on a subject which should be in everyone's minds in the Decade of Evangelism. Those who have read his joint work with Max Turner, *Linguistics and Biblical Interpretation* will expect something written with clarity and authority and full of substance, and they will not be disappointed.

This book is not a handbook on methods of how to engage in 'mission'. It is rather one on the theory of mission itself, and it might be said to treat its subject from the standpoint of *Ecclesiastes* rather than from that of say *Romans;* viz., it deals with what is wrong with life from a human point of view rather than from a divine one. That is the significance of 'Meaninglessness' in the title; it comes of course from the New International Version's rendering in *Ecclesiastes*. The treatment is in four parts. First comes *Religion, Religions, and the apparent Meaninglessness of Life,* a very wide-ranging discussion of the human situation and of the diagnoses of it offered by the great world religions. It ends with the Christian world view and the various objections it encounters: Can we deny that there is salvation in other

religions? Can hell be justly everlasting, or may not immortality be 'conditional'? and so on. Here we meet critical encounters with such thinkers as John Hick, Hans Küng, and Karl Rahner. The author concludes this discussion with Ten Theses in which he sets out systematically the basis for the validity and necessity of Christian Mission.

Next comes *Mission as Response to the apparent Meaninglessness of Life.* Matthew's mission theology is carefully expounded, then what is meant by man's lostness and what is God's response to it ('elenctics' is a term which is met here and which gives an indication of the sophistication of the treatment)? What then is the relation of Christianity and Judaism? What is the Church? The Church Growth Movement, the Church in Europe, the reality which is the church, and the church and the poor, are concluding topics.

The author next turns to *Alternative Responses to Meaninglessness: Islam, Marxism, and Liberation Theology.* The discussion of Islam here is very thorough, covering its history, its internal divisions, its present-day impact as Islamic fundamentalism and as pragmatic and westernized liberalism, with a final, considered Assessment. The same treatment is then given to Marxism, and to Liberation Theology as political and 'Christian' alternatives respectively. There is some perceptive and valuable criticism here.

The fourth part is headed *Meaninglessness and Mission.* What is the experience of 'meaninglessness', and how does the Christian Mission meet it? There are four aspects which concern respectively the Ultimate Meaning of Life; the *dukkha* experience of Disease and Death (*dukkha* is a Buddhist word which the author frequently uses as a convenient shorthand for the general unsatisfactoriness of human life); the Experience of Political and Economic Oppression; and the Experience of Natural Disaster. On all of these topics his comments are thoughtful and well-presented. Finally, there is a brief *Postscript* setting out what it means to be a missionary today. This is expressed not in conventional *clichés,* but in systematic connexion with the points that he has been concerned throughout to expound.

There are twenty-seven pages of Notes, eight of Bibliography, a very full three pages of Biblical References, three of Subject Index, and three of Author Index. The claim made on the cover that this is 'a fully biblical and fully thought-through Christian manifesto for the 1990s' is one which can be heartily endorsed. Not all its conclusions may be equally acceptable to every reader of *Churchman*; but all are faithfully exposed to Biblical scrutiny and argued with honesty and clarity. This is a very timely book for the Decade of Evangelism now under way, especially for those who are not sure of what the Gospel is all about (a very common state of mind) or who are uncertain of its present-day relevance. In spite of its scholarship it is written in a pleasant and easy style, and is difficult to put down once it has been started. I wish it a wide circulation.

Ivy Cottage, Grove, Wantage, Oxon. DOUGLAS SPANNER

GOOD NEWS TO THE POOR: JOHN WESLEY'S EVANGELICAL ECONOMICS Theodore W. Jennings, Jr.

Abingdon Press, U.S.A. 1990 234pp. $11.95 pb. ISBN 0 687 15528 2

Formerly Professor of Theology at the Evangelical Methodist Seminary in

Mexico City, Dr. Theodore W. Jennings, Jr. has written a book that raises some important questions. Was Wesley fully aware and concerned for human conditions as much as salvation of peoples in England and the colonies? The writer, using source materials from Wesley, emphasizes an affirmation. Wesley cared deeply for the social conditions of human beings. He further stresses that Wesley challenged in his writings that evangelical economics could lead to the demise of the great Methodist church unless the church let go of personal consumption of wealth and shared all things common.

Among the informative and provocative chapters are: 'The Demystification of Wealth', 'Preferential option for the Poor', 'Redistribution of wealth', and 'Wesley on Politics.' These chapters potentially provoke the reader as well as illuminate a dimension of John Wesley's theology that has heretofore not received this unique attention. Prof. Jennings provides abundant quotations and theologically sound analysis for readers to work with as they struggle with the radical economical claims of the gospel espoused by John Wesley.

An evident weakness in this book is Jennings's consistent connexion of Wesley's economical and Scriptural teachings on the theology of economics with liberation theology. The connexion is slight, but not within the framework of Wesley's practical view of holiness and how it was to be carried out in his world. Readers will benefit greatly by this insightful book. It has the potential to assist in answering some of the problems in the Third World where biblical answers are so greatly needed. Linking Wesley's thought with possible answers for today gives hope of a better world.

5, Sunset Lane, Bristow, Oklahoma MONTY NEAL

THE TUBINGER SCHOOL, A HISTORICAL AND THEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION OF THE SCHOOL OF F. C. BAUR Horton Harris

Apollos Inter-Varsity Press, Leicester, 1990 288pp. £15.95
ISBN 0 58111 419 9

Did it really all happen a century and a half ago? It seems like yesterday, not to mention today! When we listen to Baur calling for a biblical investigation free from pre-suppositions or watch him restructuring the New Testament on the supposition of war between Peter and Paul, have we not come face to face with its twin in the liberal theological faculties of our own day – all the more so if 'our own day' reaches back to pre-war universities and theological colleges? And then, as more recently, the cry for presuppositionless study only meant the abandonment of biblical and evangelical presuppositions but not those of the Enlightenment and nineteenth century rationalism. Certainly in Old Testament study one has only to think of the restructuring and redating that has proceeded from the assumption of conflicting parties in the post-exilic community to be aware that Baur being dead yet speaketh.

This is a book no Bible student should miss. Apart from its eye-opening relevance to the very concept of study and its salutary puncturing of the balloon of liberal illiberality and arrogance, it is a matter of extraordinary interest to meet with Baur and his seven leading colleagues (Zeller, Schwelger, Planck, Kostlin, Ritschl, Hilgenfeld, Volkmar) who are accorded a biographical chapter each and to find, flitting in and out of the story the

names of the past: marvellous insights into the pervasively influential Schleiermacher, not to mention the opinionated and irascible Ewald. What a supremely prickly and self-important lot they were! And how (incredibly) Baur could consciously maintain a 'double-think', preaching what he did not for a moment believe, week by week, in Tubingen's Stiftskirche! But then he would not be the last to be a destructive liberal in the lecture theatre and a positive Bible preacher on Sundays.

Dr. Davies (Pastor of Teversham Baptist Church) has put us deeply in his debt, historically, with his biographical skill; theologically, for his painstaking and always pellucid unravelling of a complex system of doctrine. Earle Ellis has contributed a thoughtful and relevant preface which, considered on its own merits, would almost make the book worthwhile.

10 Littlefield, Bishopsteignton, Devon ALEC MOTYER

HISTORICAL CRITICISM OF THE BIBLE: METHODOLOGY OR IDEOLOGY? REFLECTIONS OF A BULTMANNIAN TURNED EVANGELICAL Eta Linnemann (translated from the German by Robert Yarborough of Wheaton College)

Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, U.S.A. 1990 169pp. No Price
ISBN 0 8010 5662 4

This is a splendid book, its very title a challenge. Here is the true story of a Christiana breaking out of Doubting Castle with the key Promise, out of the dungeon of Giant Despair and up the Delectable Mountains. We can pursue the analogy one step further '. . . to the top of a hill called Error.' The author shows us where she and her fellow-theologians went wrong, and warns against the dire consequences of tinkering with God's Word. The book is in three parts: Author's Introduction, Christianity and the Modern University (its *anti*-Christian roots are analysed), God's Word and Historical-Critical Theology. Dr. Linnemann recalls her years of study under Bultmann and other outstanding scholars; her success as a writer; her induction into the prestigious Society for New Testament Studies, and appointment as Professor of New Testament at Philipps University, Marburg. But after a deep spiritual experience she came to see historical-critical theology as 'the lie' (II Thes.2.11), that God's promises are true and actually *work*. In 1978 she (literally) threw her own highly-rated books into the trash, resigned her professorship, and went out to Indonesia as a Bible institute teacher. She writes as a humble Christian, very conscious that her previous teaching was *sinful* – 'the blind leading the blind' – and eager to warn others away from the precipice.

The translator informs us that Dr. Linnemann is writing another book to explore in depth the fallacies on which this slim volume merely touches. However, her (nearly) two hundred Scripture references (from thirty seven books) cover a wide range of questions and show her to be a penetrating (but never bitter) critic of the critics. Of particular interest to this reviewer is a long quotation from *The Fall Of The Christian West* by W. J. Ouweneel, the Dutch geneticist-creationist. Linnemann links the 'intuition' of evolutionists with the 'intuition' of Higher Critics who pile hypotheses upon hypotheses, unsupported by any real evidence. She also points to the disastrous effects of

critical theology on education, morals, and scientific research. This book is a trumpet-call to *intellectual* self-examination and repentance. It will be extremely helpful to anyone preparing for spiritual ministry, even more so to Professors of Theology, Principals of Bible Colleges, and Scripture teachers at all levels. 'In the same way that I resist adultery in the name of Jesus, I can also resist historical-critical theology, and appeal to my Saviour . . .' (p. 129). A magnificent testimony!

31 Harold Heading Close, Chatteris, Cambridgeshire DAVID C. C. WATSON

LIVING FOR CHRIST IN A PAGAN WORLD Michael Bentley
Evangelical Press, Durham, 1990 258pp. £6.95 ISBN 0 85234 279 9

It may be ambitious to use a major theme to expound two New Testament epistles. The danger is that an expositor could read into his material what he thinks ought to be there. Michael Bentley avoids this in his sermons on the Petrine epistles by his faithfulness to the text. After considering the background of 1 and 2 Peter he expounds the Christian's blessings in the face of trials and sufferings. The need of divine grace for spiritual growth, the value of Church fellowship, the nature and importance of Christian behaviour, and the believer's responsibility to political Government and human society all draw forth practical comments. A valuable section in the book is that dealing with marital relationships. The need of faithful Church leaders, the call for Christian witness, and the integrity of scripture are vividly expressed.

This book is splendid Reformed teaching set forth in devotional terms and enriched by striking analogies, with frequent quotations from Paul to support the author's ideas. Here is no academic interpretation of Peter's thought-forms, but a steady progression of essential Christian doctrine applied to human situations. It is a work that will enable the reader to face the issues of life. Its short chapters with sub-headings make it useful for private reading and House Groups. As the product of a fourteen month sermon series to a given congregation it bears the marks of audience reception, a quality not always evident in works of this kind. We highly commend it.

5 Green Lane, Clapham, Bedford ARTHUR BENNETT

MORALITY AND THE MARKET-PLACE: Christian Alternatives to Capitalism and Socialism (London Lectures in Contemporary Christianity, 1980) **Brian Griffiths**
Hodder and Stoughton, London 1989 (first printing 1982) 160pp. £5.95
ISBN 0 340 26354 7

> Clear biblical words such as 'love', 'the poor' and 'sharing' are removed from their immediate context to become slogans for wealth redistribution. The pursuit of greater social and economic equality is identified as the necessary expression of equality in the sight of God. While our responsibility to others is at the heart of Jesus' teaching, it is quite wrong to make it synonymous with equality (p. 10).

This quotation from the Preface of Brian Griffiths's book makes clear his general approach to the current debate about the Church and Society: not quite current, indeed, since these are lectures originally given in the Spring of 1980, and much has changed in Britain and the world since then.

Subtitled 'Christian alternatives to capitalism and socialism', successive chapters perceptively examine these two socio-economic systems, the relevance of Christianity, reform of the market economy, and the First World's responsibility towards the Third World. All the main authorities are quoted, from Burke to Marx, Friedman (whose question, 'How can you be a Christian and advocate the market economy?', inspired these lectures), Galbraith *et al.* Republished after seven years, it is surprising that the author has not updated some of his comments or emphasis. The world has lately undergone sensational and rapid change. Socialism is in its death-throes, the market economy triumphant. Here instead, in the language of a past decade, we read of 'the crisis of capitalism', the oil crisis, inflation, the closed shop and wild-cat strike. It has taken a revolution in the Kremlin, as well as Mrs. Thatcher, to force Western socialists to re-examine their premises, as they see private enterprise lauded and hear severe strictures against simple egalitarianism in country after country. *Enrichissez-vous* and the 'trickle-down effect' underlie economic reform in Deng's China too.

What, then, is the specifically Christian view set out here? It is possible to think that such a perspective has no earthly system in view but rests on things above, the human heart, an individual relationship with God, and eternity. For Griffiths, however, this separation of God and Caesar ignores 'the social dimension of the gospel' (p. 74). From a Biblical basis, he adduces the following principles: a positive mandate to create wealth, private property as the norm for society rather than state ownership, a family stake in economic life, relief of poverty rather than pursuit of equality, remedies for economic injustice, a warning against materialism, and personal judgment and accountability. Those who wish to follow the intricate arguments in full should read the book and not just this review, but Griffiths is careful to emphasize that 'Proper structures are desirable in themselves but by themselves they are never a substitute for that vital Christian life which comes from personal commitment to follow Jesus Christ' (p. 99). For those who do not know, the author of these words was Head of Margaret Thatcher's Policy Unit at No. 10 Downing Street.

Bilkent University, Ankara, Turkey VICTOR FUNNELL

MILLENNIAL DREAMS AND MORAL DILEMMAS: Seventh-Day Adventism and Contemporary Ethics Michael Pearson

Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1990 328pp. £32.50
ISBN 0 521 36509 0

The church to which I belong is at a street corner. The opposite corner is occupied by a Seventh-Day Adventist church. Just up the side street is a Jewish synagogue, on the same side as the Adventists. The two churches both use the New Testament and both 'sing hymns to Christ as God,' but one of them, the Adventist, keeps Saturday as the sabbath and avoids ham sandwiches as carefully as do the occupants of the synagogue. In a quaint way, the topographical location of the buildings seems symbolic of their varied outlooks.

Many Evangelical Christians are at a loss to know how to view the Adventists. Is their Church a cult, to be viewed in the same light as the Jehovah's Witnesses or the Mormons, or is it a slightly off-beat variant of Evangelical Christianity, of which there is certainly no shortage today?

On the one hand there is their strange doctrine that in 1844 Christ entered the Heavenly Sanctuary to commence an investigative judgment to determine those worthy to share in Christ's Kingdom and so to escape annihilation. This view was put forward to account for the 'Great Disappointment' of 1844 when William Miller's prophecy of Christ's return proved to be mistaken. There is also the special rôle of the late Ellen White as the prophet of the movement and the strongly legalistic tone of many of her pronouncements.

On the other hand, since 1957 some leading Adventists have played down many of the distinctive features of traditional Adventism. They have emphasized the considerable amount of common ground which Seventh-Day Adventists share with Evangelical Christians. In recent years the Adventist ministerial magazine 'Ministry' has been sent on a complimentary basis to many ministers of other churches and has often created a favourable impression.

There are in fact both traditionalists and progressives in their ranks, the latter questioning many of their distinctive doctrinal and ethical positions and even the special place of Ellen White. Moreover, men like the New Testament scholar, Sakae Kubo, his Old Testament colleague, Gerhardt Hasel, and the historian of doctrine, Edwin Froom, have won the respect of the world of Christian scholarship.

Whatever our verdict on the group as a whole, the present volume makes interesting reading. It is an exercise in historical ethics, written by a Seventh-Day Adventist on the basis of research for which he was awarded an Oxford D.Phil. It deals with the way his co-religionists have handled a number of ethical issues during their one hundred and fifty years' history. It is tempting to compare it with John Stott's *Issues Facing Christians Today* but its scope is more limited, dealing exclusively with sexual ethics, and it does not attempt to define a position, but rather to record and reflect on changing trends.

It shows the way that the advent hope and the understanding of God's people as in the world but not of it, have affected their approach. The great influence of Ellen White's views (which she claimed were based on prophetic revelation) becomes clear on issue after issue. It is also clear, however, that Adventists spent much time examining Scripture and seeking to come to grips with the implications of its teaching for dealing with ethical issues in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The reader is also shown how changes in society and various sociological and psychological factors have produced changes, usually liberalizing, in Seventh-Day Adventist attitudes to ethical questions. There are also comparisons with the way these factors have influenced both Liberal and Evangelical Protestants and also Roman Catholics.

Adventist attitudes to marriage, contraception, abortion, divorce and homosexuality have all been affected by trends in the world around them and, for those expecting the typical authoritarianism usually to be found in sects, there is a surprising amount of difference of opinion and of practice. It is very surprising to find how traditionalist is their attitude to the ministry of

women, in view of the enormous influence Ellen White has undoubtedly had on the movement.

Dr. Pearson's valuable study makes us aware that the Adventist leadership has often avoided making authoritative statements on ethical issues. Whether or not they have been affected by philosophical Pragmatism is open to question, but there is plenty of evidence of the pragmatic cast of mind which is so common in America. Without doubt there has also been from time to time an avoidance of dogmatism in the interests of unity in the Church. Change has sometimes come through reassessment of Biblical teaching.

If present trends continue and the more liberalizing tendencies gain the upper hand, Seventh-Day Adventism may well lose most of its distinctive features before too many years have passed.

43 Camphill Avenue, Glasgow GEOFFREY GROGAN

SALVATION The Bible and Roman Catholicism William Webster
Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh 1991 183pp. £3.50 pb. ISBN 0 85151 571 1

This book is made up of three distinct parts. Part One contains seven chapters in which key Roman Catholic beliefs and the Bible are compared and contrasted. Part Two, consisting of four chapters, contains a presentation of the biblical gospel. The third part, of some forty pages, contains no less than seven appendices each of which lists or quotes the official sources or authoritative statements of the Roman church on the particular subjects addressed within parts one and two of the book.

The author, a former Roman Catholic, is qualified to and speaks with authority as step by step he analyses what both the church of Rome and the Bible say about tradition, the mass, the priesthood, confession and penance, the eucharist, baptism and salvation. The first and third parts of the book are informative and challenging. The second is lucid and moving.

The book had a profound effect upon me. First, it challenged my complacency. In these days of ecumenical advance we are apt to forget that at heart Romanism is another gospel. Mr. Webster makes that abundantly clear in a most gracious and winsome manner.

Secondly, it moved me to tears. I found myself weeping for Roman Catholics and praying that they would know the glorious gospel which Mr. Webster presents in such a powerful way in the second part of this work. And I found myself filled with tears of joy and thankfulness as I realized afresh just how much God so loved me/us that he gave his one and only Son. May God give you a similar experience as you read this most useful title.

St. Stephen's Vicarage, Low Elswick, Newcastle upon Tyne GEORGE CURRY

CHRISTIANS IN COMMUNION Paul Avis

Geoffrey Chapman Mowbray, London, 1990, 150pp., £7.95 pb.
ISBN 0 264 67203 8

The literature on inter-Church dialogue is now becoming a flood of new publications, dealing in the main with what ecumenists like to call the 'reception' of the various Agreed Statements by the Churches which originally commissioned them. The present book adds another contribution to what is essentially the ongoing A.R.C.I.C. discussions. It starts from the premise that 'communion' is now the major buzz-word in ecumenical circles, whose meaning and implications must be clarified.

Paul Avis believes that intercommunion between churches should be based on a common baptism, which he sees as fully constitutive of Church membership. He rejects any reliance on subsequent confirmation, or on anything which might necessitate a narrower assertion of faith and commitment than the initial one entered into at baptism. In support of his position he marshalls an impressive array of authorities, ranging from Scripture ('one Lord, one faith, one baptism') to a full range of modern ecumenical theologians.

One of the snags in his approach is that it is not immediately clear what baptism entails. At no point does he discuss whether baptism should involve conscious, responsible commitment on the part of the recipient, though given that he is operating within an Anglican framework, it must be assumed that he does not consider this to be essential. The problem then arises that there are many baptized people who are not members of any church and do not believe the gospel – are we, as Christians, united with them? Dr. Avis does not discuss this question, but it is of fundamental importance to his position. If we ought to be able to have communion with Roman Catholics and Orthodox merely on the ground that we share a common baptism, why not with the lapsed and hostile as well?

It is true that in his seventh chapter, Dr. Avis writes at length about the need for communion in the gospel, which he (laudably) understands as a need for agreement on the question of justification by faith, but this comes rather late in the day, and is not properly integrated with what he says elsewhere. In any case, he argues for 'latitude' in the interpretation of this doctrine, whatever that is supposed to mean!

At many points, Dr. Avis must be commended for taking recent ecumenical bodies to task for their vagueness of language and inability to discern what the main points of discussion ought to be. He is not afraid to point out that the doctrine of justification was ignored by Anglican theologians for far too long, and that many of them seem to have no idea of what their own church's ecclesiology is. He launches into a stringent, though fairly polite, attack on Anglo-Catholic notions of the Church, and denounces Newman's understanding of the Reformers (or rather, lack of it), in a way which is quite refreshing.

On other points, this book is less satisfactory. Dr. Avis has a sacramental view of the Church which puts doctrinal agreement very much in second place. This is a view which does not commend itself to Roman Catholics or to the Orthodox, but which he believes is the correct interpretation of Anglican 'comprehensiveness'. He occasionally recognizes that Evangelicals will not

be happy with that sort of position either, but ignores them on the ground that they are unrepresentative of Anglicanism! More seriously, he also ignores the fact that the 'one baptism' of Scripture is dependent on the one Lord and the one faith – without these, there can be no 'Baptism' at all! Most of his quotes from the Reformers and others are taken out of this vitally important context, and so rendered meaningless.

It is also apparent that his approach to Scripture is unacceptable to Evangelicals. He has a habit of dividing up the Pauline Epistles, for example, and of dismissing the parts of Scripture that he does not like by saying that they are culturally conditioned, and so on. This is not compatible with an Evangelical understanding of Biblical authority, which plays little or no rôle in his thought. In his discussion of the ordination of women (which of course, he favours), he does not even mention Evangelical objections, taken though they are from the New Testament.

Finally, it is not altogether clear whether Dr. Avis understands the teaching of the Church as primarily a revelation from God, or whether he sees it as primarily a human construct. Sometimes it appears as the one, and sometimes as the other! Once again, we are brought face to face with the question of Scriptural authority as a divine revelation, and we realize just how small is the place which Dr. Avis accords to this.

The Evangelical reader must recognize that Dr. Avis has a different standpoint from the one we are used to, but once this is understood, there are many good things which can be gleaned from this short but stimulating book.

Oak Hill College, London N.14 GERALD BRAY

ISLAM IN THE MODERN WORLD Norman Anderson

Inter Varsity Press, Leicester, 1990 280pp. no price ISBN 0 85111 414 8

If there is one thing which has become increasingly clear over the last decade or so, it is that the challenge of militant Islam is now one of the greatest dangers facing the Christian Church. Marxism, which only recently was regarded as a far more serious threat, has now all but disappeared, but the teachings of Mohammed continue to inspire millions, and to be used in warfare against the countries of Western Europe and North America. Muslim fundamentalists have taken control of Iran, have destroyed the peace of the Lebanon, and are a constant menace to Islamic rulers throughout the Middle East. It is therefore vital for Christians to be well-informed about this religion, so near to, yet so far from their own, and to be able to make some response to it.

To help us in this task, Sir Norman Anderson has put together a study of Islam which, though brief, is extremely informative, and concentrates on the main issues at stake. After an introductory overview of Islam as a whole, he concentrates on Muslim theology and law, which he sees as the twin sciences of Islam, and then adds two chapters on mysticism and fundamentalism. His study of the Islamic mystics is especially interesting, as this subject is far too little known in the West, and he demonstrates clearly the close connexion between fundamentalism and the desire to enforce the Sharia Law in Islamic countries.

At all times Sir Norman is careful to point out the many inconsistencies

which there are in Islam, caused in part by the multiplication of schools and sects, and in part by varying degrees of Western influence. He is confident, for example, that Muslim fundamentalism will eventually be defeated, because a majority of Muslims will eventually see that its demands are not in their best interests.

The second section is an examination of those Christian doctrines least congenial to a Muslim mind - the incarnation, the atonement and the resurrection. They are taken from one of Sir Norman's earlier books, *The Mystery of the Incarnation*, though with a certain amount of adaptation for this volume. These chapters are a very good defence of traditional Christian teaching in the face of recent criticism from liberal scholars in the West, though it is not altogether clear what they are doing in a book of this kind. They seem to be addressed to Muslims who want to understand Christianity better, which is fine, except that the rest of the book seems to be aimed at Christians wishing to understand Islam! Perhaps the material they contain could have been integrated more closely with the discussion of Islam (in the form of a debate between the two religions?) and not left to stand in isolation.

The book concludes with an epilogue which sketches out some of the areas in which Christians and Muslims can perhaps enter into dialogue. There is also an excursus on the so-called 'Gospel of Barnabas', an apocryphal work which is often (erroneously) attributed to an Arab source, and which is frequently used by Muslims in their polemic against Christianity, because it presents enormous distortions of the true Gospels, and also claims to predict the coming of Mohammed.

It is greatly to be hoped that this book will spur other Christians to pursue the study of Islam in the same spirit of faithfulness to the Gospel as shown by Sir Norman Anderson. We are in great need of a detailed study and refutation of the Quran and its claims, from which more popular works can be derived and circulated among ordinary Christians. What stands out here is that many Christian believers are woefully ignorant of their faith, especially on matters relating to the Trinity and the Incarnation, which are particularly repugnant to Muslims. They are thus very poorly placed to offer any kind of explanation of their own beliefs, which might help them to share the Gospel with those from an Islamic background.

Sir Norman's work is much to be commended in this respect, and deserves a wide readership. Is it too much to hope that in a subsequent edition, there might be a bibliography, or guide to further reading on the subject?

Oak Hill College, London N.14 GERALD BRAY

RESTORING THE VISION Anglican Evangelicals Speak Out
Ed. Melvin Tinker
Marc, Eastbourne 1990 286pp. £8.99 ISBN 1 85424 048 X

Of many recent books on the modern Evangelical movement this is one of the best. It is a valuable investigation into and declaration of the conservative viewpoint in the light of dangers it faces to-day. Thirteen scholars here present to the public outstanding essays on the nature of Evangelicalism. All reveal a deep love of the Anglican Church and a concern for its future. The

subjects they cover are pertinent and important; inter-faith dialogue, social ethics, the place of women in the church, and the primacy of preaching. From the stand-point of scripture a sound diagnosis is given of hermeneutics, pluralism, liberal theology, the Charismatic Movement, and ecumenism as they confront Evangelicals. It is difficult to fault any of the authors' treatments of their subject. All are shot-through with Bible doctrines and principles by which they allow the scriptures to speak for themselves. If there is one weakness it is the strong stress on laocization which tends to degrade the nature of the established ministry, as if the Christian layman has rights and privileges of the ordained man. This is a sensitive approach to the divisive issues which face Evangelicals and it merits close attention on almost every page. It deserves a wide circulation and serious consideration by all schools of thought within and outside the Church of England.

5 Green Lane, Clapham, Bedford ARTHUR BENNETT

WINGED WORDS TO GET IT ACROSS Leonard Ashton

Churchman Publishing Ltd. Worthing 1990 122 pp. £3.99 pb.
ISBN 1 85093 165 8

This book by the one-time Chaplain General of the R.A.F. and Bishop of Cyprus and the Gulf is unique and unusual. It is an attempt to communicate the truths of the Christian Faith in thought-forms and terms that young people can understand. Much of it was intended for the chaplains and members of the Air Force over a period of thirty years, and includes mostly apologetic addresses and writings spiced by a number of poems. Ashton's 'Thoughts on the Christian Year', centred on the Church's main festivals, are particularly valuable. Simple, yet profound, serious, yet practical they offer subjects for preachers, and spiritual food for the layman. His 'Chaplain's Column' with sub-headings of 'A Date for Daddy', 'The Reluctant Cherub' 'Omnibus', (a title for the church), and 'Pets' Corner' are particularly witty. Of more serious note, the section on what 'Uncle Amos' has to say on matters of general interest such as worship, faith, riches, and sacraments give much room for thought. His 'Bishop's Papers on Cyprus and the Gulf', and his searching critique of Charisma with its dangers of exclusiveness, isolation and pride need to be given serious attention. A touch of allegory appears in such papers as 'Mr. Paltry Goes to Paradise' that is both entertaining and instructive. In this book clergy will find much interest in what Ashton writes of worship and mission, while the laity will not find a dull page in it. The Bishop has a human and humorous touch in what he writes which if read seriously will increase personal faith in Christ and a desire to live more closely to him.

5 Green Lane, Clapham, Bedford ARTHUR BENNETT

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