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# Book Reviews

RANALD MACAULAY reviews

## **THE HUMAN JOURNEY: Christianity and Modern Consciousness** Bruce Wilson

Albatross Books, Australia 1980 A\$5.95  
Lion Publishing 1980 318pp £1.95

Aust. ISBN 0 86760 003 9  
UK ISBN 0 85648 333 8

The greater the expectations, the greater the disappointments! Expectations because we have needed such a book for too long: an apologetic paperback directed at the modern, unbelieving world, extensive enough to deal with the important questions, yet not too complicated. This it purports to be. As the author says, its intention is 'to be *popular* and non-academic' (p.145, my italics). So no index and almost no footnotes, the argument being sustained only by careful exposition of the theme and a commendable use of illustration.

To find such a book within the evangelical world is to find gold!

The author sees himself as a guide to those who 'hardly know where to begin— people who do not know where they are now' (p.159). So he carefully avoids complicated terminology and tries to explain each step as he goes along. He admits that he uses 'jargon' in the interests of simplification (p.158)— something which must be taken into account in any criticism of terminology and style, for his intention is praiseworthy. He wants to help those who have a problem with Christianity, who find the basic ideas and language difficult, or who have been influenced, say, by positivism so that things unseen are treated as things 'incredible' (cf. Acts 26:8 NIV).

This is good. The chief purpose of apologetics must always be to 'make the gospel clear', to remove the stumbling blocks that litter human society as a result of man's turning from worship of the Creator to worship of the creature.

So he begins with the uncertainty which exists in the modern world about 'personal identity'. He shows the consequences of a materialistic 'map of reality' and leads up to what he calls 'a hole in reality' (p.67). This is personality (p.74), 'which "rises above" our natural and human environment' and is 'the clue to our real identities' (p.70). Very helpfully, he guards against the impression that this is a 'God of the gaps' idea: 'on the contrary, the transcendent self is the *explaining* mystery of human being, not its unexplained mystery... It is not a leftover which we discover at the end of these creative processes; it is there all the time, doing the thinking and the understanding' (p.71, 72, my italics).

So, in order to understand 'reality', this great reality (the transcendent self as he calls it) must be accounted for. But within what 'map of reality'?

Part 2 looks at inadequate alternatives: relativism, secularism, Marxism, and pantheism. Again, this is in the main very helpful. His critique of the first three is informed and strong, and his approach towards eastern religions gentle yet firm. He rightly avoids the mistake of saying that *no* truth resides in false systems. His comments on meditation and mantras, though, are troubling (p.154, 155).

Part 3 is entitled 'The Christian Way'. It contains first a brief summary of the main teaching of the Bible: creation, fall, judgement, salvation through Christ, faith; then concludes with a practical section: the Christian community, prayer, individual morality, social morality.

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It is in this third part that the disappointments really begin, though there are sections which are good.

*Creation and Fall* No apologetics in our moment of history can evade the issues raised by the Bible's teachings on creation, the fall, and judgement. As the book itself says: 'A Christianity which shirks the problem of pain and suffering does not deserve the name' (p.194). So the author addresses himself to them. Despite, however, his clear insistence that theology need not, and must not, 'accommodate itself to modern knowledge... for [it] is usually a muddle-headed mishmash of half-digested science and secularism' (p.170), the author in fact does just that more seriously than almost anything else produced by evangelicals in recent years—which is saying something! He goes further than David Winter's *But This I Can Believe* (Hodder 1980), and further even than George Carey's *I Believe in Man* (Hodder 1977).

He points out that 'all suffering is a consequence of human rebellion against God' (p.197). Well and good. But what can this mean when the fall is removed from history? 'The beautiful biblical story of Adam and Eve... is not history, science, or fairy-tale, but dramatized theology' (p.178). And again: 'Theology does not treat these stories (Genesis 3) as historically true (in the modern sense) but as theologically true' (p.209); 'Obviously the description of Adam and Eve's fallen condition is a description of the reality *we live in*' (p.210, my italics)... 'In the biblical story Adam... means human. This is not a insignificant detail. Its intention is to say that each of us is Adam, that Adam's story is *our* personal story as well as the story of humanity. We are responsible for all suffering and pain' (p.216).

Of course our sin does add to human suffering, and all human sin has done this subsequent to Adam. But the question is really: Was there a person Adam, an individual, who rebelled within an original perfection of body and spirit? To say, as the author does, that there *was* a fall, that 'humans did reject God' (p.209) etc., when an historical root for this is denied, is not Christian theology: 'The biblical story specifically states that the fall took place in *another reality*—symbolised by the paradisaical garden...' (p.211, my italics).

This concept of 'another reality' is perhaps even more worrying, for the argument is not only that suffering results from the fall, but *time* also! (p.211): 'In an immensely profound sense, time is a measure of the tragic existence of self-conscious spirits in this present universe' (p.213); 'The Christian reality map claims this tragedy exists because we called *time* and death on our own heads—by rebelling against the eternal Being who created us' (ibid., my italics). We all, including scientists, 'can only describe the good creation now reversed and fallen into evil—including the evil of time' (p.211).

One feels the author has manoeuvred himself into this very complicated line of reasoning simply because of his fundamental accommodation to science: 'If theology insisted that the story of the fall was part of the history of this universe as it is now, its explanation could only be valid if the theory of evolution was false. Of course this is possible; some scientists do believe the theory is false. But as this appears less than likely, it is not a course that will be pursued here' (p.211).

But not only is it the usual problem in such presentations of Genesis 1–3 (the current evangelical orthodoxy?), namely the problem of explaining how, if man's origin was evolutionary, there could ever have been an 'historical' fall. Since even time is a consequence of the fall, within what 'reality' (one wants to know) did all this happen? And what relation does it bear to present physical reality? It seems suspiciously like a new gnosticism, like the idea of the Christ coming, but not in the flesh (cf. 1 John 2:22; 4:2,3).

Nor is it surprising, given such confusion, that the book presents evil and

suffering in human experience as a necessary, moulding experience, with God getting better results out of fallen man's experience because of this suffering than otherwise (p.224).

All positions which deny the break in human history at the fall (NB *real* history) are forced towards this conclusion, as for example Teilhard de Chardin. It is perhaps noteworthy that a) Bruce Wilson's exposition resembles de Chardin's, and b) George Carey's parallel section (*ibid.* p.17) actually includes a modest commendation of de Chardin. If an historical fall is denied, as it seems to be in these cases, then it follows that God is the direct author of evil, and evil has therefore to be made to seem beneficial. But this is *not* the teaching of Scripture, needless to say, either of God's character or of his creation.

*Judgement* The author asserts: 'That each of us will individually face the judgement of God upon sins is clearly disclosed by Christian revelation' (p.227). Nevertheless, his view both of judgement and of atonement is exceedingly weak. In the first case, he recoils from the scriptural emphasis upon the 'wrath of God' (Romans 1)—that God's active judgement of sin is a demonstration of his goodness, rather than a denial of it (Romans 3:25). Therefore, damnation becomes 'self-damnation' (p.231). It is the sinner who flees from God: 'God continues to do nothing except to be himself', i.e. perfect love and goodness (*ibid.*). Therefore, not surprisingly, the author favours annihilationism (p.233). Perhaps it is this muting of the biblical teaching on judgement which makes the treatment of Christ's atonement so uncertain and unsatisfactory (p.243).

Other aspects of the book are troubling: the Scriptures are too frequently related to human experience rather than supernatural revelation, e.g. 'The people we today call Jews were grasped by the idea that matter and time originated in spirit' (p.178). 'Without the nature miracles of Jesus the Christian belief about creation would lack substance' (p.180)—a revealing comment on the author's view of creation? Referring to the state as a 'necessary evil' is surely unbiblical (p.309).

All this, within a book published simultaneously by an Australian company and a leading evangelical publisher in the UK, makes one wince. How could we have been reduced to such confused and confusing theology? If the views expressed about the fall are now representative of evangelicalism in this country, one can only lament, 'Whither evangelicalism?'. The name of the Australian company, Albatross Books, is perhaps uncomfortably appropriate! Lion Publishing could have done worse than ponder this strange (and admittedly superstitious) name.

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**THE DAILY STUDY BIBLE** general editor John C. L. Gibson

**Genesis** Volume 1 **John C. L. Gibson**

214pp. £2.95

ISBN 0 7152 0465 3

**Leviticus** **G. A. F. Knight**

172pp. £2.95

ISBN 0 7152 0479 1

**Daniel** **D. S. Russell**

234pp. £2.95

ISBN 0 7152 0464 5

All published in both hardcover and paperback by The Westminster Press, USA 1981 and in paperback only by The Saint Andrew Press, UK 1981.

The three books before me are the first-fruits of a plan to provide for the OT a

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series of studies comparable with the series provided by Dr Barclay for the NT. The aim is to introduce the reader to some of the most important issues of modern OT scholarship, and to help people to find in the OT a living and relevant force in their everyday lives. It is in the light of these aims that I comment on one of them: the book of Daniel, by David Russell.

I am drawn to David Russell's book in particular: first, because it is good to have something from the pen of a man who has been for many years engaged in furious ecclesiastical activity; and secondly, because there are several references to the books of Walter Lüthi, a much neglected theologian from the earlier part of this century, whose works I have always prized.

The first aim has undoubtedly been achieved. David Russell is well up in modern OT scholarship and conveys the fruits of it in an unostentatious way.

The second aim is clearly more difficult to fulfil, given the seeming remoteness of this enigmatic book from the present day, yet it is expounded in a way which draws the attention of the reader to its main theme, viz. the place of the dissident in the totalitarian state. There is, alas, no doubt of the relevance of this particular theme in the contemporary world, and I am grateful to the author for making it so impressively clear. I have no space to comment on the other volumes, but if they are as successful as this one in achieving the aims of the series, I commend them unhesitatingly to individual students and to study groups.

If I have one criticism, it relates to the format rather than the content. The books are divided up into as many as seventy sections. This in one sense makes for easy reading, but makes it difficult to achieve or retain a grasp of the book as a whole. Perhaps the grouping of these small sections, under larger headings, would enable the reader to perceive more easily the general drift of the book and the totality of the message. This does not, however, detract from the usefulness of the series. The volumes are good value at £2.95 each.

Bishophthorpe, York

+STUART EBOR:

## **LOVE TO THE LOVELESS: The Story and Message of Hosea** **Derek Kidner**

IVP 1981 142pp. £3.25

ISBN 0 85110 703 6

With the prospect of a book by Derek Kidner on Hosea due to arrive, I was tempted to begin immediately on the review. I knew it would be beautifully written, soundly argued and clearly expounded, and suspected it might be the best book for someone opening Hosea for the first time. The book's arrival confirmed all this; it is a worthy addition to a very useful series.

Kidner adopts a traditional view of Hosea's marriage: he married a real harlot and had children with strange, significant names. When his wife left him and sank to a terrible state of degradation—a debtor, a slave or a prostitute?—Hosea was told to go again and love her. The author argues that God's love rekindled Hosea's: it was not that Hosea loved his wife and perceived that God must be like that. Anyone who has read Rowley on the subject of Hosea's marriage will appreciate that not all possibilities could be considered, but that the economy with which the author has presented his case is a masterly achievement (pp.40-4). Good use is made here, as elsewhere, of footnotes to comment on some of the very difficult textual problems in Hosea, although inevitably some are passed over.

Perhaps the most difficult task in writing a commentary (or expository book)

is to sustain the quality through passages which apparently have little new to add to the overall message. Kidner seems always to have something helpful and often penetrating to say, although I wish he had been allowed (or taken!) more space. The excellent book by Alec Motyer on the shorter and more straightforward book of Amos has 208 pages, whereas Hosea has only 142.

On 8:11, where the RSV reads, 'Because Ephraim has multiplied altars for sinning they have become to him altars for sinning', Kidner adopts an emendation of the vowels to produce the NIV's, 'Because...altars for sin-offering...altars for sinning.' Those who would prefer to keep the Massoretic text and alter only an accent might like to have known about H. W. Wolff's rendering: 'Indeed, Ephraim has multiplied altars. He uses them for sinning. Altars for sinning!' I am sure the author has good reasons for his preference but I should like to know what they are. Nevertheless, a second reading of a section often reveals that there was more packed in than it seemed.

An extremely useful innovation is the section of addenda: two maps (showing 'Assyria and the West' and 'The Break-up of Israel'), a chronological table (with diagrammatic arrows!), and a 'Bird's-Eye View of the Book'.

If I were invited to play Desert Island Commentaries, and allowed two for each OT book, then, notwithstanding the fine commentaries now available, I should be quite happy with Wolff and Kidner.

Oak Hill College, London

MICHAEL BUTTERWORTH

## **ARCHAEOLOGY, THE RABBIS AND EARLY CHRISTIANITY**

**Eric M. Meyers and James F. Strange**

SCM Press 1981 207pp. £4.50

ISBN 0 334 00013 0

This is perhaps the most thought-provoking book on NT archaeology for many years. A Jewish scholar of the archaeology of early Judaism, and a Christian specialist in early Christian remains, both currently working in Israel, combine to give their views on the problems to be met. This is not a systematic survey, but includes many new details. They seek to counter the trend in which the archaeological context is neglected in theological and textual studies. Three type-sites are examined. First, urban Jerusalem, with its grid-plan of streets to house 40,000 inhabitants (double at festival time). The discoveries at the decorated HulDAH (=Beautiful?) Gate, entered up a ramp, are discussed. Secondly, the village culture of Nazareth, of which little contemporary with the first century is known; then the agricultural town of Capernaum. Details include 'Peter's House' and the private 'prayer houses' or 'house churches' used before the third-century AD as 'synagogues' (assemblies). Only thereafter are specifically designed places of worship for each tradition attested. This study undermines the earlier theories of the development of synagogues and churches in Palestine.

A chapter on the inscriptions (mostly marking burials) shows that while Greek reflected the social status of urban Judah, it never totally penetrated the Aramaic-speaking countryside. Hebrew, though in the minority, flourished throughout the NT period, preserving the identity and traditions of the Jews. This was most marked in upper Galilee—a conservative centre of literary activity and material culture. The region was a 'crossroads', and, like Jesus Christ, never isolated from the world around.

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The authors are cautious, but sometimes speculative, in discerning evidence of early Christianity. They emphasize the difficulty of distinguishing Jewish or Jewish-Christian burials (before Constantine), or the advent of symbols, narrative art and figural representation in synagogues. These chapters, with that on the early Jewish and Christian attachment to the 'Holy Land', should remind us of the problems of interpreting archaeological evidence in a multi-racial and many-faith situation.

Anyone wishing to be 'up-to-date' in the subject must read this book.

School of Oriental and African Studies, London

D. J. WISEMAN

## THE CHARISMATIC LEADER AND HIS FOLLOWERS

### Martin Hengel

T. and T. Clark 1981 111pp. £7.95

ISBN 0 567 03001 6

Tübingen offers us here a learned, lucid, positive study of what it meant to follow Jesus. Starting from the shocking saying 'Let the dead bury their dead' Hengel examines in detail the claims of Jesus and his demands upon his disciples. This saying, he argues, gives the strongest evidence of authenticity, since it can hardly stem from the tradition of the Jewish or the later community. It demands a break with law and custom which can only be explained on the basis of Jesus' unique authority as the proclaimer of the imminent kingdom of God. The relationship of Jesus to his disciples is not that of rabbi to pupil, nor that of apocalyptic prophet to the nation. His is a charismatic and messianic authority. Hengel's particular thesis is that Jesus calls on the nation to repent, but he does not call on them to follow him. That call is given to a chosen few, and it is quite literal and physical: they are to accompany him in his wanderings and perils in the short time before the End.

Of course there are some gospel texts which virtually equate 'following' with 'believing', and which show 'following' to be more than merely physical; and there are texts which show the coming of the kingdom to be by stages (of which the crucifixion was to be of supreme importance) and that the End was not to be immediate. Hengel eliminates these by the current critical methods. If it should be true that he who initiated the incarnation safeguarded its recording, we should be bound to modify some of Hengel's conclusions.

Oxford

JOHN WENHAM

## HISTORY AND CRITICISM OF THE MARCAN HYPOTHESIS

**Hans-Herbert Stoldt** translated Donald L. Niewyk

first published in Germany 1977

Mercer University Press, USA 1980

ISBN 0 86554 002 0

T. and T. Clark 1981 302pp. £7.95

ISBN 0 567 09210 7

'The synoptic problem is one of the most difficult problems that has engaged the human mind' (p.xii). For nearly a century it had been generally thought that that problem had been finally solved through recognizing the priority of Mark and postulating the existence of Q. Now the question is again in ferment. Members of the Synoptic Problem Seminar of Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas hold at least six distinct views as to its solution. Dissatisfaction with the

regnant theory is strongest in the English-speaking world and is least in evidence in German circles. What gives Stoldt's work particular importance is that it comes from Germany.

After an interesting introduction by W. R. Farmer, Stoldt gives an exposition of the work of the chief architects of the Marcan hypothesis (Wilke, Weisse, Holtzmann, Wernle, Bernhardt Weiss) and then criticizes the main arguments in turn. This he does convincingly, except in the case of the argument for the Petrine origin of Mark, where curiously he doubts that Papias' reference to Mark's writing is a reference to Mark's gospel.

The weakness of the book is that it virtually assumes that the Griesbach hypothesis, which dominated the first half of the nineteenth century, is the only alternative to the Marcan hypothesis. The Griesbach theory, however, has grave difficulties. All the alternatives must be examined afresh. We can be grateful to Stoldt for his cogent challenge to current critical orthodoxy.

Oxford

JOHN WENHAM

### **PAUL THE APOSTLE** Hugh Montefiore

Collins Fount Paperbacks 1981 125pp. £1.50

ISBN 0 00 626389 5

A writer on Paul who knows in his bones what the apostle was getting at has an advantage over those who, however great their scholarly apparatus, can assess him only from the outside. Bishop Montefiore enjoys an additional advantage over many of us: 'Paul', he says, 'holds a special place in my personal affections, partly perhaps because of temperament, partly because I belong to the same race as he did and also came to Christ through a sudden conversion.'

This book is based on two courses of lectures delivered to hearers who were not theological specialists. Paul is viewed successively as a man, as an apostle, as a writer and as a theologian. He is presented as a real human being, in whose character the grace of Christ progressively worked wonders: 'It took Paul many years before he fully matured as a Christian.' Our main source of information about him lies in his own writings, with regard to which Bishop Montefiore takes an unusually conservative line: he holds the view, which he believes to be gaining ground today, that even the Pastorals are 'genuinely Pauline'. The evidence of Acts is not overlooked, although 'Luke sat fairly light to historical accuracy, and made it subservient to his main objectives in writing.' The danger of systematizing Paul's theology is recognized, but 'it is useful to see Paul's thinking as a whole' and appreciate what 'was certainly an enormously impressive achievement.'

A concluding chapter considers 'Paul for Today'. Bishop Montefiore is conscious of the difficulty of making the cultural transition between Paul's age and ours, but is not so pessimistic about the possibility of making it as Dennis Nineham is. 'The basic themes of Paul span the different cultures across the centuries' and, as in earlier days, a return to Paul could well bring us a 'time of renewal and recovery today.'

Buxton, Derbyshire

F. F. BRUCE

### **PAULINE STUDIES** edited D. A. Hagner and M. J. Harris

Paternoster Press 1980 293pp. £10.00

ISBN 0 85364 271 0

These sixteen essays, by former pupils, add up to a worthy tribute to Prof. F. F.



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Bruce on his seventieth birthday, reflecting his lifelong love for Paul and his letters. Certain pieces stood out, for me, as having something fresh and interesting to say (I often disagreed, but that is no matter): examples would be Paul Garnet's 'Qumran Light on Pauline Soteriology', David Wenham's careful discussion of Romans 7 (more impressive than Robert Gundry's attempt to reinstate Dodd's view of the same passage), Donald Hagner's 'Paul in Modern Jewish Thought' and Ronald Fung's argument that justification, being present in 1 and 2 Corinthians even though the context is not the polemical one of Romans and Galatians, is clearly of more than *ad hoc* importance for Paul. Some of the essays—for instance Stephen Smalley's comparison of the Christ-Christian relationship in Paul and John—were tantalizingly brief, despite a wealth of (bibliographically useful) footnotes. And some were content with formal or lexical analysis without drawing any startling theological conclusions: e.g. Swee-Hwa Quek on 'Adam and Christ', Moises Silva on *Ginōskein* (heavy going, this), Paul Beasley-Murray on Colossians 1:15–20, and Peter O'Brien (yet once more) on 'Thanksgiving' within Pauline theology. A change of gear is provided by Bruce Demarest's interesting discussion of 'Process Theology and the Pauline Doctrine of the Incarnation', though (sadly) the 'incarnational' passages in Paul are now more controversial than he implies. Colin Hemer patiently works his way through some tricky Pauline chronology; Ronald Clements examines, and somewhat clarifies, the Isaianic background to Paul's 'remnant' doctrine; Margaret Howe concludes that Paul was more in favour of women's lib than the writer of *Paul and Thecla* made out; John Drane comes out near Bornkamm's position, though with a characteristic twist of his own, on why Paul wrote Romans; and Murray Harris painstakingly argues that Titus 2:13 predicates divinity of Jesus. Whatever one thinks of the various conclusions reached, these essays will be of great interest to all NT students and specialists. They bear a recognizable stamp: that of the patient study of sources, attention to detail, resolute grappling with problems, and reverence before the ultimate subject-matter—in short, Christian scholarship—that we have come to associate with the teacher in whose honour they are now published.

McGill University, Montreal

N. T. WRIGHT

## COMMENTARY ON ROMANS Ernst Käsemann

translated G. W. Bromiley

first published in Germany 1973

SCM Press 1980 428pp. £12.50

ISBN 0 334 01947 8

I thought it was hard reading Käsemann until I tried to write about him. He is a German of the Germans, initiated early into critical thought, brought up at the feet of Bultmann: as touching theology, a radical Lutheran; as touching zeal, a persecutor of Catholicism, 'enthusiasm', popular piety and 'salvation history'. This alone would be enough to tell us that, when we grapple with his *magnum opus*, we will find it challenging, exciting, frustrating, controversial and altogether a worthy representative of the traditions in which it stands. But Käsemann is more: he is, in his own way to be sure, one who has struggled to read Paul and think his thoughts after him, and who has spared no effort at every level of academic theological discipline to enable Paul's original and authentic gospel to be heard afresh. Käsemann's *Romans* reminds me of nothing so much as Barth's: perverse, difficult, gritty, yet constantly coming alive with fresh and brilliant exegesis and theological exposition. Some might

say that this is the sort of impression that Paul himself makes, and probably always made.

There are dozens of issues which cry out for discussion, and I shall be examining them in a forthcoming article for *Themelios*. But one or two points can be made here by way of introduction for the reader who has not tried Käsemann yet but feels it is time he did.

First, as to theological substance, Käsemann finds the centre of Paul's thought to be justification, based on Christology (by which he usually means the *theologia crucis*), and understood as a polemical tool against 'the pious', of whom the Jews are (merely) the chief example. God justifies not the good, pious people, but the ungodly (does Käsemann come close to suggesting that it is better to *remain* 'ungodly'?). This is the key to his account of chs. 9-11, in which Israel acts out the fate of 'the pious'. Käsemann's own polemic hits out at those modern Christians—including what English speakers would call 'evangelicals'—whom he regards as too much at ease, materially and politically as well as theologically, in Zion. His emphasis on 'the righteousness of God', understood (wrongly, I believe) as God's 'salvation-creating power', leads him to wide-ranging statements about God's total victory over the world and the necessity of submitting to God's sovereignty in all areas of life. This delineation of the *centre* of Paul's thought leads to a critique of the *outlying areas*: this process, which Käsemann knows to be risky, involves (*inter alia*) chipping away at the bits of 'apocalyptic mythology' (e.g. 5:12-21; 11:25ff.; etc.) which Paul has apparently not assimilated properly into his mature thought. This kind of talk will no doubt be baffling to many who are unused to looking for Paul's apocalyptic background in the first place, let alone to demythologizing it when they find it: a case can be made out, however, not altogether dissimilar to Käsemann's, for a history-of-religions approach like this as one element in the exegesis of Romans. But this approach, as part of Käsemann's overall method, dictated in turn by his view of the content, leads him into difficulties (not least his treatment of Israel and the covenant, which remained more important for Paul than radical Lutheranism can afford to admit) which pose questions for the whole structure. But it is at least good to know that there is such a structure: that, unlike the many commentators who deal in little piecemeal units and make no attempt to see the thing whole, Käsemann is struggling to see Paul, his background, his life and work, and Romans in particular, as one enormous and integrated totality. There is a theological toughness and integrity about this book which is to be respected despite all disagreements.

Second, as to method: the book is very difficult to *use* as a commentary. Generalized running heads, layout in large sections and the total absence of indices mean that, for quick reference to particular passages, one should really work right through and pencil in one's own signposts. Having eschewed the excursus, preferring to follow the line of the argument, Käsemann nevertheless writes extended essays which are excurses in all but name, and which appear and disappear without warning in amongst general remarks, short detailed notes and a wealth of bibliographical detail (unhelpfully printed in brackets in the main text). His characteristic swipe at 'the impatient, who are concerned only about results or practical application' hardly justifies making life this difficult for all his readers alike. But to work through the whole book—perhaps at five pages a time, spread over three months—would be of great value to any student or minister who is prepared to be stretched and stimulated, to learn and to disagree. For such, and for any others who may be interested, a final tip: the first eight paragraphs of the exposition of 10:5-13 (pp. 284ff.) form as clear a

summary of what Käsemann is trying to say as one is likely to come across in his writings.

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N. T. WRIGHT

**FUNDAMENTAL THEOLOGY Gerald O'Collins SJ**

Darton, Longman and Todd 1981 283pp. £5.95

ISBN 0 232 51522 0

In recent theology, attention has been given to fundamental theological issues of faith. This has been especially true of Roman Catholic scholarship which, since Vatican II, has rigorously examined its own presuppositions. This work by Gerald O'Collins, professor of theology at the Gregorian University, Rome, is a major contribution to current research in this area. Without question this is Dr O'Collins's most important book to date and he deserves widespread recognition for such a helpful and constructive volume.

But what actually is 'Fundamental Theology'? It is, according to O'Collins, the study of revelation, hermeneutics and faith, set within the parameters of faith, experience and reason. These elements are thoroughly studied, and the author argues that theology needs to be 'faithful' as well as 'rational'. *Fides quaerens intellectum* (faith seeking understanding) assumes that theology commences from the standpoint of faith. Rationalistic theology which despises experience is therefore rejected as unfaithful theology. Yet, the author insists, rational theology is essential: otherwise theology will lapse into mindless piety.

It is in the area of the relation of Scripture, tradition and *magisterium* of the church that the book makes its own distinctive contribution to ecumenical scholarship, and not by any stretch of the imagination will the author's conclusions receive unanimous acceptance. First, the primacy and centrality of Scripture is asserted. This is emphasized again and again. However, its distinctive authority is somewhat blurred by O'Collin's analysis of 'foundational' and 'dependent' elements of revelation. Scripture, as foundational documents, is determinative and decisive for Christian believing and has a major role in distinguishing true dependent traditions from false progressions. So far, so good. But is it valid to speak of 'dependent' revelation at all? If the NT witness is to be believed (Heb.1:2), revelation and salvation did grind to a halt at the end of the apostolic era. Further understanding, theological crystalization and theological penetration certainly did occur in the post-NT church, but is it not misleading to call such developments 'revelation'?

Second, from a Protestant perspective, O'Collin's examination of tradition combines satisfactory with unsatisfactory elements. He shows quite properly that church tradition depends upon the tradition enshrined in Scripture, but one wishes that he had given more attention to the question he poses: 'Do all traditions contain the Tradition?' He rejects the idea that the Scripture is the sole criterion, and concludes an interesting section on supplementary criteria with the argument that it is in the living person of the risen Christ, here and now, that the witness of Scripture, church and tradition converge. This is undoubtedly true, but this is the witness of the NT anyway, and suggests that the *'sola scriptura'* principle is not as incomplete as the author argues. And does not this criterion itself shout the most deafening criticism of all unbiblical traditions—such as extreme veneration of the Blessed Virgin Mary and papal infallibility—which so clearly and so sadly replace the risen Christ by other centres of devotion?

The above comments indicate that in Dr O'Collins' work we have a seminal

study which all serious students of theology will appreciate as a contemporary catalyst for theological exploration.

St Nicholas Vicarage, Durham

GEORGE CAREY

## **THEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS Karl Rahner**

Volume 17 *Jesus, Man and the Church* translated M. Kohl

Darton, Longman and Todd 1981 260pp. £14.50

ISBN 0 232 51401 1

This collection of Rahner's occasional writings in the early '70s is divided into four sections: 1) The Experience of Jesus Christ; 2) Man in the Spirit; 3) Ministry and the Spirit; 4) Signs of the Times and for the Church. These contain a good deal of restatement of Rahner's main theme: 'The Theological Dimension of the Question about Man', for example, well expounds his 'transcendental-anthropology'—urging that there is this dimension to be apprehended in a radical assessment of the thrust of all the sciences—which can be seen as another form of 'grace perfecting nature'. While Rahner would certainly deal with the reality of sin and redemption in this discussion, it does not appear here. But this view of grace, as inherent in the whole created order, ties in with another aspect of his total view—reflected in 'Jesus Christ in the non-Christian Religions'—where such grace means that Christ, as the one mediator, is both working in all the religious urges of men, and at the same time is their goal; a theme that develops the Logos doctrine (cf. John 1:9) or such a passage as Acts 17:23–31 to its furthest stretch, although anticipated in the past by J. N. Farquhar (*The Crown of Hinduism*, 1913). What is not clear in all this is that while Christ may indeed be the undiscerned goal of all human seeking and striving, he is also its Judge, and so Redeemer and Transformer.

In a different direction, the whole of section four, and especially ch. 14 of section 3 ('Transformations in the Church and Society'), explore the trends making for church unity within the secular context and in terms of the 'The Third Church', i.e. those 'basic' Christians who have a common faith and belief and who fail to find meaning in many of the differentia between the denominations. It is possible that more of a German background is here reflected than one in Britain, where any such 'third church' is more in terms of the 'house church'. Yet Rahner's concerns here would relate to all who find a superficial unity in sectarian terms, which in the end weakens Christianity in the world; while at the same time he has equally astringent comment about the official procedures of the churches. Among some chapters more loosely tied in to the total scheme of the book is one on 'The Intermediate State' which would be of interest to all readers. Rahner finds it hard to affirm the existence of a condition between death and resurrection; partly because of the problem of time—a waiting period 'between' death and resurrection—and partly because Christian thought does not envisage a disembodied soul. Indeed, the very term is meaningless because the 'soul' is the 'form of the body, and thus will always find embodiment in some way. The continuing person is a full person, and the continuation of history in time and space until the final consummation does not provide the terms in which those who depart this life in Christ enter upon their full inheritance. Interestingly, no discussion of purgatory takes place in this chapter. The book ends with a half-humorous note reviewing the work he has done, humbly aware of its technical limitations, yet 'attempting to say something

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which may minister to salvation'—surely one great aim for a theologian. The translation is well done.

Archdeaconry of Auckland, Co. Durham

G. J. C. MARCHANT

### **I BELIEVE IN SATAN'S DOWNFALL** Michael Green

Hodder and Stoughton 1981 254pp. £4.50

ISBN 0 340 26568 X

Every generation needs a fresh book on the enemy of God and his people: not because previous ideas need to be changed, if they are based on the biblical revelation, but because the ways of the church and the world change the form of the battle.

Michael Green leads with the commonsense notion that the evil power in the world points to a personal source, i.e. Satan. The recorded behaviour and teaching of Jesus Christ give substantial support to belief in the nature and tactics of the enemy, with the principalities and powers under him.

The first 100 pages set out the facts as conservatives have always known them, but much of the second part of the book is coloured by Michael Green's experience in evangelism and counselling. A chapter on modern attraction of the occult is followed by a most excellent analysis of the counterfeit religions, e.g. the Moonies, Marxism, and Transcendental Meditation, compared with the heresies that Paul dealt with in Colossians.

I would disagree with one point. On p.119, telepathy, clairvoyance, clair-audience, and ESP are said to be 'at the root no different from spiritism, fortune-telling, black magic, Satan worship, and death magic.' They are completely different, and Christians, as well as non-Christians, have spontaneous experiences such as are here condemned. They are as 'neutral' as any other human function, and may be used of God, without being handed over to Satan. The book ends triumphantly with the final downfall of Satan, but, in wrestling with the problem of Satan's present power, Michael Green creates difficulties for himself by following those who see Rev. 20:1-3 as applying to the Christian era, although it is certainly not true that Satan now deceives the nations no more.

Bristol

J. STAFFORD WRIGHT

### **GOD INCARNATE: Story and Belief** edited A. E. Harvey

SPCK 1981 104pp. £3.95

ISBN 0 281 03832 5

*The Myth of God Incarnate*, published in 1977, provoked many reactions. One of the more constructive was the establishment of a regular meeting of interested Oxford scholars, and the result is this collection of eight essays and a sermon, most of which point cautiously to a more positive view than that of *The Myth*—while neither employing the trenchant tone, nor reaching the robustly orthodox conclusions, of the earlier counterblast *The Truth of God Incarnate*.

Anthony Harvey edits the new volume, and contributes two essays himself. He first introduces the issue and explores suggestively the (suddenly fashionable) category of 'story', and later points out that the NT evidence about Jesus has not been so completely silenced by historical criticism as is sometimes

thought. This clear-headed exposition whets our appetite for his forthcoming Bampton Lectures. From a very different standpoint, Geza Vermes reiterates many points from his *Jesus the Jew*, questioning the ultimate possibility of combining history and theology in the way Harvey does. John Macquarrie (the only contributor who also took part in the 'Myth-Truth' debate, having written a 'postscript' in *The Truth*) writes from a philosophical standpoint, first to ask what precisely 'truth' means in this area of discourse, and second to clarify the slippery, though frequently employed, concept of 'Christ-event'.

Rachel Trickett (principal of St Hugh's College) offers a literary critic's view of the gospels, arguing that a proper reading, in which, as with all good literature, the imagination is encouraged to take its place, will cut through academic pedantry and enable us to appreciate the *completeness* of the whole story, resurrection and all. The Christmas sermon by Peter Baelz (now Dean of Durham) reaches a moving and orthodox conclusion, despite doubts about the precise details of the nativity story. Peter Hinchliff, chaplain of Balliol, writes with a bold freshness on 'Christology and Tradition', using unfashionable concepts like 'ontology' without apology. And James Barr, at the end of a characteristic piece reshuffling the ideas of 'narrative', 'story', 'myth' and 'history', provides what to me was the most suggestive note in the book, pointing out that the first question Jesus' contemporaries asked was whether he was 'the Messiah expected in Israel', and asking whether incarnation should not be seen as 'an interpretation of Messiahship, in the light of the passion and resurrection'.

There are times in the book when I feel that too much has been conceded, even if only for the sake of argument, to the 'Mythographers'. Without wishing to deny, for instance, that there are other important ways of 'doing theology' than merely stating 'logically related propositions', I still think that the latter task, not least in relation to Christology, is in principle viable (see p.13). But, within its limits, the book comfortably achieves its aim of advancing the debate by setting the issues in a wider context, and the very fact that this sort of work is going on is an encouraging sign.

McGill University, Montreal

N. T. WRIGHT

### **THE INCARNATION: Ecumenical Studies in the**

**Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed AD 381** edited T. F. Torrance

The Handsel Press 1981 180pp. £6.50

ISBN 0 905312 14 7

This handsome hardback symposium, produced by scholars of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches, as well as of the Church of England and the Church of Scotland, and issued by an enterprising new theological press at Edinburgh, is the weightiest answer yet to the modern neo-Arian Christology. It originated at a conference of the Académie Internationale des Sciences Religieuses, which took place in 1978, in the wake of the publication of *Christian Believing* (1976) and *The Myth of God Incarnate* (1977). The papers, which are all in English, have now been published in the year of the celebrations of the 1600th anniversary of the first Council of Constantinople, at which the Nicene Creed is believed to have been brought to its final form. The writers are convinced that, far from being an addition to the gospel or a perversion of it, or even an outmoded way of expressing it, the Nicene terminology is the only permanently satisfactory way of formulating the truth about the person of

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Christ. As a learned contribution to historical theology, given a clear contemporary application, their book stands in a great tradition. May it be widely read, and have as profound an influence as some of its predecessors!

Latimer House, Oxford

ROGER BECKWITH

### **DOORS TO THE SACRED: A Historical Introduction to Sacraments in the Christian Church** Joseph Martos

SCM Press 1981 530pp. £8.50

ISBN 0 334 00335 0

The first of the Tridentine canons on the sacraments says, 'If anyone shall say that the sacraments of the New Law were not all instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord, or that there are more or less than seven, namely baptism, confirmation, eucharist, penance, extreme unction, order, and matrimony, or even that any one of these seven is not truly and strictly speaking a sacrament, let him be anathema.' For Professor Martos, a Roman Catholic, this will not do. 'Although the Catholic church officially still recognizes the doctrines of the Council of Trent as its own, Catholicism in general is quietly laying them aside.' He readily accepts that the seven sacraments were not all instituted by Christ, and he pleads for a much broader notion of a sacrament 'as a sign or symbol of something which is sacred or mysterious'. The bulk of his book is an historical consideration of the seven, but always against this wider background. He continually stresses the mutual interplay between experience and ideas, theory and practice. So he writes particularly well on Augustine, who argued 'from practice to theory' against the Donatists; on Aquinas, whose method was inductive though his systematic writing looked deductive; and on the early Reformers, who reintroduced to religious debate 'the role of personal experience in interpreting statements about God and religion'. On the other hand, Professor Martos has little good to say of those later scholastics who used Aquinas as an authority in a dogmatic way but could not or would not share his openness to experience. He sees a decline in the later Middle Ages into 'legalism, nominalism and magic' and welcomes the renewal of religious experience that many have found after Vatican II in the charismatic movement, the *focolare* movement, and so on.

Part one of the book is an excellent, concise history of the sacraments in the West. Part two deals with the sacraments in turn. Inevitably, there is some overlap, but the comprehensive treatment is one of the strengths of the book. A weakness lies in the very openness to experience, change and development. Professor Martos is (understandably) less keen to stress the influence of theory upon experience than experience upon theory. This means that, in his openness to new 'unofficial' sacraments, the authoritative teaching of the past just slips below the horizon, and he lapses into a dangerous historicism. What is his estimate of *the truth* of the Tridentine teaching now?

Most of the book is devoted to the Roman Catholic understanding of the sacraments. Comments on Anglicanism are erratic. He twice asserts baldly that Anglicanism retained all seven sacraments; he leads us to believe that, from the middle of the nineteenth century, Anglican canon law has permitted divorce and remarriage; and he seems to have overlooked Article XXVIII when, with exaggerated understatement, he says that, in the years that followed the death

of Henry VIII 'not all Anglican priests and bishops continued to accept the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation'!

St Edmund's House, Cambridge

NICHOLAS SAGOVSKY

**NEWMAN AND THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST** Roderick Strange

OUP 1981 179pp. £12.50

ISBN 0 19 826718 5

Roderick Strange disclaims any intention of providing a modern Christology, but aims rather at a systematic account of Newman's Christology and soteriology, gleaned from the diverse, often fragmentary, sources. In this aim he succeeds admirably. Strange shows that Newman held a broadly consistent view from the 1830s onwards.

In his Christology, Newman seeks to be rigorously orthodox. He adheres to Chalcedon, and Strange is at pains to show Newman's due regard for the true human nature in Christ. The unity of Christ's person is focal, and Newman thus follows his great mentor Athanasius and the Alexandrian school. In doing so, he does not quite seem to escape the Apollinarian tendency which dogs the Alexandrians.

We remain very much in the realm of the fourth-century Fathers during the discussion of soteriology, with some colourful effects. The Son, the creative and redemptive Logos, condescends to man and reascends having assumed manhood. The incarnation, as with Athanasius, is a recapitulation of wayward man, although the incarnation and atonement were not strictly needed for our salvation, for 'His Word had been enough' (p.113). The atonement doctrine is patristic, and the cross is primarily for adoration.

Redemption is applied when Christ indwells men and sets up the cross in them: 'This is to be justified, to receive the Divine Presence within us' (p.138). Justification, regeneration and sanctification are one in ongoing process. It is not the author's purpose to discuss the sacramental initiation of this gift. As a whole, Newman's scheme of salvation seems steeped in Hellenism: the soul journeys back to the Logos, a journey continuing after death, according to 'The Dream of Gerontius'.

As to contemporary systematic relevance, trace a line from Newman, the precursor of Vatican II, to Küng and Barth over the theology of justification. For the evangelical: Can the NT bear Newman's soteriological interpretation?

Trinity College, Bristol

TIMOTHY BRADSHAW

**ETHICS** Karl Barth

first published in Switzerland 1973 Seabury Press, USA 1981

T. and T. Clark 1981 534pp. £17.50

ISBN 0 567 09319 0

**THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: Church Dogmatics IV.4**

Lecture Fragments Karl Barth

Eerdmans, USA 1981

T. and T. Clark 1981 310pp. £7.95

ISBN 0 567 09320 4

**LETTERS 1961-1968** Karl Barth

first published in Switzerland 1975

T. and T. Clark 1981 382pp. £8.95

ISBN 0 567 09321 2

These three publications all translated by G. W. Bromiley

*Ethics* comprises lectures delivered some fifty years ago, but published for the



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first time in '73 and '78 as part of the Swiss *Gesamtausgabe*. The original two-volume German work is here condensed into one. It is likely to appeal to the Barth specialist or enthusiast rather than to the general reader.

The lectures come from what was undoubtedly a critical period in Barth's theological development, and it is fascinating to find in them an ethical understanding no longer that of the earlier essay of 1922 ('Das Problem der Ethik in der Gegenwart') nor yet that of the *Church Dogmatics*. It was precisely because he had left behind some of the ideas contained in these lectures (e.g. the doctrine of orders of creation) that Barth refused to publish them during his lifetime. Nevertheless, already Barth's basic ethical conviction has taken form, namely, that ethics must be rooted in dogmatics if it is to avoid 'the inveterate tendency either to base it on law and tradition on the one side or on pragmatic concerns and changing mores and circumstances on the other' (p.vi). And already Barth has fashioned the overall shape that would inform his treatment of ethics in the *Dogmatics*: an introductory section on 'The Reality of the Divine Command' (cf. CD II.2), followed by chapters on 'The Command of God the Creator' (cf. CD III.4), 'The Command of God the Reconciler' (cf. CD IV.4 unfinished) and 'The Command of God the Redeemer' (the projected CD V.4). Since CD IV.4 exists only in fragmentary form, and V.4 not at all, this outline is peculiarly valuable.

*The Christian Life* is a further fragment of *Church Dogmatics* IV.4. It had been Barth's hope that after his retirement in 1961 he would complete his section on the 'Ethics of Reconciliation'. He never did, partly because of the American tour, partly because of ill-health, and partly because he missed the 'salutary pressure' of having to prepare lectures. His intention had been to expound the Christian life under the overall concept of calling upon God, in which Christians 'may take God at his word as their Father and take themselves seriously as his children' (p.49). There were to have been three sections: the first on baptism as the foundation of the Christian life (already published as CD IV.4 fragment); the second an exposition of the Lord's Prayer—the present volume, though the exposition breaks off after the second petition—and finally a section on the Lord's Supper as the thanksgiving which renews the Christian life. This morsel makes the *Dogmatics* a little less incomplete.

*Letters 1961-1968* will have a wider appeal. Though Barth published very little during his years of retirement, these letters show that his theological and ethical concerns continued. More importantly, they show us vividly 'Barth the man, stamped with our common humanity, yet no less distinguished by his inimitable individuality. An acquaintance with even a few of these detailed human aspects can give fresh insight and interest to the study of his weighty theological volumes' (pp.viif.).

Why is it that, at least for some of us, reading Barth is such a delight (as well as benefit)? *Letters 1961-1968* includes in an appendix a handful of letters to Barth and, in one, Professor Thielicke reflects briefly on the difference between Barth and 'all the others whose books one must read professionally. To be sure, it is the *doctrina* that makes this difference. But the charming thing is probably more a by-product of this *doctrina*: the cheerfulness of the climate, the beauty, the great joy in telling, the laughter of the world-overcoming. . . . In you is none of the terminological and hermeneutical make-up with which the ravaged face of theology is adorned but theology that always has a freshly washed and laughing face; one might not even miss the freckles that spot the likes of us' (pp.355f.). Well said!

What an enormous debt the English-speaking world owes to Professor

Bromiley for the devoted skill and care with which he has made Barth available to so many!

Wycliffe Hall, Oxford

ARTHUR MOORE

**EXPLORATIONS IN THEOLOGY 9 Ronald H. Preston**

SCM Press 1981 182pp. £5.95

ISBN 0 334 01981 8

Ronald Preston was until recently professor of social and pastoral theology in the University of Manchester, and he has for a very long time been deeply engaged in work on Christian ethics, and especially social ethics. His involvement has led him into areas of discussion which reflect the changing concerns of British and international matters since the war. His involvement has been both Anglican—and this is reflected in the journals from which some of the papers have been taken—and also ecumenical. In the introduction, Professor Preston outlines some of the reasons why he chose the selection of twelve papers that are printed in this volume from the considerable list which is indicated in the bibliography of published works at the end of the book. The papers cover a variety of things, but mainly they turn on questions of church and society, social ethics and the use and interpretation of the Bible in ethics. The first essay, on ethical criticism of Jesus, stands aside from this generality and looks a little out of place. There is inevitably a certain amount of overlap amongst these essays: for example, middle axioms are discussed on a number of occasions and the various implications of the 1966 Church in Society Conference commented on several times in different papers. The interest of the collection as a whole, however, is that it charts a good deal of the discussion since the war on these issues, and four essays in particular are of special interest. Essay 2 gives us a very interesting and useful insight into the forces at work in the 1966 Church in Society Conference at Geneva, and he suggests that the conference was in many ways a breakthrough in ecumenical ethics. This is for five reasons: a) the conscious effort made to ensure that it was as significant as the Oxford Conference of 1937 on 'Church, Community and State'; b) the fact that, for the first time, the 'third world' was strongly represented at an ecumenical conference; c) the inclusion, by this stage, of the Orthodox Churches in the WCC, and the impact that they had on the conference; d) the active involvement of Roman Catholic participant-observers and the impact of the second Vatican Council; and e) the very strong lay element present in the conference. These are all substantial considerations, and the way in which subsequent conferences concerned with these sorts of questions have been organized, illustrates how much the 1966 conference was a pace-setter.

What papers 2 and 5 do for the ecumenical movement, paper 7 does for Anglicanism and British ecumenical social ethics. Combined with paper 6, we are given here a most interesting analysis of post-war British Christian discussion of social ethical questions.

There are occasional undercurrents of a critical kind in relation to the impact of Calvinist theology on social ethical discussions, and I would rather like to have heard or read Professor Preston as to his evaluation of the contribution made by people such as Leonard Ragaz and Arthur Rich. All in all, a most informative and interesting collection of essays by a working ethicist and moral theologian.

St John's College, Durham

B. N. KAYE

Churchman

**BAPTIZED INTO HOPE Emmanuel Sullivan**

SPCK 1980 244pp. £8.50

ISBN 0 281 03759 0

What an unsatisfying experience to read this book! A Franciscan, gracious in tone and eirenic in intent, has produced a widely researched book on subject matter to which every intelligent contemporary Christian will relate, as he examines in turn the ecumenical movement, the Catholic-Evangelical convergence, the Christian liberation movement, the neo-Pentecostal movement and the community movement, under the thesis that they presage an optimistic future for the church. Those who have shared with him in these arenas in recent years will be predisposed to endorse his theme.

Yet the treatment doesn't really come off. It is not only that events like the Nationwide Initiative in Evangelism, the National Pastoral Congress, the Proposals for the Covenant, the WCC Conference at Melbourne, the conservative reaction in the Vatican, the demise of the Fountain Trust etc. (most of which are not even envisaged) have moved matters on; nor that an alternative selection of, say, the liturgical movement, the church growth movement, the women's lay ministry movement, the house church movement and the advent of the 'electronic church' (most of which rate no mention) might have produced a different conclusion.

Basically, I would want to challenge, *inter alia*, the author's predilection (albeit disavowed!) for the Graeco-Roman philosophical framework; his readiness to synthesize biblical Christianity with modern secular disciplines; the (surprising?) lack of any concept of 'apostolicity' in his appraisal of the NT; and an over-hasty rejection of evangelical missiology, (surely 'towards' should be 'against' at the bottom of p.107?). But most crucial of all (a late attempt on p.206 notwithstanding) is his failure to exploit the centrality of the local gathered eucharistic congregation in its human community setting as *the* focus for what it means to be 'church' in the NT sense. This seems to me to be the touchstone for any assessment of these movements, and its wholesale relegation *must* be held to vitiate an otherwise magisterial guide to these major current developments.

Romsey House, Cambridge

DAVID GREGG

**THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND**

Report by a General Synod Working Group

CIO Publishing 1981 65pp. £1.95

ISBN 0 7151 4751 X

**STEWARDS OF GOD'S GRACE Siegfried Grossmann**

translated Michael Freeman first published in Germany in 1977

Paternoster Press 1981 192pp. £4.20

ISBN 0 85364 287 7

The GS report aims 'to explore the reasons for this upsurge [of the charismatic movement], pinpoint the particular distinctive features of spirituality and ethos... and indicate both the points of tension which arise with traditional Anglicanism and also how the movement may enrich the church' (foreword).

The report outlines its history, and the situations requiring it in the Church of England. These include 'A Missing Experience?', 'A Reaction Against Clericalism?', 'An Existential Atmosphere?', 'A Release From Formalism?', and

'Impoverished Pneumatology?'. (They could form useful sources for self-examination on different levels.)

About one quarter of the report illustrates the movement at work, showing problems and tensions which arise, and lessons for all. It poses three vital questions: a) What is Christian maturity? b) What room does the truly catholic church have for new movements and how should it evaluate them? c) How should Christians learn from each other? Other noteworthy features are books and topics mentioned, together with different opinions as well as pertinent queries.

The central part of the report deals with distinctive phenomena, giving detailed attention to baptism and the Holy Spirit, the gift of the Spirit, tongues, prophecy and healing. A section on 'Subculture' deals with worship, structure, spiritual warfare, biblical interpretation, cross-fertilization, love and openness and romanticism.

Both books pose and answer many important relevant questions: e.g., How far does the subculture affect the spirit of the age? How far are the charismatic features mentioned suitable for general application?

There are numerous similarities between the two. The second book is more comprehensive, being both wider and deeper in its historical and descriptive section, but equally balanced. Both would help to secure 'a dynamic balance in the body of Christ. Both contain numerous useful judicious summaries, and wide and classified bibliographies. The omission of indices is partly met, because of extensive synopsis given of the chapters. In the second book we get, in addition to the usual features and gifts, some pages on eternal life, encounter, marriage and the single life (called general gifts) and also discussions on gifts of the word, of action and of discernment.

The third part of the report deals with life in the Spirit, the place of charismatic gifts, their use and abuse, the charismatic practice and how to develop these gifts. Both books would help to assess spiritual temperature, and provide constructive help in how to raise it and how to avoid dangers. While the first publication is rooted in the English scene, the other is world-wide, very scriptural, and covers much ground. Get both if possible. If not, buy one and read the other.

Trinity College, Dublin

H. F. WOODHOUSE

## **MARTIN LUTHER AND THE BIRTH OF PROTESTANTISM**

**James Atkinson**

first published in 1968

Marshall Morgan and Scott 1982 352pp. £5.95

ISBN 0 551 00923 3

Next year, 1983, will mark the 500th anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther, and already appropriate celebrations are being planned: as, for example, in London, where the University Library will be arranging a special exhibition to mark the occasion. No doubt, too, there will be a spate of books on the Reformer—an important new one has in fact lately appeared in print.

It was presumably with this partly in mind—though he does not say so—that Dr Atkinson decided on a reissue of his book, which appeared in 1968 as a 'Pelican Original'. I was among those who then managed to purchase a copy, and have since frequently commended it to students and included it in reading lists for those concerned with the Reformation period of church history. Its

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particular value, as well as its appeal for those unable to gain easy access to original sources, lies in the extensive extracts which it gives from Luther's own writings, thus directing the reader's attention not only—as do many books on the German Reformer—to biographical details, but also to his teaching and thought. As that doyen among English scholars on Luther, Professor Gordon Rupp, says in the foreword written for the 1968 edition, and reproduced in the present one: 'Here, close-packed within one volume, is a biography in which the great and grave ideological and theological issues are lucidly explained.'

Despite all this, there are those who would question the wisdom of reprinting a volume complete with bibliography published fourteen years ago, exactly as it stands; especially when this relates to so momentous a character as Luther, and to a period towards which many scholars today adopt a different approach. It is true that Dr Atkinson has added a new foreword, where he discusses recent research, especially on the part of Roman Catholic writers, as well as the change of attitude brought about by the Second Vatican Council. Nevertheless, this brief summary scarcely does justice to the scholarship of the past decade or so, and there are some whose contribution goes unnoticed: among them, my own respected colleague in this college, the late Professor James Cargill Thompson, who had already, at the time of his early and lamented death, become a recognized authority in the field of Lutheran studies.

King's College, London

GORDON HUELIN

## **THE POPES AND EUROPEAN REVOLUTION** Owen Chadwick

Clarendon Press: OUP 1981 646pp. £28.00

ISBN 0 19 826919 6

The title is somewhat misleading. On the one hand, Professor Chadwick is concerned with far more than the papacy. His canvas is the life of the Roman Catholic Church, and thus he analyzes the religion of the people and the character of the clergy and monastic institutions—an undertaking which occupies 250 pages—before he has embarked on any sustained examination of the papacy. On the other hand, he pays much less attention to France than the title might suggest, mainly because Professor McManners is intending to cover this ground in a forthcoming volume in the same series (*Oxford History of the Christian Church*). As an examination, however, of the life of the Roman Catholic Church, mainly in Southern Europe, in the period immediately before and immediately after the French Revolution, the book is superb.

It has all the skills which have made Professor Chadwick's writings so eminent in the past. There is the vastly stocked mind, moving easily through sources in half a dozen languages, the ability to illustrate whole themes through well-chosen incidents and individuals, the capacity to sum up complex material in a few well-rounded and aptly phrased sentences, and the urbane and gently detached humour which adds pleasure to the story. All this amounts to the most distinctive style, in which Professor Chadwick's artistry recreates an atmosphere and arouses a sympathy for his subject. At the same time, he eschews the sharply argued thesis. There is, for example, no sense of the inevitability of events which is so often the product of more sociological analysis.

The book has, of course, a perspective which provides an explanation of the effects first of all of the Enlightenment and, secondly, of the European Revolution, on Roman Catholicism. The Enlightenment emerges as much less totally

anti-Catholic than is often urged. Rather it added a humane and tolerant face to the Roman Catholicism of the counter-Reformation. Even the Inquisition became humane, and Chadwick delights to show its mellowing by citing the leg-pulling of an English clergyman on the part of two inquisitors who happened to be his fellow coach-travellers. The revolution forced Roman Catholicism into modern times by depriving it of its temporal power, and by giving it a model of bureaucratic efficiency. Above all, it elevated the papacy, partly because Napoleon deliberately destroyed Gallicanism in the Concordat and emphasized rather the prestige of the papal office, partly because the papacy benefited from its martyr status, and partly because its comparative decline in temporal power made it attractive to those over-burdened by the general increase in the power of the state.

All this is clearly presented, but Chadwick is happy to point to other parts of the picture which fit awkwardly into the overall development, and is relatively unconcerned if no explanation is ready to hand. Thus his fascinating opening chapter on 'The Religion of the People' charts and makes perceptible a decline in the degree of 'superstition' in popular religion. It concludes that this was not due to the Enlightenment and, while other explanations remain embedded in the text, they are not very explicitly drawn out. Thus he emphasizes the fierce directness of the popular missionaries of Roman Catholicism, and draws intriguing parallels between these and the preaching of John Wesley and Whitefield, arguing that the powerful simplicity of their sermons 'was curiously out of keeping with the general temper of late baroque' (p.167). He returns again to the 'astounding contrast' between the good-humoured, humane Roman Catholicism which he has described, and 'the missionary-evangelist lashing himself in the pulpit at some fiery service of conversion' (p.256), and yet the explanation of the contrast seems curiously elusive. These quibbles point to a wider dissatisfaction. The picture which Chadwick lovingly paints of a civilized, pre-revolutionary Roman Catholicism is so attractive that the extent and depth of its failure scarcely emerges. But, when in 1790 Pius VI was 'kidnapped' and sent off to Siena, Chadwick notes that 'in Rome no one lodged a protest' (p.464), and when the prince-bishoprics were destroyed 'the people did not care' (p.500).

Perhaps history writing is too dominated by explanations. Perhaps an exercise in narrative writing which concentrates on painting a picture in which the explanation is sometimes explicit, sometimes implicit, sometimes non-existent, is a salutary exercise. At any rate there can be no doubt that most readers will find their horizons widened, their sympathies broadened and their pleasure enhanced. They will by reading know more, though they will scarcely feel that they understand all.

Trinity College, Bristol

PETER WILLIAMS

### **GEORGE MULLER: Delighted in God Robert Steer**

first published 1975

Hodder and Stoughton 1981 320pp. £1.95

ISBN 0 340 26709 7

If you read this book very carefully, you can discover the following information about the orphanages that George Muller built and ran at Ashley Down, Bristol. The first house was opened in 1836. It was different from all other institutions, as it was open to all applicants—including the poorest. All other orphanages

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had governing bodies, where subscribers had votes and the poorest orphans were excluded. The first house took three hundred, but the need was so great that Muller started on a second house to take seven hundred. Later, Muller doubled the numbers and built three more houses. Originally only girls were admitted, but eventually boys were also accepted. The staff in this vast organization consisted of matrons, teachers, medical officers and one school inspector. Muller insisted that they should all be believers. His wife, Mary, was responsible for work done in the homes, and for material for clothes, linen, etc. She was also the accountant. The teachers taught a wide curriculum: writing, reading, Scripture, arithmetic, dictation, grammar, geography, English, world history, composition, singing, needlework. The girls cleaned the rooms and worked in the kitchen and the laundry. On leaving, most of the children became apprentices, servants and nurses. The boys left at fourteen or fifteen; the girls at seventeen.

It is not altogether easy to dig out this information, because Roger Steer's major concern is not with what Muller did with the money for his orphanages, but how he obtained it. The houses were not built by any appeal, but by George Muller kneeling and telling God exactly how much he needed, and gradually that money came. Page after page is devoted to telling first how much money was required for what object, and then how one lady opened the account with £5, followed by a businessman who gave £500 till the work on that house could go ahead and Muller started praying for money for the next one. According to Roger Steer, Muller was trying to prove to the world the reality of God in answering prayer. Some readers will accept this: others may feel that God was being manipulated like an automaton. This does not diminish Muller's greatness: he deserves his place beside Dickens and Shaftesbury, who both visited Ashley Down, as a champion of the child in Victorian times who was poor and friendless.

Manchester Cathedral

MICHAEL HENNEL

## **THE SEVENTH EARL OF SHAFTESBURY 1801–1885**

**Geoffrey B. A. M. Finlayson**

Eyre Methuen 1981 639pp. £19.50

ISBN 0 431 28200 7

The dominant evangelical layman of the mid-nineteenth century is an enigma. When I did a short account from printed sources some years ago I found him an attractive character. Recent biographers, using manuscript sources and relying especially on his Diary, emphasize the gloom in Shaftesbury's make-up while admiring his achievement.

Dr Finlayson has spent many years on the present huge book, and with enormous industry has worked through Shaftesbury's life in detail. The result is an admirable compendium; moreover, Dr Finlayson understands Shaftesbury's evangelical position. The book is chronological in form. The religious, social, philanthropic and political sides, and Shaftesbury's personal and family life, are seen in harmony, not in isolation from each other. The range of his activities was extraordinary. All the great evangelical societies felt his hand, and his social reforms and religious controversies form part of the history of England.

The author's decision to present the life on such a scale, in strict order, rather hinders the reader's grasp of the broad sweep of, say, factory reform. Also, Dr

Finlayson might have given more information about his sources. References as such are meticulous, but the author gives no indication as to what is missing. I understand that a large part of Shaftesbury's papers were destroyed or lost after his death. If I am right, the picture can never be complete, and the introspective Diary may perhaps leave him out of proportion.

Dr Finlayson is a professional historian. His book will be appreciated by scholars and students prepared to work in it. He should now prepare a short, warm paperback for the general reader in the centenary year to bring his hero alive.

Rose Ash, Devon

JOHN POLLOCK

### **RELIGION AND THE PEOPLE OF WESTERN EUROPE 1789–1970 Hugh McLeod**

OUP 1981 169pp. hardcover £8.95  
paperback £3.95

ISBN 0 19 289101 4  
ISBN 0 19 215832 5

If we subtract notes, bibliography, appendix, maps and index, this book contrives to cover 181 years of history in a mere 143 pages. Dr McLeod, a lecturer in church history at Birmingham University, displays a high degree of selectivity, an acknowledged heavy concentration on England, France and Germany, and a fine economy of words which only occasionally lapses into the cryptic. Less judiciously, the publishers' pack-'em-in policy makes unfair demands on readers by confronting them with pages and pages of solid type without benefit of sub-heading.

McLeod recounts the challenge made from 1789 by religious dissenters to the clerical establishment, discusses the effect of socialism, capitalism and the growth of cities, and identifies some of the issues facing the church in the latter half of the twentieth century. Now and then one will disagree or be mystified by some statistic, or feel that pressure of space has led on to some questionable generalization. Thus to pinpoint the Quakers as 'probably the only Christian denomination within which there is equality of power between men and women' could be challenged by the Salvation Army (a body never once mentioned in this book). When McLeod quotes Zeldin's claim that 'even in the 1960s a quarter of the male population of Paris visited brothels', one might validly ask who was counting. And it seems odd that figures for nominal religious affiliations in countries surveyed should be on average dated no later than 1961.

But these are minor matters. With a wealth of anecdote and notes to stimulate further reading, Dr McLeod has brought together, in compact form, strands from different countries and cultures, and told us a great deal about a period we tend to neglect.

St Andrews, Fife

J. D. DOUGLAS

### **A SOCIAL HISTORY OF THE DIOCESE OF NEWCASTLE 1882–1982** edited W. S. F. Pickering

Oriel Press: Routledge & Kegan Paul 1981 338pp. £12.00 ISBN 0 85362 189 6

Between a foreword by Alex Vidler and an epilogue by Ronald Bowlby are



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eighteen essays on various aspects of the life of the diocese. Peter Jagger's essay concerns the formation of the diocese and the appointment of William Wilberforce's grandson, Ernest Wilberforce, as the first bishop. Curiously Jagger omits the detail that in the proposed sixteenth-century diocese, the first bishop was to have been Edmund Grindal. One of the most memorable chapters concerns an Anglo-Catholic's twenty-year ministry in a slum parish. Cecil Davis recalled that 'the streets were so near the river that the sewer rats ran everywhere, even across people sleeping in bed in the middle of the night' (p.206). There is a useful biographical sketch of Lady Louisa Waterford (pp.146–57) which describes her work as patron, benefactor and Temperance crusader. She was an evangelical of some character, and organized revivalist meetings in her village, as well as becoming a celebrated artist.

The book records the steady decline of the Church of England in the north-east throughout the century. The pattern of decline in the seventh largest diocese in England is common to *both* urban areas and the countryside. While 93 per cent of the diocese is rural, only 7 per cent is urban; yet of the population, 63 per cent live in urban areas and 37 per cent in the country.

There are two serious weaknesses in the book. First, the stress is far too sociological. The number of essays could have been reduced, and repetition avoided, if there had been theological comment and evaluation of 'the history of the church in decline' (p.146). There should have been some comment on the relative strength of other denominations—particularly Methodism and Roman Catholicism.

A second weakness is that evangelicalism is totally ignored, and the impression given is that a bland Anglo-Catholicism has always been the colour of the diocese. Although the evangelical bishop Norman Straton (1907–15) was 'the odd man out among our bishops' (p.55), who tried to curb the activities of Anglo-Catholic extremists, his relationship with James Inskip (vicar of Jesmond 1907–16, Bishop of Barking 1919–48), was always cordial. Evangelicalism was certainly strongest in the north-east before the first world war, and the decline was caused by a steady rise in the number of Anglo-Catholics (strengthened by the parish communion movement started by Noel Hudson at St John's, Newcastle in 1927) and the emergence of liberal evangelicalism, which, with its association with Freemasonry, sapped the life of a vibrant, biblical evangelicalism.

Two curious omissions relate to the training of clergy and lady workers. There is no mention of the diocesan theological college opened in 1901, or of the Jesmond Church House for Lady Workers, which from 1899–1907 trained nearly forty women for home and overseas ministry.

In addition to the text, there are sixteen black and white plates and an outline map of the diocese. The book is well printed and bound and has few typographical errors, apart from two strange misprints on pp.270 and 291, where 1981 should read 1918.

Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne

ALAN MUNDEN

**CHRISTIANITY, SOCIETY AND EDUCATION:** Robert Raikes,  
Past, Present and Future edited John Ferguson  
SPCK 1981 214pp. £5.95 ISBN 0 281 03787 6

As we might have hoped from a collection of essays written to commemorate

the bicentenary of the founding of the Sunday School movement, this book provides a definitive account of that movement. The ground covered by the essays is impressive. Not only are there contributions which examine the motivation of Robert Raikes in his advocacy of Sunday Schools, but the progress of the movement over two hundred years is charted in some detail.

There are a number of essays which discuss possible ways forward for the movement, of which the most notable is by John Westerhoff in which he examines the objectives of Sunday School work for the future. His argument is that the dichotomy which has existed between evangelicals and liberals in their respective concerns to bring people to Christian faith through conversion and nurture, is false. Westerhoff's case is that *kerygma* and *didache* both have a place in church education, and that we have paid a heavy price for the estrangement of the two in the past.

As might be expected from a group of writers who are eminently qualified to contribute to such a volume, all the papers are authoritative. If they appear variable in quality, this in part is because of the initial paper by Asa Briggs, setting out the eighteenth-century context for the rise of the Sunday School movement. It provides a standard which some contributors find hard to sustain.

For anyone with a passing interest in knowing where the Sunday School movement came from, how it got to its present state, and where it might go in the future, this is an ideal book. For anyone with a serious interest in church education, it will be essential reading.

Avery Hill College, London

COLIN BROWN

### **NO MERE CHANCE** John Laird

Hodder & Stoughton: Scripture Union 1981 191pp. £5.50 ISBN 0 340 26966 9

John Laird took over the leadership of what is now Scripture Union at the end of World War Two. It was comparatively small, mainly confined to Britain and the Empire, and slowly dying of archaic administration. When he retired in 1968, it was a world-wide federation of national or regional bodies which has continued to grow; a true auxiliary to the churches.

Therefore it is important to have Laird's own story, and although the book will mainly interest those who have links with SU, they form a large and varied readership. The title is well chosen: his life turned on a number of 'coincidences' which were certainly the hand of God.

Born in Scotland, the son of an architect and brought up among the Open Brethren, he had hoped to be a medical missionary in China. A 'coincidence' sent him instead on a voyage to New Zealand as doctor on a cadet ship. The *Northumberland* lay at Napier when the 1931 earthquake occurred. He is much too modest about his part in the rescue work, for in fact his courage and endurance won him local fame and opened many doors when 'coincidences' turned the ship's doctor into the foremost evangelist among New Zealand schoolchildren.

He made a very happy marriage. Having put CSSM (as it then was) on a sound footing in New Zealand and Australia, he was brought home in 1945 to Wigmore Street. His account of the extraordinarily difficult conditions of work, of his near breakdown, of his gradual transformation of the ramshackle organization, is given with candour, humility and generosity. He backs the narrative with valuable spiritual reflections.

Rose Ash, Devon

JOHN POLLOCK

**FAITH, AUTHENTICITY AND MORALITY** Donald Evans

The Handsel Press 1980 298pp. £12.00

ISBN 0 905312 12 0

This excellently produced book, from a Canadian printing (University of Toronto Press), will not be of very widespread interest. That is partly because it deals with fairly specialist academic interests in any case; and even more because it follows a rather self-conscious process of discussing its subject matter in direct comparison not only with other scholars, but also with the past conclusions and positions arrived at both by them and by the author himself. Thus, if a reader were so interested, he could follow and check up on the progress of the matters discussed, especially as by Evans himself. Probably only a minority involved in this ball game will wish to pursue this side of the book with any great interest. Having said that, there are some valuable discussions of important philosophical issues. The book is dedicated to the late Bishop Ian Ramsay, and Evans treats Ramsay's philosophy, particularly his 'talk about talk about God', to a rigorous though sympathetic examination and critique, and anyone who wished to look into Ramsay's thought should not miss it. Evans rightly points out that the logical and cerebral thinking of Ramsay needs complementing from a richer view of the human believer (or disbeliever), and turns to the American, Sam Keen, for a more sensitive philosophical anthropology that is concerned with inner experience as explored by depth psychology and existential insight. Here again there are some valuable analyses of what it means to be truly human—viewed in contrast with distortions of human *being*—and the basic trust so part of true humanity which is really another kind of *capax dei* without any actual religious conviction. The individualism of Keen is then brought to another thinker for enlargement in social terms: the Canadian Gregory Baum. His interests lie in group psychology and sociology, which draw critical attention to modern man's alienation, and domination by unjust structures bolstered up by ideologies that serve to legitimize evil. His Godward reference is to see God mysteriously at work to liberate mankind from dehumanizing forces widespread in modern society. Then Evans turns to continue a long-standing debate with Paul Ramsey, the well-known American moral philosopher. The connection with the foregoing is possible, but hardly inevitable, and the tightly argued chapter is one that the author actually suggests might be skipped or skimmed; one asks whether it is there to maintain his argument in another side of the plurality of debates this book seems designed to forward. Of course, the discussion of the nature of ethical rules, and the elucidation of moral vocabulary, has its implications for Christian faith in the accurate assessment of situations, and it is proper that the ensuing chapter should investigate the intellectual and volitional aspects of believing in relation to a new Christian creed produced in 1968 by the General Council of the United Church of Canada. Although in its fourteen affirmations many good things are said, it is noticeable that there is nothing explicit about sin, atonement and redemption. 'Jesus, crucified and risen, our judge and our hope' is 'the true Man' in whom God has come, 'to reconcile and make new'. Evans' enthusiastic exposition of this creed has many good things to say about Christian experience and life in the Spirit, and its expression in ethical activity, both individual and social. The nature of religious conviction, and its relation to basic attitudes, is the main subject-matter of the final chapter. So this is a book not only for those with a well-grounded philosophic interest, but also for those who will not be put off by a fairly detailed debate on the author's past

assessments of his own and others' positions in this field. But there are worthwhile pickings for the persistent.

Archdeaconry of Auckland, Co. Durham

G. J. C. MARCHANT

**RELIGION AND IMAGINATION: 'in aid of a grammar of consent' John Coulson**

Clarendon Press: OUP 1981 193pp. £12.50

ISBN 0 19 826656 1

Coulson's book is a sophisticated plea for a closer link between theology and literature. He claims that a 'common grammar' once existed in the unashamedly metaphorical language of the Bible and Shakespeare. The 'dense' type of metaphor, there used as a way of holding a belief, differs from the modern, 'translucent' type of metaphor (found, e.g., in Matthew Arnold) which seeks to explain belief. Coulson argues that 'what we hold in faith is most frequently expressed in metaphor, symbol, and story and, as such, prior to and as a condition of its verification, it requires an imaginative assent comparable to that we give to poems and novels.' Imagination and belief can be successfully held together, as demonstrated by the theology of Newman—on whose writings Coulson is a formidable authority—and by the poetry of T. S. Eliot, on whom he writes with an allusiveness which many unversed in literary criticism will find frustrating. But in the cases of George Eliot, Arnold and Hardy, the Catholic modernists, and indeed modern culture generally, the two break apart: imagination is left to keep alive what reason can no longer explain or profess.

Newman spoke of 'saying and unsaying to a positive result'. Coulson's instinct is to set metaphorical religious statements in juxtaposition so that, taken together, they form a cohesive whole. He bemoans modern theologians' attempts to produce reductionist explanations which are 'sharply defined, unmysterious, and rigid'. Those, like myself, who discern this trait in e.g. the authors of *The Myth of God Incarnate*, will sympathize with this thesis. Nevertheless, modern theology is hardly as uniform in this respect as Coulson's general statements suggest. Moreover, in arguing for the priority of imaginative assent, Coulson also seems to be arguing for its primacy. But metaphor can be a cloak for muddle, and symbol for sloppiness of thought. The need remains for more analytical, metaphysical statements to extrapolate some of the content of myth. Theologians owe modern philosophy a debt insofar as it has taught them to use language more carefully, unfortunate though it would be if this led to a loss of imaginative faculties (and certain philosophers, notably Iris Murdoch, place great store by the latter), Christianity is about *explaining* belief as well as about *holding* it. Coulson would not deny this, but his tendency is to emphasize the latter at the expense of the former—unduly so.

Cranmer Hall, Durham

RICHARD HIGGINSON

**FIVE RELIGIONS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY**

**W. Owen Cole**

Hulton Educational Publications 1981 254pp. £2.85

ISBN 0 7175 0883 8

The first reaction on reading this book on the five religions Hinduism, Judaism,

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Christianity, Islam and Sikhism is one of gratitude. Here, it would seem, is the answer to the busy teacher with, perhaps, scant background knowledge, who has been detailed to teach 'other religions' and quails at the prospect.

Beautifully produced and presented, the book details thematically the various religions' approaches to messengers of God, worship, scriptures, festivals and pilgrimages. There are clearly drawn maps and diagrams that would make excellent fodder for overhead projectors and blackboards. There is, too, a comprehensive book list and glossary of terms in the back, as well as a most useful list of questions for pupils to attempt at the end of each chapter.

This would be an admirable classroom text-book for 'O' level and VI form general studies, though the level of reading ability required is somewhat high for more general use. The writer has gone to great lengths to show that there is no one Christian position on many of the themes, and he explains clearly what different denominations feel about such topics as sacramental worship. This fair, factual approach should mean that the book endears itself to a wide public and the author's sensitive handling of difficult issues is to be commended.

I can thoroughly recommend this book as a most useful tool for both the specialist religious studies teacher and the great number of those who want to read about other faiths in an easily palatable form. My only regret is that I wish the book had been written ten years earlier!

London NW1

GILLIAN HYLSON-SMITH

### **IS CHRISTIANITY CREDIBLE?** edited David Stacey

Epworth Press 1981 121pp. £3.50

ISBN 0 7162 0364 2

The twelve responses assembled here (from nine Christians of various hues, a Jew, a Marxist and a humanist) first appeared in the *Epworth Review*.

As more than one of the contributors points out, the question 'Is Christianity credible?' can be variously understood. Is Christianity comprehensible? Is it capable of being believed? Is it believed? Ought it to be believed? Ought everyone to believe it? Most of the answers concentrate on the belief-worthiness of Christianity.

It comes as no surprise to discover that the answers are as various as the contributors. Some (Flew, Gunn, Reif) answer with an emphatic 'No': Flew (so it seems) assuming that if  $p$  is contingently related to  $q$ , the reasons for believing  $p$  must be logically distinct from the reasons for believing  $q$ ; and Gunn slurring over the manifest inadequacies of Marx's causal explaining-away of religious belief.

The Christian contributors fall mainly into two camps. There are the defenders of robust versions of orthodoxy (Anderson, Leonard, Packer) and there are those for whom Christianity is a fairly malleable thing, the source of inspirational symbolism rather than the emodiment of revealed truth (Lampe, Kent, Wiles). Baelz, Lash and Wainwright come somewhere in between.

In a number of answers, there seems to be a muddle between what Christianity is and what ought to make a person a Christian. Lash has a good section on objectivity, Kent's piece seemed to be a particularly acid affair, Wainwright's rather donnish. It was gratifying to see, among the more orthodox, an entire absence of rationalism: of the idea that Christianity ought to be believed because it provides the only solution to intellectual problems.

University of Liverpool

PAUL HELM

**DIVINE AND CONTINGENT ORDER** Thomas F. Torrance

OUP 1981 162pp. £9.50

ISBN 0 19 826658 8

The main theme of Professor Torrance's latest book is the claim that the Christian understanding of the universe as the contingent creation of God, made possible the rise of the natural sciences. Because the nature of nature could not be deduced *a priori* from the character of God, the need for investigative enquiry became apparent. Professor Torrance regards this recognition as a *re-discovery* by the Reformers, for it was an insight first discovered by the earliest theologians of the church, only to be lost under 'Augustinianism'.

This seems a straightforward thesis, open to historical confirmation or falsification. But closer inspection reveals that the thesis is far from clear. To say that the universe is the contingent creation of God is one thing. To say that any universe created by God cannot be deterministic is another. (This looks like a bit of the *a priori* reasoning about nature that Professor Torrance properly dislikes.) It is perfectly consistent to suppose that there is nothing logically inevitable about the actual universe, while allowing that it is one of many deterministic possible universes. Further, to say that deism and determinism 'go together' is doubly unclear. Does Professor Torrance mean that if deism is true, then necessarily any universe is deterministic? This does not seem plausible. Why could not a deistic god everlastingly contemplate random swarms of atoms? Does Professor Torrance mean that if determinism is true, then necessarily deism is true? This seems to be even less plausible.

In pursuit of his theme, Professor Torrance provides much densely expressed scientific and theological lore. Dare one say that, at times, the author seems to be the victim of his own magniloquence, while the interesting themes that he has chosen to discuss call for patient analysis?

University of Liverpool

PAUL HELM

**COSMOS AND CREATOR** Stanley L. Jaki

Scottish Academic Press 1981 168pp. £6.75

ISBN 0 7073 0290 0

I am very glad I have read this book: for it is a defence, at once aggressive, well-informed and powerful of the traditional view of Christian theism, that the physical universe owes its origin to a Creator. As a defence it conducts its case on an intellectual and polemical level much above the ordinary. It cannot be accused of either timidity, triviality or ignorance.

Stanley Jaki is a Hungarian-born Benedictine priest who is Distinguished University Professor at Seton Hall University, New Jersey. I do not know the extent of his training in science, but he writes with obvious authority on the topics he chooses to discuss, and they are wide-ranging. Of course his subject takes him far beyond science; in the realms of philosophy (his position seems to be that of a Thomist), logic and metaphysics he is equally at home, and this makes his book not always easy reading.

The thrust of Professor Jaki's argument may be described very inadequately as follows. Science seems to be leading us to the conclusion that the universe had an origin in time—or with time—and that at that origin it was already an 'extremely specific entity', far from the undifferentiated nebula it was once thought to be. Moreover, had it then had a composition relatively different

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from what it appears to have been, its subsequent physical evolution would have resulted in a stellar universe quite unfitted to support life or, of course, man. This conviction is referred to as the anthropic principle of cosmology.

Further, scientific advance (as well as purely logical argument) strongly supports the view that the nature of the universe is *contingent*, i.e. that it could conceivably be other than it actually is. But if so, upon what is it contingent? Here we must of necessity leave science behind; a 'realist metaphysics and a sound Christian theology' must take over.

This brief summary quite fails to do justice to the vigour, even splendour, of the argument, which bristles with shrewd and incisive comments. He ends: 'In a very crucial sense, one must first say Creator in order to say Cosmos.' A book to give to an enquirer of more than average intelligence.

Witney, Oxon.

DOUGLAS C. SPANNER

### **OUR FRAGILE BRAINS: A Christian Perspective on Brain Research** D. Gareth Jones

IVP 1981 282pp. £3.95

ISBN 0 87784 792 4

The increase of knowledge always has posed problems for faith, and no doubt always will do so. The more intimately that knowledge touches the person of the subject, the more challenging and troublesome the problems become: sometimes ethical and practical, as in the case of genetic engineering, or nuclear energy; sometimes theoretical and philosophical, as in the case of Darwinism or cosmology. Our increasing knowledge of the human brain, coming at a time which has seen a phenomenal rise in, *inter alia*, the theory and practice of electronic computing, presents us with problems of both sorts. On the one hand, it provides us with powerful means of changing personality (by surgery) or 'expanding' consciousness (by drugs), with notable consequences for ethics. On the other, it hints that the brain may be merely a very elaborate computer, with even more far-reaching consequences for the whole biblical view of man. Whichever way we look at it, Christian thinkers need to be aware of work in this field, and that is where the present book seeks to meet a need. It does so admirably.

Originally on the staff of the department of anatomy at University College, London, D. Gareth Jones is now associate professor of anatomy and human biology at the University of Western Australia, and is a conservative Christian. He is writing, therefore, very much as a researcher in his own field; and his treatment strikes the reviewer as highly competent, scrupulously fair, yet with a very definite thrust of its own—the sort of approach one would wish for in a guide. He begins with a lucid account of the history of ideas about the brain, and of our present knowledge of its anatomy and cellular microstructure. A chapter follows on 'Language and Consciousness' in relation to the brain, with a fascinating account of the role of the two hemispheres. 'Damaged Brains and Diseased Personalities' recounts some startling case-histories. 'Brain Control' through surgery or electrode implantation, 'Behaviour Control' through drugs or psychological conditioning, and 'Environmental Influences' such as malnutrition, are other informative chapters. 'The New Consciousness' deals with techniques dependent on a certain element of training such as Transcendental Meditation or Biofeedback, and promising experiences transcending the

physical. But the most significant chapter is undoubtedly the last: 'The Human Brain and the Human Person'. Here, very skilfully, Prof. Jones discusses the perennial problems of mind and brain, determinism and free will: not academically, but in the light of a robust conviction of the pre-eminence of the human being as a *person*, with a dignity before, and a responsibility to, his Maker.

Well printed, well illustrated and reasonably priced.

Witney, Oxon.

DOUGLAS SPANNER

**TECHNOLOGY AND THE FUTURE: A Philosophical Challenge**  
**Egbert Schuurman**

Wedge Publishing Foundation, Canada 1980  
 Norfolk Press 1980 434pp. £12.95

Ca. ISBN 0 88906 111 4  
 UK ISBN 0 85211 044 8

What should a philosopher think of the microprocessor? In this lengthy and detailed study of technology, Professor Schuurman argues that modern society is ambivalent in its attitude to technological advance. On the one hand it is hailed as a saviour, on the other it is shunned as a dictator. The author, who teaches at the Free University of Amsterdam and writes from a Dooyeweerdian perspective, contends that such ambivalence is inherent in modern secularism, and that it can only be overcome by a properly Christian approach which advocates the liberation of technology for the service of man. Like fire, technology is a good servant but a bad master.

Who could complain at this? But how is it to be achieved? What institutions ought to be devised, and what safeguards erected? As with much writing from this particular stable, there is little to quibble about in general. But how are we to get from general propositions about the creation to the detailed prescriptions about technology? On this question, not surprisingly, Professor Schuurman has little to offer.

University of Liverpool

PAUL HELM

**WINTERS OF DISCONTENT** Industrial Conflict: A Christian  
 Perspective

Report by General Synod's Board for Social Responsibility  
 CIO Publishing 1981 51pp. £1.75

ISBN 0 7151 6558 5

In his foreword to this slim booklet, the Bishop of Lincoln says that he hopes the report by the Board for Social Responsibility will be 'a popular and readable piece of "map-work" and . . . a "contribution" to a view about some of the hard issues presented by industrial relations today . . .' Certainly the relationship between employers and employees, especially in the large state-owned organizations which provide services essential to the maintenance of our social fabric, do not seem to improve.

Canon Ronald Preston, who chaired the working party, has produced a very clear description of the issues, and anyone who wishes to be well informed before they 'moralize over symptoms' would benefit from reading it. The



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authors warn against confusing sociological with theological reflections, and plump for 'justice' as the key concept in reconciling differences. They stop well short of suggesting any specifically Christian approaches to the problems, derived from the NT. For instance, although they argue that strikes are nearly always damaging, there is no suggestion that withdrawal of labour is in any way sinful. Thus no Christian ideal is provided against which to measure the behaviour of groups or individuals in our close-knit society. As a result, we are left with an honest and moral survey of the issues which is useful but is also a pity, because ordinary people look to bodies like the Church of England for a lead in a society. In a period of rapid change, everyone needs a few clear fixed points; if we do not provide them, someone else surely will.

London EC4

SIMON WEBLEY

### **POVERTY, REVOLUTION AND THE CHURCH**

**Michael Paget-Wilkes**

Paternoster Press 1981 142pp. £3.80

ISBN 0 85364 285 0

This is a prophetic book, and it has all the strengths and weaknesses of prophecy. Michael Paget-Wilkes writes with a passionate concern born out of his experiences of the inequalities of society in South London. He challenges the middle-class complacency of much church life, and urges us to take seriously Jesus' commitment to the poor and his concern for justice. But that same passion allows him occasionally to overstate his case, to overlook what is good in contemporary church life, and to ask for a revolution which could ignore the historical element in our present institutional life.

The basic thesis of the book is that the church is institutionally identified with the wealthy and powerful élite within our society. Such an association is in total contrast to Jesus, whose message and life-style linked him to the poor and the oppressed. If, therefore, the church is to be true to the gospel of Jesus Christ, it must itself undergo a revolution and press for revolutionary changes in the structures of modern western society.

The book falls into four sections. First (chapter 1) Michael Paget-Wilkes examines the inequalities of our modern society. He quotes extensively from the reports of the Royal Commission on the Distribution of Income and Wealth, to show that 'the cycle of inequality' still exists within our society in spite of attempts to redistribute wealth through varying forms of taxation. Tinkering with the system will not right the situation: only 'a radical reappraisal of the political and economic balance' will produce a juster society. Secondly (chapters 2 & 3) he shows how the church, from the time of Constantine onwards, has become identified with the established economic and social order and is therefore guilty by association of prolonging the cycle of deprivation and inequality. Thirdly, he examines the biblical attitude to the poor and the oppressed, and to ownership and property. In some of the best sections of the book he discusses the provisions of Jubilee and the economic laws of Judaism, urging us to reassess their significance for today.

The longest chapter is concerned with our response to the social evils of the day in the light of these insights: 'Where do we go from here?' (chapter 6) and a postscript (chapter 7) sketches his basic theological assumptions—a holistic rather than a dualistic view of salvation. He criticizes the traditional evangelical

understanding of social action as 'of secondary importance', and the radical understanding which tends to remove any supernatural dimension from the gospel. Instead, 'full salvation... needs to be expressed in all three areas; in man's relationship to man, to the world, to God.' He recognizes the danger of rejecting capitalism, only to become ensnared in another political system: 'What is required is not further adaption of secular ideologies but a biblical ideology that is both related to the society in which we live, and at the same time able to stand critically apart from it through its own dependence on the prophetic revelation of God's word.'

It is a challenging book, which raises a number of important questions. First, how far is the situation changing? Even though many of the authorities he quotes are a few years old, the cycle of inequality is still with us. Mrs Thatcher's government has not removed it, and rising unemployment has probably made the gap between rich and poor even greater. In the church, however, there *are* seeds of change, and some of his criticisms do not appear to give full weight to the changes that are taking place. For example, in the matter of inherited buildings, many congregations (including Michael's own) have sold or adapted their Victorian barns in favour of more modest and appropriate structures. True, the legal establishment remains, but its effects are being eroded: the Crown Appointments Commission would be surprised to read that 'the government has the last word in appointing the bishops of the Church of England'. The letter may come from Downing Street, but the effective choice lies with the church—in the form of the commission—not with the government.

Secondly, Michael is surely right to ask the church for fundamental changes in some of its attitudes and thinking. Do we share Christ's passionate concern for justice? But should we seek a revolution rather than a reformation? 'To take Jesus' message seriously, we must fight injustice and self-seeking to the end, until it is overthrown. There can be no room for conciliation and compromise, and the kingdom of God cannot be built upon it. The kingdom will be built on reconciliation, which means exchanging the new for the old and this may involve decisive confrontation, and conflict, which the church should not be afraid of, or attempt to avoid' (p.112). The distinction between conciliation and reconciliation is important in his argument; the former being rejected as compromising the truth of the gospel. But granted that we tend to run away from conflict, sometimes for the wrong reasons, cannot the kingdom come through growth as well as revolution? The mustard seed is a parable of the kingdom as well as the pearl of great price! We have to live in our society and with our history—that is where God meets us and asks us to seek his kingdom. We can say 'Yes' to Michael's call (echoed by Partners in Mission (81)E, *To a Rebellious House?*) for positive discrimination in favour of the poor, but is revolution or reformation the right strategy?

Thirdly, while the pyramidal structure of the church can and has led to a wrong authoritarianism, congregationalism (towards which Michael appears to lean) has its own dangers. The genius of the Anglican structure, albeit undefined, is that it does allow local initiatives and local decision-making, while retaining a visible and practical expression of the church's catholicity in its episcopal and synodical structure. And the trend towards area bishops, area pastoral committees, etc., is for more local decision-making: the working-class voice and culture is finding the opportunity for self-expression, just as the 'middle-class' has done in the past.

I raise these questions not to undermine the importance of the book or of the issues it raises: I hope it will be widely read by clergy and PCC members, even if it angers some! Like all prophets he has put his finger on some uncomfortable

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areas. I raise them in an attempt to promote the debate about *how* we work for a juster society and a 'slimmed down' church which can truly be a signbearer for the kingdom of God. I welcome the book's uncompromising stance (even the misprints, of which there are too many—where is Dan. 4:44?—convey a sense of passionate concern) and hope that it will goad us all into seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

Mortlake Rectory, London

IAN CUNDY

### **MAN AND WOMAN IN CHRIST: An Examination of the Roles of Men and Women in the Light of Scripture and the Social Sciences**

**Stephen B. Clark**

Servant Books, USA 1980 753pp. \$15.95

USA ISBN 0 89283 084 0

Distributed in UK by T. and T. Clark £7.95

This is a remarkable and outstanding book, potentially an epoch-making one. In combining massive length and full documentation with a readable style, it reminds one of Dix's *Shape of the Liturgy*; and if it proves as influential as that book, the results will be far healthier for the church! It is in four sections. The first two sections, which comprise fifteen chapters (about 350 pages), are devoted to 'The Scriptural Teaching' and 'Assessing the Scriptural Teaching'. The next five chapters (about 200 pages) deal with 'The Scriptural Teaching in Contemporary Society', i.e. in the light of the social sciences. The last four chapters (about 100 pages) draw conclusions from what has gone before, under the heading 'A Christian Approach for Today'. Most of the remaining pages are filled by the notes.

The book is not primarily concerned with the ordination of women, but with the relationship between the sexes. It has often been remarked that Christian discussions of the ordination of women need this much broader framework and are seldom given it. Here, however, the lack is impressively supplied. The writer does, indeed, draw conclusions about the ordination of women, among other matters still more fundamental, but he does not devote an excessive amount of space to it (pp. 654–8 contain his main examination of the topic). His book is more concerned with the role of men and women in life as a whole, and forms a sort of heavyweight counterpart to Elisabeth Elliot's popular treatment, *Let me be a Woman* (Hodder & Stoughton).

One of the greatest surprises about the book is that it is written by a Roman Catholic. To read it, one could easily conclude that it was written by an exceptionally well-informed and intelligent conservative evangelical. The writer even devotes a brief section (pp. 345–50) to the question 'Is this Fundamentalism?', in which he makes some shrewd points. Yet his work carries the *Nihil Obstat* and *Imprimatur*.

Christian 'feminists' have never written at this length and depth, or anything like it. Unless they now do so, their case can be considered to have gone by default.

Latimer House, Oxford

ROGER BECKWITH

**THE PASSIONATE GOD Rosemary Haughton**

Darton, Longman and Todd 1981 343pp. £12.95

ISBN 0 232 51515 8

This is a book that sooner or later somebody had to write. To sum up its contents briefly, it is an imaginative attempt to interpret the gospel in terms of Romantic love. We are dealing here with '... a God so passionate he has to be Jesus, a Jesus so passionate he has to be God. ...' (p.7), a proposition which, as Mrs Haughton hastens to add, '... is so outrageous a demand on human intellect and human courage that there are only two possible responses: utter faith or utter rejection'.

This reviewer concurs wholeheartedly, and comes down firmly on the side of rejection. Why? For a start, Mrs Haughton's understanding of Romantic love is one-sided and hardly applicable to God. She writes: '... the language of Romantic passion can provide the kind of concepts, images and language tools which can enable us to articulate the theology of exchange, for it is a paradigm of Exchange' (p.27). The short answer to this is that it is not theology. If it were, God could fairly be accused of homosexuality—a prospect which must make Mrs Haughton's thesis exceedingly unpromising.

To say this, is not to deny the imaginative power and interest of much of the book, which ranges over the whole field of courtly love and devotes an entire chapter to Dante's passion for Beatrice. As a description of secularized Christianity, it is very intriguing. Mrs Haughton's mistake is to think that the Romantic tradition is the natural and even the *necessary* product of the Christian revelation, because it conveys better than anything else the image of man's experience of God. This idea is all the more insidious in that *matrimonial* love is used in the Bible to describe God's relationship with his people, and today this kind of love is closely linked to Romantic passion. This cannot, however, obscure the fact that Romantic love has never been closely linked to the marriage bond (certainly not in the Bible) and has usually been notoriously contrary to it. To regard religious revival as a 'passionate breakthrough' from one person to another, as Mrs Haughton does (p. 61) is to miss the point of religious experience entirely.

Reading this book cannot help but bring to mind the great doctrine of the impassibility of God. Indeed, it is a major example of what can happen when that doctrine is ignored or misunderstood. A corrective is certainly needed here, and this book may well stir someone to provide it.

Oak Hill College, London

GERALD BRAY

**THE PROBLEM OF SELF-LOVE IN ST AUGUSTINE****Oliver O'Donovan**

Yale University Press 1980 221pp. £8.80

ISBN 0 300 02468 1

'You shall love your neighbour *as yourself*.' I cannot remember any exposition of 'the second great commandment' which explained the force of the last two words. Preachers seem commonly to regard their significance as self-evident. The title of this rewritten D. Phil. thesis by the newly appointed Regius Professor of Moral Theology at Oxford indicates that the meaning of 'loving oneself' was not straightforward for Augustine, who was responsible for introducing the

concept of 'self-love' to western theology and also, it seems, for the prominence of the twofold summary of the law in the western church.

Dr O'Donovan brings to his task of analysis a deftness in philosophy, ethics and theology, a wide familiarity with Augustine's works (on which at points he is able to advance precisions in chronology and even authenticity) and a command of the relevant secondary literature. He has perforce to take account of the modern debate about the concept of 'love' in Augustine, provoked chiefly by Anders Nygren's *Agape and Eros*. Among subsequent contributors he gives pride of place over Ragnar Holte and John Burnaby to a lesser-known Swedish scholar Gunnar Hultgren. His own contribution is to identify four aspects of love in Augustine's thought. Nygren exaggerated what O'Donovan calls *positive love*, the pursuit of a chosen goal by the lover in freely directing himself towards his own happiness. Holte by contrast overstressed *cosmic love*, its ontological aspect, grounded cosmologically and teleologically, and moving all things towards their appropriate ends. Between these poles O'Donovan marks out *rational love*, an evaluative appreciation which, with the detachment of an observer, apprehends the relative worth of love's objects; and *benevolent love*, which wills 'that something which has its existence from God should fulfil its existence for God' and hence is integral to love for the neighbour.

Against this background, the work distinguishes three main 'tones' of self-love: a) *an unfavourable tone*—self-love as the root of all sin and rebellion against God, 'the love of self to the contempt of God' which created the earthly city; b) *a neutral tone*—the natural condition of either man's animal or rational being, his instinctive concern for his own survival and safety; c) *A favourable tone*—man's discovery and pursuit of his true well-being in God, whereby 'we love ourselves by loving God'. 'Augustine has no place either for a virtue of self-love independent of the love of God or for the love of God without self-love.'

The author weaves his way skilfully through Augustine's development of these ideas—paying regard to their chiefly Stoic and Neoplatonic inspiration—to the scriptural texts Augustine bent to their service and to how, if at all, they relate to each other. If in the end he has to conclude that for Augustine self-love 'is not in itself a finished, self-conscious theological artifact', yet it remains 'the product of his most important psychological and theological speculations.' It belongs inseparably to his ethical eudaemonism, which regards the quest for one's own happiness as central to the determination of moral obligation. In a valuable last chapter O'Donovan seeks to show that critics of self-love in Augustine and of his eudaemonist ethics in general are really attacking his acceptance of an immanent theology in the created order. The ultimate issues are metaphysical: Is there a continuity between creation and redemption such that the latter fulfils the destiny of the former?

Important books are sometimes easy to digest. This is not one of them. Its argument is at times too condensed, and it makes heavy demands on the reader. But it will be indispensable to serious students of Augustine and, I suspect, to historians of ethics and philosophy also. Although the Reformation largely killed off the medieval concern with 'self-love', it was Augustine's merit to have tried, albeit with largely non-biblical materials (although I think the Neoplatonic contribution once or twice overdone here), to give meaning to the words of Jesus within the expansive confines of his great apologetic and theological enterprise. Dr O'Donovan is a sympathetic, yet never over-protective, expositor of a great man's thought.

**THE DYNAMIC OF TRADITION A. M. Allchin**

Darton, Longman and Todd 1981 151pp. £4.50

ISBN 0 232 51516 6

How is the past related to the present, and how are both related to the future? This is, in part at least, the question of the significance of tradition. The author of this book has drawn widely from the spiritual traditions of the Christian West and East (the Orthodox tradition is obviously of special interest to him) and from poets, medieval and modern, to illuminate his thesis that in all genuinely creative, artistic work, and in the experience of prayer and worship, the past and present come together and give promise for the future. Among modern writers, T. S. Eliot figures largely (his essay, 'Tradition and the Individual Talent', published ten years before he announced his adherence to Christianity, is referred to appreciatively). From earlier times, a group of poets and mystics of the late fourteenth century, and a group of Anglican and Scottish divines of the early seventeenth century, provide illustrations of the power of tradition to enhance the sense of life's continuity and to bind together the disparate elements of human experience. The offering of praise to God, who is immanent in creation as well as transcendent over it, is the activity which above all others leads to a recognition of the unity of all things.

At a time like the present, when the sheer pace of events tends on the one hand to make us all dizzy and forgetful of the value to us of our past, and on the other hand causes us to sigh nostalgically for earlier, supposedly happier, times, this book gently draws us back, as Christians, to a recognition that the eternal is present in the midst of time—at all periods of history, including our own.

Wheldrake Rectory, York

JOHN COCKERTON

**I BELIEVE IN CHURCH GROWTH Eddie Gibbs**

Hodder and Stoughton 1981 460pp. £5.95

ISBN 0 340 26352 0

Eddie Gibbs argues from the biblical theology of creation, covenant, servant, redemption, new covenant, kingdom, gospel and church towards the justification of mission, evangelism, and church growth on the agenda of the church. He then 'contextualizes' his theology in the chapter on 'Gospel and Culture'. His balanced treatment of kingdom, institutional development and social action is marred by uncritical acceptance of Peter Wagner's oversimplistic definition of church growth. As a result, the practical sections to all intents and purposes ignore the careful theological foundation of the first 130 pages.

The great strength of the book lies in the chapters on 'Measurement and Meaning', 'Groups and Growth', 'Structures and Strategy' and 'Leadership and Relationships'. He rightly stresses the parallel importance of both quantitative and qualitative growth, but unfortunately fails to offer any practical tools for qualitative assessment. He underlines the need for an appropriate and vigorous style of leadership. However, his description of 'non-directive leadership' as 'a contradiction in terms' reveals either misunderstanding of the terms involved, or else an exclusion of enabling, empowering skills of leadership, in favour of a style which seduces people into a compliant following of the enthusiastic vision of the 'leader'.

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Production of the book appears to have been rushed, as evidenced by the number of uncorrected errors. Lack of an index or acknowledgement of statistical sources hamper the book's use as a reference work.

The reader is left with an impression of infectious enthusiasm insufficiently rooted in the reality of church and society. The constraints on healthy development of the church in England lie so much deeper in the roots of social, psychological and institutional dynamics than American theory allows. Eddie Gibbs gives no sign as yet of having heard the deeper agenda raised by resistance to change in the church, or by indications that churches grow most rapidly in transitional cultures or during periods of social stress. 'Church growth' could be interpreted as a response of the religious institutions to social pressure to provide more and better opium for the people during a period of rising global, national and local *angst*.

Urban Church Project, London E14

DAVID WASDELL

## **FAMILY SERVICES Kenneth Stevenson**

Alcuin Club Manual No. 3

Alcuin Club: SPCK 1981 45pp. £1.95

ISBN 0 281 03826 0

One of the significant post-war developments which so far appears to have escaped the attention of the Liturgical Commission, is the family service in the Church of England. Many evangelical clergy have seen this as an ideal way of bringing the unchurched into the worship of the local congregation, and in consequence such services have particularly flourished in new housing areas. However, others have found difficulty in knowing how to bridge the gap between the family service and the normal liturgical experience of the congregation, and to link such a service with what is increasingly being seen as the church's main family service, the Holy Communion.

Kenneth Stevenson's book is the fruit of his experience as a curate at Boston Parish Church, and includes a valuable chapter (5) of sample services for a whole year. But the reader must not cheat and turn to this chapter first, as the opening chapter on 'Aims' should be required reading for everyone who would think of experimenting with such a service (or is wishing to rethink the principles behind one already in existence). Those who consider such occasions as best served by a 'hymn-sandwich' will do well to ponder Mr Stevenson's motto (p.4) that 'liturgy is the educational matrix of the church'.

There is in consequence an imaginative use of various liturgical forms, involving also dance, drama, mime, choral reading and dialogue. Not all clergy will be happy with some of the suggestions, such as sprinklings and censuring, and here, as in other areas of liturgy, care will have to be taken to ensure that all the activities help to clarify rather than obscure the main theme of the service.

*Family Services* makes a valuable addition to the literature already available on this subject, and should be read by everyone who is involved in planning such services. One wonders how far the reference in the sample service on p.30 to embarrassment at Christ's 'gaiety', is open to misunderstanding.

Oak Hill College, London

DAVID H. WHEATON

**DER GELEHRTE DIPLOMAT. ZUM WIRKEN  
CHRISTIAN CARL JOSIAS BUNSENS**

(Beihefte der Zeitschrift für Religions – und Geistesgeschichte 21)

edited Erich Geldbach

E. J. Brill, Leiden 1980 133pp. 40 guilders

ISBN 90 04 06346 7

This collection of six essays (five in German and one in English) is a welcome reminder of the extensive influence the Prussian ambassador in London had, not only in his native Germany and here in England, but also wider afield as well. Bunsen was a diplomat, orientalist, lay theologian, hymnologist and student of liturgy. He was also an ecumenical pioneer, seeking to build bridges between the various branches of European Protestantism. Many of these aspects are surveyed here: K. D. Gross evaluates Bunsen's political and diplomatic work as the Prussian ambassador in London; R. Preyer writes on his association with the Anglo-American literary community in Rome; K. Schmidt-Clausen on Bunsen's contribution to the founding of the Jerusalem bishopric; U. Kaplony-Heckel on his place in Egyptology; and H. Hattenhauer and E. Geldbach on his controversy and correspondence with Friedrich Julius Stahl and Franz Lieber respectively.

In these essays, Bunsen's influence on, and friendship with, such English churchmen as Thomas Arnold, Charles Kingsley, Richard Whately, H. H. Milman, Augustus Hare, and other Broad Churchmen of the 'Germano-Coleridgean grouping', is clearly set out. However, one major area of Bunsen's influence on English church life is almost entirely overlooked: his persuasion of people like Catherine Winkworth, Frances Elizabeth Cox, A. T. Russell, and others, to translate German hymns into English. Indeed, his hymnological activities as a whole should have received more attention.

At the end of the volume there is an appendix listing Bunsen's publications in which his hymn books are inadequately and incorrectly listed. His *Versuch eines allgemeinen Gesang—und Gebetbuches zum Kirchen—und Hausgebrauch*, Hamburg, 1833, is correctly listed. But what is given as its second edition, *Allgemeines Evangelisches Gesang—und Gebetbuch zum Kirchen—und Hausgebrauch*, was really a new collection and was not published in Hamburg in 1871 but in 1846. Further, the new edition edited by Albert Fischer in 1881 was based on the 1833 collection rather than that of 1846. However, this criticism apart, these essays underline the fact that for an understanding of English church history in the mid-nineteenth century, the life and work of Baron Bunsen should not be ignored.

Latimer House, Oxford

ROBIN A. LEAVER

## In brief

**GOD'S WORDS: Studies of Key Bible Themes J. I. Packer**

IVP 1981 223pp. £1.95

ISBN 0 85110 434 7

As the author remarks in his foreword, biblical word study is somewhat out of fashion, 'its reputation tarnished by mistakes of method' in the past. What comes from the professor of systematic and historical theology at Regent College, Vancouver is of different calibre. Particular value is to be found in a nine-page introduction, 'Of Biblical Words and Themes', which sets out the principles for this type of study.



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### **PREACHING THE NEW TESTAMENT** A. M. Hunter

SCM Press 1981 148pp. £3.50

ISBN 0 334 01292 9

Hunter says it is his 'conviction that one prime cause for the church's decline today is the lack of truly evangelical preaching' and that the cure 'is to put back Christ and the Gospel (which is about divine salvation for sinners) into the centre of our preaching'. To that end he offers thirty-four sermons on NT themes. Books of sermons are not always popular—one can but hope that this one will be read by many who have forgotten what preaching should be about.

### **INTO THE WAY OF PEACE:** Readings in St Luke's Gospel

**Maurice Wood**

Triangle: SPCK 1982 126pp. £1.25

ISBN 0 281 03846 5

All credit to the Bishop of Norwich for this well-constructed and readable series of daily studies. Though compiled for Lent, the studies are totally relevant at any time, since they offer a clear sketch of Christ's earthly ministry, leading on to his redemptive work on the cross and the triumph of his resurrection. Each day has a passage for reading and meditation, a key verse, comment, and a closing prayer, whilst a theme for each week enables additional material to be provided for weekly group study. The obvious Anglican background (it is the Blackburn Diocesan Lent Book) need be no deterrent to its use in ecumenical groups.

### **AMAZING LOVE:** The Parable of the Prodigal Son

**John R. DeWitt**

The Banner of Truth Trust 1981 160pp. £1.95

ISBN 0 85151 328 X

A fairly detailed look at the parable of the prodigal son. Whilst not neglecting any aspect of the story, the author places the emphasis where it should be—on God's love and peace.

### **THE LAST DAYS OF JESUS:** The Forty Days Between the Resurrection and Ascension

**T. V. Moore**

The Banner of Truth Trust 1981 212pp. £1.95

ISBN 0 85151 321 2

First published in 1858, this book deals with the Lord's appearances during the forty days between the resurrection and the ascension. The inevitable dating in style does not detract from a useful combination of apologetic, expositional and devotional material.

### **GRACE AND THE GENTILES:** Expository Studies in Six

Pauline Letters **Marcus Loane**

The Banner of Truth Trust 1981 149pp. £2.50

ISBN 0 85151 327 1

Convinced that—apart from the glory of Christ—the cause of the Gentiles dominated Paul's thinking, the former Archbishop of Sydney seeks to explore something of the process of that thought. He does so in twenty-four studies from the two epistles to the Thessalonians and the four 'prison epistles'—one study from each chapter of each epistle. Here is a book to bring home the richness of our position in Christ and strengthen our resolve to work for him in the world. My only criticism is the lack of a list of contents.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY OF HENRY VENN'S PRINTED WRITINGS  
WITH INDEX Wilbert R. Shenk**

Institute of Mennonite Studies, Indiana 1975 US\$3.75

Distribution by Scottish Institute of Missionary Studies 100pp. £1.00

A comprehensive list of all Venn's printed writings which had been located up to the date of publication. The compiler observes that other items may well come to light.

LANCE BIDEWELL

**PILGRIM'S ENGLAND: A Personal Journey William Purcell**

Longman 1981 190pp. £8.50

ISBN 0 582 50290 X

**JOHN WESLEY'S ENGLAND: A 19th Century Pictorial History**

based on an 18th Century Journal compiled Richard Bewes

Hodder and Stoughton 1981 hardcover £8.95

paperback £5.95

ISBN 9 340 25747 4

**THE SEASONS IN STAINED GLASS**

**Sonia Halliday and Laura Lushington**

Lion Publishing 1981 32pp. £1.95

ISBN 0 85648 351 6

Albatross Books, Australia 1981 A\$5.95

ISBN 0 86760 270 8

**PHOTO GUIDE TO THE BIBLE**

introduced Donald Wiseman and Michael Green

Lion Publishing 1981 285pp. £1.95

ISBN 0 85648 430 X

Albatross Books, Australia 1981 A\$14.95

ISBN 0 86760 335 6

William Purcell sets out from St Albans, as a modern pilgrim, to visit the major shrines in England and to rediscover some of the beliefs which have motivated those who, for hundreds of years, have travelled along the same paths. One may not agree with all these beliefs, but the result is a fascinating blend of history and anecdote, travelogue and personal comment, liberally illustrated with photographs and line drawings—the latter not without humour!

*John Wesley's England* gives a vivid picture of life in the Georgian era. The book is attractively designed, with calligraphy by Elaine Cooper, and is illustrated with wood cuts. Richard Bewes has compiled the historical background to over 200 cities, towns and villages with which Wesley would have been familiar, and has included descriptions of some of the famous people with whom the great man had contact. I have not seen the hard cover edition, but the format makes the paperback somewhat awkward to handle.

There is no such problem with the slim hardback of photographs depicting *The Seasons in Stained Glass*, although I should have liked more examples of this delightful art. Lion Publishing produce many books which are pleasing to the eye as well as being informative. This is certainly one of them.

Another is the splendid *Photo Guide to the Bible*, which is a combination of two earlier publications (1972 OT and 1973 NT). The text has been completely rewritten and the whole production aims 'to make the setting of the Bible live for those who are unable to visit all the places themselves'. With almost 200 beautiful colour photographs, relief maps, Bible texts and explanatory notes, it does just that.

HAZEL BIDEWELL

## OTHER BOOKS RECEIVED

- Almond Press** *Those Who Ponder Proverbs*, J. G. Williams, £5.95 (pb) £14.95 (hc), 1981
- Arthur James** *Ladders up to Heaven*, E. Urch, £1.95, 1982
- Banner of Truth** *A Brief Exposition of the Evangel of Jesus Christ According to Matthew*, D. Dickson, £5.95, 1981; *They shall be Mine*, J. Tallach, £1.95, 1981; *The Importance of the Local Church*, D. E. Wray, 40p, 1981
- Charles Higham** *Bibliotheca Hymnologica (1890)*, ed. R. A. Leaver, £3.00, 1981
- Christian Focus Publications** *Ruth the Harvest Girl*, C. Mackenzie, 70p, 1980; *Peter the Fisherman*, C. Mackenzie, 70p, 1980
- T. and T. Clark** *The Third Reich and the Christian Churches*, ed. P. Matheson, £2.95, 1981
- Darton, Longman and Todd** *Parables for Now*, E. Flood, £2.50, 1981; *More Parables for Now*, E. Flood, £2.50, 1981; *Yoga and Contemplation*, B. Amaldas, £2.95, 1981
- Geoffrey Chapman** *God and Man in African Religion*, E. I. Metuh, £3.95, 1981
- Gospel Publishing House** *The Book of Acts*, S. M. Horton, US\$10.95, 1981
- Hamish Hamilton** *The Foreigner: A Search for the First Century Jesus*, Desmond Stewart, £9.95, 1981
- Harrison Trust** *Agreeing to Differ*, D. Samuel, 40p, 1981
- Hodder and Stoughton** *Love Until it Hurts*, D. Rae, £2.95, 1981; *Through the Year with Pope John Paul II*, ed. T. Castle, £6.95, 1981; *A Preacher Among the Prophets*, G. B. Duncan, £1.95, 1981; *The Soldiers' Armoury*, C. W. Kew, 95p, 1981; *The Unexpected Call*, A. Arnott, £1.75, 1981
- Kestrel Books** *The Nativity (3D Christmas Scene)*, £4.50, 1981
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# Opinion

Reviewing books is often a highly subjective matter, and so, I suppose, is the response of those who happen to disagree with the actual published review.

Without wishing to take up space in arguing a case, I should merely wish to record my opinion that Dr Alan Rogers seems to have taken more notice of the dictum of Sydney Smith ('I never read a book before reviewing it—it prejudices one so') than the content of David Edwards' excellent work *Christian England*. I personally found the latter both stimulating and highly instructive, and could not recognize it in the dismissive remarks of your reviewer.

My gratitude to Dean Edwards is only fractionally diminished by the delightful misprint which tells us that the thirteenth century saw the definition of transubstantiation in which 'the bread and *wind*' become the body and blood of Christ. The book is worth it for that one howler!

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