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## Book Reviews

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A COMMENTARY ON THE JOHANNINE EPISTLES. *J. L. Houlden*. A. and C. Black, 1973. 164 pp. £2.75 (£1.60 paperback).

It may not be a good idea to ask one who has written a commentary on St. John's Epistles to review another writer's contribution to the same topic. There is an inevitable tendency to favour one's own interpretations. I have tried to guard against this temptation, but I am still bound to say that I have read Mr. Houlden's commentary with a good deal of disappointment, not to say concern.

This is not because the book falls below the standards of scholarly exegesis which one has come to associate with the Black series of commentaries. The Principal of Cuddesdon shows himself well aware (perhaps too much aware!) of the latest German works on the subject, and writes in a challenging and spontaneous style.

What then is in my view wrong? Just this. Up to now, most commentators, set to write on a New Testament book, have begun by accepting it as *in some sense authoritative*, and set themselves the task of making its message clearer and more effective in the minds of their readers. Mr. Houlden addresses the Johannine Epistles as if he were marking an essay by a GCE candidate, and awards him Gamma minus!

It would not be fair to omit a short sketch of his reading of the Epistles and of the place he gives them in early Church history. Briefly it is this. St. John's Gospel represents a certain interpretation of the message and work of Jesus, marked by a high Christology, and some leaning towards a 'gnostic' understanding of the Gospel. (Here Houlden follows Käsemann.) Epistles 1 and 2 represent a conservative, cautious reaction, addressed to those who, by going further along the 'gnostic' line have emptied the faith of its vital content, and have separated themselves from the main body of believers. Epistle 3 is addressed to a congregation where the 'heretics' under Diotrephes have won the day, and where the orthodox have been turned out. This reconstruction is, of course, very speculative. We know little about the relative dating of the documents, and Houlden's view rejects the opinion, still held by many scholars, that all four documents come from the same hand. His reconstruction is certainly a possible explanation of the facts.

All that said, it now has to be added that Houlden puts the Gospel in class

one for intellectual depth and clarity, the Epistles in class three. 'Muddled,' 'inconsistent,' 'contradictory' and 'conservative' are the words that he frequently applies to its arguments. The acceptance of the letters into the Canon means nothing to our commentator, still less the instruction in the Articles that we should not expound one passage of Scripture so as to make it contrary to another! Indeed, Houlden does little else. At every point he contrasts the Epistles with the Gospel, to the detriment of the former. On the other hand, every parallel between the Epistles and the Qumran texts is hailed with obvious delight.

I think I can award the author a good mark for his translation, but the Greek of the original is so very simple that if we all had nothing to work on save the Authorised Version we should not go far wrong.

I should be sorry to think that all Cuddesdon students are to be subjected to such a very Germanic approach to Scripture. It is far from that traditionally associated with Anglican New Testament scholarship.

RONALD LEICESTER

EGERIA'S TRAVELS. *John Wilkinson*. SPCK, 1973. 320 pp. £3.00.

In the preliminary chapters of the book Mr. Wilkinson sets the scene for his translation of Egeria's Travels with skill, erudition, and sustained interest. His description of the Orient in the 4th century, with its discussion of the background and meaning of pilgrimage for the people of that time, makes fascinating reading with its numerous quotations from contemporary sources. In particular, Mr. Wilkinson is obviously fascinated by what can be deduced from Egeria's writings about the ecclesiastical set-up in Jerusalem. He gives excellent diagrams of the layout of the city and of the various churches which she visited; and a fair description of the different services she attended. One feature which she found unfamiliar was that 'any Presbyters present were allowed to preach and when they had finished there was always a final sermon from the Bishop. Applause or groans from the Congregation marked their enthusiastic participation in what was being read or preached'—even if most of our congregations would find this as unfamiliar as Egeria did, perhaps we could do with more of such audience participation in church today! The translation of Egeria's narrative itself reads attractively as if we were overhearing her retailing her adventures to her sisters back at home.

Mr. Wilkinson concludes the book by a series of detailed notes on the text itself and then an admirable selection of additional notes on various related issues raised by the text. These are somewhat technical in parts but once again make the whole presentation valuable and interesting. The bibliography and indexes at the end of the book make it particularly useful for occasional reference, and as a source book for those interested in other fields.

All in all this paperback re-issue will make the book, originally published in 1971, much more widely available. Mr. Wilkinson and SPCK are to be congratulated on what will surely be a most attractive addition to many a Christian bookshelf.

PATRICK BLAIR

COMMON PLACES OF MARTIN BUCER. *Translated and edited by D. F. Wright*. Sutton Courtenay Press, 1973. 520 pp. £8.00.

Nothing but praise should greet this selection of pieces from the writings of Bucer. None but will salute the editor with respect for his labours, with

pleasure for his success. He has gone deep down into the vast mine of Bucer's folios, made his discoveries, drilled out the ore, and here presents it to us ready prepared for our use.

Let us explain the process a little more fully and with less of metaphor. Martin Bucer never wrote a full-length dogmatics. Besides many smaller and occasional pieces, he was what an earlier age would have called a painful interpreter of Holy Scripture. His three major commentaries were on the Gospels (1527 - 1553), Romans (1536), and Ephesians (1562, published posthumously from lecture notes). These, and particularly Romans, had an idiosyncratic form in that they were several books in one—a translation of the text, a paraphrase on it, a running commentary, and by no means least in extent or importance, a number of essays on the chief doctrines treated in the book.

These essays, technically called *loci communes*, have provided the main source of supply for the editor. From Romans come the common places on predestination, original sin, free will, justification, faith, and baptism; from the Gospels the two on Peter and the Papacy, and Marriage, Divorce and Celibacy; from Ephesians that on the Church. There are also included six shorter writings, either in whole or in part: *A Brief Summary of Christian Doctrine* (1548), *The Restoration of Lawful Ordination* (1549?), *A Brief Statement . . . on How the Sick should be Visited*, and three distinct writings which serve to illustrate the development of Bucer's eucharist thought—*The Apology of Martin Bucer* (1526), *The Account of the Concord . . . on the Eucharist* (1536), and *Aphorisms on the Sacred Supper of the Lord* (1550?).

This is a good choice, one which follows the lines of Bucer's own emphases; for it allows us to read Bucer's straight theology on the major Reformation controversies, and also represents adequately his social and community theology as well as his work as a practical Reformer in Strasbourg and a counsellor of the English in the days of King Edward. Moreover, the editor has not only written a very useful general introduction to Bucer's life and thought, but also supplied full and most learned notes and good bibliographies. It is hard to say which is to be the more admired, his masterly introduction to, say the *Aphorisms*, or the ease with which his translation moves. Few would disagree if we called Bucer's Latin uncouth. I expected to find this quality carried over into the English; but the editor has achieved a remarkable smoothness and clarity.

So little of Bucer has ever been translated into English and so few of his works in the original languages are to be found in English libraries, that the publication of this book must be regarded as a red-letter day for English Reformation studies. We hope that it will mark the beginning of wider interest in this some time Regius Professor of Divinity in an English university.

T. H. L. PARKER

WILLIAM LAW: HIS LIFE AND THOUGHT. *A. Keith Walker*. SPCK, 1973. 280 pp. £3.95. NINE PUBLIC LECTURES ON IMPORTANT SUBJECTS IN RELIGION. *Count N. L. von Zinzendorf*. Translated and Edited by G. W. Forell. University of Iowa Press, 1973. 170 pp. n.p.

The latter part of the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries together form a period of unusual interest and importance in the history of religious and Christian thought and experience, and among the various formative writers and influential people, William Law and Count von Zinzendorf hold an

important place. Yet, while Zinzendorf's importance in the development of Moravianism (the Moravian church) is fairly familiar, Law is one who, as Dr. Walker rightly remarks, 'is virtually unknown to the reading public'. This is strange, considering the different situation in the past, and especially when remembering his influence on both John and Charles Wesley, so that Bishop Warburton could state (with a sly mixture of truth and exaggeration) 'Mr. William Law begot Methodism, and Count Zinzendorf rocked the cradle'. Enough that the epigram indicates the important cross-currents that acted and re-acted together in these times and movements.

Dr. Walker has developed an account of Law's thought, writings and influence that fills in much that was missing in Overton's *Life and Opinions of William Law*, with a wealth of background and source material that lies behind Law's ideas throughout his long and energetic life. Thus each of his successive writings is placed within its intellectual context, sometimes with compressed but sufficiently clear exposition of views Law was either adapting for himself or actively combatting, in the controversies in which he took part from time to time. There emerges the lively impression of an austere personality, yet one very aware of church and society enough to draw the pen-pictures of characters embodying virtues and vices (and, interestingly enough, more effective in the case of examples to shun, than in the case of those to follow!); a much sought-after counsellor on the spiritual life and an able controversialist against opponents such as Mandeville, Hoadly and Warburton. And besides all this, one who imbibed and used for his own thought and teaching, the peculiar speculations of Jacob Boehme, whose influence increasingly supplanted that of the non-juring churchmanship of his earlier life. Dr. Walker, now Precentor of Chichester, has provided us with a very welcome work of standard usefulness for this period and offered fresh understanding of Law—including another assessment of the ambivalent relation of John Wesley to him—which will make the book a necessary one for a due appreciation of eighteenth century British Christianity.

A similar welcome is to be given to Professor Forell's translation and editing of Zinzendorf's *Nine Public Lectures*, very attractively printed and produced by the University of Iowa Press. In his editorial introduction, Forell sketches the continuing interest in Zinzendorf, especially on the Continent, and then outlines his influence upon John Wesley and eventual breach with him; and his activities in the American Colonies and general effect upon the ensuing growth of denominations based on varying cultural and language backgrounds. This foreword concludes with a brief indication of the setting in which the *Nine Public Lectures* were given. In the longer view of theological development, especially through Zinzendorf's known influence on Schleiermacher, it is interesting to note, not only the particular theological emphases made in Lutheran doctrine by him, but, just as much, the Pietist urge to feeling and affection as essential to the faith response of the true believer. In this, as in his apparent basic acceptance of the 17th century pattern of the process of conversion, Zinzendorf is worth comparing with the teaching of Jonathan Edwards, and his 'sense of the heart'. It is therefore a considerable contribution to the comparative study of the great eighteenth century evangelical teachers to have this translation of Zinzendorf's lectures provided. A thirty-three page bibliography, mainly of German sources, completes the book and indicates the hinterland of study for those who would wish to continue further.

G. J. C. MARCHANT

**POLITICS AND THE PUBLIC CONSCIENCE: SLAVE EMANCIPATION AND THE ABOLITIONIST MOVEMENT IN BRITAIN.** *Edith F. Hurwitz.* George Allen & Unwin. 179 pp. £3.65.

This book is one of a series in which a particular historical question is treated in some depth. The general editor is Professor G. R. Elton of Cambridge, and the series ranges widely from the origins of English feudalism (No. 19) to a title with a contemporary ring, *The Woman Movement* (No. 5). The present volume contains an introductory essay of eighty pages, followed by eleven illustrative documents, including excerpts from the writings or letters of Wilberforce, Thomas Clarkson, and T. F. Buxton. Mrs. Hurwitz does not accept the view recently propounded by such authorities as Eric Williams or the Nigerian historian Michael Crowder (cf. *The Story of Nigeria*, p. 115) that a powerful factor in the suppression of slavery was the profitability to capitalists, in an era of free trade, of the growth of 'legitimate commerce'. Instead, the roots of abolition were in the Evangelicals' insistence on the value of all men before God and the universal need for salvation. Ideology, not economics, provided the dynamic (see pp. 16, 97). The method by which the abolitionists attained their objective, a national campaign producing huge numbers of parliamentary petitions (500 in one day on the 13th May 1833, the day before Stanley made his proposals (p. 62)) shows again that they had nothing to learn from modern techniques of peaceful persuasion. Mr. Whitelaw might ponder wryly on Stanley's fate as a secretary of State: 'having just grappled with one piece of legislation in Ireland that was fraught with controversy (he) was now acknowledged to have the competence to deal with another of equal excitement and conflict' (p. 60). T. E. YATES

**THE LETTERS AND DIARIES OF JOHN HENRY NEWMAN: VOL. XXV, THE VATICAN COUNCIL, JANUARY 1870 TO DECEMBER 1871.** *Edited with Notes and Introduction by Stephen Charles Dessain and Thomas Gornall, S.J.* Clarendon Press, OUP, 1974. 496 pp. £12.00 net.

Newman's chief preoccupations in the years 1870 and 1871 were the Vatican Council and the promulgation of the Dogma and Papal Infallibility, the publication of *An Essay in aid of a Grammar of Assent* and the re-issue of some of his earlier writings in *Essays Critical and Historical*.

Although Newman refused to make public his misgivings about the expediency of promulgating the Dogma of Papal Infallibility, the contents of his highly confidential letter to Bishop Ullathorne of Birmingham became common knowledge. He regarded the Definition as a desperate step but consoled himself and others with its 'limited nature'. Also, he recalled those words of St. Augustine which were 'the shadow of a hand upon the wall' in his own religious development, *Securus judicat orbis terrarum*, translating them, 'the judgment of the whole Church has no chance of being wrong'.

Completion of the *Grammar of Assent* entailed much hard work but won Newman many golden opinions. He thought it 'dry', but the first edition sold out in a day.

To quote the dust-wrapper, it is wonderful to live with Newman day by day. Many touches bring him alive, from his keeping an Anglican vicar's wife to her promise of a mulberry-tree for the Oratory garden to his many complaints about the poor summer of 1871.

ROGER JOB

LIVINGSTONE. *Tim Jeal*. Heinemann, 1973. 427 pp. £3.75. DAVID LIVINGSTONE: HIS TRIUMPH, DECLINE AND FALL. *Cecil Northcott*. Lutterworth, 1973. 140 pp. £2.75.

Nineteen hundred and seventy-three, the centenary of Livingstone's death saw the publication of both these books and Geoffrey Moorhouse's *The Missionaries* which devotes two chapters to Livingstone in a survey of the missionary movement in Africa in the nineteenth century. Moorhouse adds nothing to what Jeal and Northcott have written about the Victorian hero. Jeal's book is a well-documented biography, brilliantly done; it will be the standard life for a very long time; Northcott's is a much briefer commentary containing enough narrative for the general reader but mainly concerned with value judgments. It is also attractively written, has facts and insights not found in Jeal and comes from a man who has had fifteen years experience of 'Livingstonia' as secretary of the London Missionary Society.

Readers are in for a shock; Livingstone is completely demythologised as the chapter headings in both books suggest. Both authors retain some respect for Livingstone the explorer and geographer; but little for the missionary who made one convert who lapsed and for the husband who was married to Africa rather than to Mary Moffatt. There is a nobility about Livingstone and a consideration for his African porters, lacking in Burton and Speke. There is also immense courage and an ability to push himself when ill and in great physical pain. But there are unpleasant facts to be faced; between them the books show why and how the Victorian public were concerned about Livingstone as they were about no other man save General Gordon, the other 'saint-hero' who died in Africa.

There are in fact only two brief periods when Livingstone's name filled the headlines from 1856 to 1858 when he was touring Britain after crossing Africa from coast to coast, and from 1871 to 1873 when Stanley was telling the world how he 'found' Livingstone and the burial in Westminster Abbey of the man who had died on his knees in darkest Africa. If it had not been for Stanley, Livingstone would be no better known than Thomas Fowell Buxton who having abolished slavery in the British Empire suggested that an attempt should be made to replace trade in people by legitimate industry and trade in West Africa in connection with the spread of the Gospel. Livingstone was present in 1840 in Exeter Hall at the founding of the 'Society for the Extinction of the Slave Trade and the Civilisation of Africa'. Livingstone's more famous speech in the Senate House at Cambridge in 1857 appealing for men to promote 'Christianity and Commerce' in central Africa was a continuation of Buxton's ideal but the climate of central Africa was as deadly as that of the Niger and the opportunity of growing cotton less real.

From the speeches of 1857 came the Universities Mission to Central Africa and the lesser known London Missionary Society mission in Linyanti. Bishop Mackenzie and Henry Burrup of the UMCA and three adults and five children of the LMS mission died of fever in areas where Livingstone said that Europeans could settle without danger to their health. In both cases Livingstone was prepared to slander the character of dead missionaries including Mackenzie, whom in life he had greatly admired. Jeal writes: 'His attacks on the dead Bishop almost equalled the libels he had penned after the Linyanti missionaries had died. With characteristic callousness he told John Moffatt that "the effect will be better men will come to the work".'

Northcott may be right to say that Livingstone was single-minded if by that he is referring to his aim to suppress the East African slave trade and find the source of the Nile; he is wrong if he does not fully recognise as Jeal does the duplicity to which Livingstone would stoop when his optimism proved ill-founded and the true facts might get back to Britain. The East African Slave Trade did disappear, British protectorates were proclaimed in Nyasaland and Uganda within twenty years of his death, of which he would have approved, but the man shown in the TV documentary 'The Search for the Nile' is nearer myth than reality.

There is a real danger that Cecil Northcott's little hard-back will be squeezed out by Tim Jeal's biography which is more than twice its length and only costs £1 more. This would be a pity as both books deserve a wide readership. Secular publishers have resources and certainties of circulation denied to religious publishers, which makes the reviewer wonder about the advisability of Lutterworth Press putting their former editor's book into paper-back from the start.

MICHAEL HENNELL

IAN RAMSEY, BISHOP OF DURHAM: A MEMOIR. *David L. Edwards.* OUP, 1973. £2.00.

It is a very considerable achievement on the part of the author and the publisher for this book to be produced only a year after the death of Ian Ramsey. David Edwards is one of the very few people competent to produce a book of this sort so readily. Although the book has only 100 pages, there is, in all, a considerable amount of material.

While it does not, in any way, purport to be a definitive biography, it is much more than a mere sketch. The book depicts an elusive personality who emerges as a lovable person. The author is right to show us the baffling defects of an impressive character, defects which, in the end, deprived the church of a man who might, otherwise, have followed in the footsteps of William Temple.

'He was often tipped for Canterbury, and often compared with William Temple, the near-legendary and still-quoted archbishop whose premature death in 1944 was being felt as a wound a quarter of a century later. In 1968 Ian Ramsey delivered a long and careful lecture on William Temple, observing that "people often recall Temple's massive intellect which could interweave the Christian faith and philosophy with a calm ease and striking clarity. They recall too the outstanding character of his Christian social concern". Above all, William Temple was "the People's Archbishop" during the second world war. Those who hoped that Ian Ramsey would become a great archbishop in the Temple tradition were thinking not only of his intellectual gifts but also of his popularity. And in the circumstances, this was a specially great compliment' (p. 4).

I first came to know Ian Ramsey when we were both serving on the old Church Assembly's Board for Social Responsibility. He was then working with Professor Gordon Dunstan on medical, legal and ethical problems which were of deep social concern to church people. The papers which were published won wide respect amongst lawyers, sociologists and medical people. Bishop Leslie Hunter was a leading member of the Board, and he quickly realised that Ian Ramsey ought to become a bishop. It has to be remembered, however, that, before his consecration he had been a don from 1944 to 1966. As a philosopher he was working in a very highly specialised



field, which was secular in character. In the past, theological dons have quite often been consecrated, philosophy dons hardly ever, and so it was that, when he embarked upon ecclesiastical life on coming to Durham, he encountered for the first time the ordinary working of the Church of England in diocese and parishes. This was undoubtedly a severe shock to him.

He may well have expected that, in an institution of the size of the Church of England, its top leaders would have under them an executive staff of the size and ability which would enable such a senior bishop to be available primarily for major policy decisions. This would leave him the freedom to travel extensively on behalf of the 'firm'. This may explain to some extent the fact that Ian Ramsey did sit lightly to the work *in situ*, so that he became a part-time Bishop of Durham. The author is very frank about the causes which led to the tragedy of the bishop's early death. He describes the mounting tide of invitations which he could never refuse, and which led to the dissipation of his energy in endless lecturing all over the world. His themes became well worn, and the *magnum opus* in the field of theology was never written. Ian Ramsey made an immediate mark in the House of Lords and the peers warmed to this lovable and expansive character. Yet it was his curious insensitivity to the way in which his words or actions affected people, which lessened his influence in the Lords. He overplayed his hand, so that, by speaking too often, the law of diminishing returns began to operate.

David Edwards is quite right in depicting Ian Ramsey as the layman's bishop. The ordinary people in the parish churches warmed to the instant friendliness of the bishop who shook hands with each of them after an induction or confirmation. They were fascinated by the small figure in the purple cloak who radiated friendliness in the parish hall. They were thrilled with the chance to 'have a crack' with their Bishop, even if they could not follow his sermon. The invitation to speak at the Miners' Gala gave him a deeper pleasure than any other event of his episcopate. He was happy and at home with the lads, even though some of the people in positions of responsibility in County Durham's social and industrial life were uneasy about some of his attitudes. He did, however, take an immense amount of trouble over his speech in the Lords over the Industrial Relations Bill—he foresaw some of the difficulties that ensued. He told me that he knew what the men on the shop floor thought about it, and he asked me to get together a group from management so that he could understand their reactions, and he found his meeting with them to have been very valuable.

The author very rightly gave a good deal of space in the book to Ian Ramsey as a philosopher, and, of course, he was a philosopher first, and a theologian afterwards. David Edwards does not really throw very much light on the bishop's religious situation, but he does rightly allow us to infer that Ian Ramsey's devotion and religious fervour were highly subjective in character. His religious liberalism, influenced by his philosophy and stemming from his days under H. D. A. Major at Ripon Hall, was covered by an evangelical enthusiasm which is still to be found in the Lancashire which he loved. His liberalism enabled him to be at home in any religious setting—he enjoyed himself equally at Benediction at Ushaw or a service in a Free Church in a pit village, or in a high, broad or low church Anglican service.

The book is very highly to be recommended. It is a most honest achievement. It is written by an admirer who loved Ian Ramsey, and who knew that Ian himself would want his friends to see all sides of the picture, and so

his very many readers will be grateful to an author who has brilliantly fulfilled his assignment. As the old-fashioned hymn says, we are given enough, but not so much that we do not long for more. This is essential reading, but it will not be the last word on Ian Ramsey.

GORDON HOPKINS

MEMOIRS. *W. A. Visser't Hooft*. SCM Press, 1973. 379 pp. £5.50.

When the history of the twentieth century comes finally to be written, it may be found that the three greatest churchmen of the century were Archbishop William Temple, Pope John XXIII—and William Adolf Visser't Hooft. The publication of the *Memoirs* of the third of the three must be an interesting event, particularly to those who have shared Dr. Visser't Hooft's ecumenical interests, but I think also to a much wider circle of readers. More than thirty-five years have passed since he was appointed General Secretary of the World Council of Churches in process of formation; throughout that long period he has been close to the corridors of power, to that centre from which the evolution of the ecumenical movement has been directed and in part controlled.

Much has already been published on this period. In the account before us there is less than might have been expected that is wholly new. I think that for the ordinary reader the most interesting section will be that on the intensive and secret work carried on from Geneva through the dark period of the second world war. To those who have worked in Geneva this story is familiar; to others it is likely to be entirely unfamiliar and exciting.

In spite of the disclaimer on pp. ix and x, this is very much an 'I book'; it is one man's vision of ecumenical development, and much more will have to be written before a full and balanced impression of the period can be obtained. Dr. t 'Hooft is right in claiming that 'I' in many cases means 'I working as the head of a group of loyal colleagues'. But a word might occasionally have been spared to indicate the independent and valuable work of these colleagues.

We are given at some length (pp. 245-248) the lamentable story of the document on 'Christ the hope of the world', which was to have been the key document for the second Assembly of the World Council of Churches in 1954; the reader would not guess that it was only through the extraordinary dexterity of Bishop Lesslie Newbigin as chairman that it was possible to produce any document at all in face of the intransigent refusal of the continentals even to listen to anyone who held a point of view other than their own.

The mass of materials available has made omission and compression necessary; but the omissions are at times surprising. The World Council of Churches came into being through the fusion of the three movements, Faith and Order, Life and Work and the International Missionary Council. It is clear from the narrative that the main interests of the writer have lain in the fields of Life and Work, high diplomacy and ecclesiastical pronouncements. Faith and Order runs as a rather inferior second. One of the gravest crises encountered by the World Council arose from the attempt of the administration to reduce Faith and Order from its proper position as an independent Division to that of merely one committee among the many in the Division of Ecumenical Study. The battle against the administration was fought and won by Dr. Keith Bridston, perhaps the ablest man after Visser't Hooft himself who has ever served the World Council of Churches. No reference

is made here to this series of events and the name of Dr. Bridston does not appear in either the text or the Index to the volume.

Reading this book has not led me to change my view that the greatest mistake ever made by Visser't Hooft was his failure to retire in 1955, when the work of the second Assembly had been cleared up. He was then at the height of his powers and of his fame, and good candidates were available for the succession. He would have been able at once to take up the professorship which was waiting for him in Holland, and we should have had the books which he alone could have written and which now we shall never have. The books which Visser't Hooft has written are hardly a worthy monument to so distinguished an intellect, and of the countless *ad hoc* papers and essays which he has produced over the years, few would bear republication today. But the decision was made otherwise. The transcendent gifts of Visser't Hooft did much to shape the World Council during the creative years 1938 to 1955; perhaps the eleven subsequent years in office have done something to bring about the situation in which the Council finds itself in 1974.

Though the book before us has to be used with a good deal of caution, it will remain for a great many years as required reading for all students of the ecumenical movement. We must be thankful that it has been written; thankful also that during those critical years the destinies of the ecumenical movement were largely in the hands of a Christian who accomplished more than perhaps any other man in the whole of Christendom could have achieved.

STEPHEN NEILL

**SANCTITY AND SECULARITY: THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD.** Studies in Church History, Vol. 10. Edited by Derek Baker. Blackwells, 1973. 224 pp. £5.00.

The Ecclesiastical History Society is to be congratulated on now having their papers appearing under their own imprint, in association with their publisher, Basil Blackwell. The present collection of papers from their eleventh summer and twelfth winter meetings have been produced by fifteen contributors, most of whom are British, the exceptions being an American from New York and a Dutch professor from Amsterdam. Nine essays deal with pre-Reformation topics; the interpenetration of monastic and general cultural mores and patterns in early Irish asceticism; the ascetic tension between the spirituality that seeks desert withdrawal or of the working communities of reformed monasticism; the social aspects of the early problem of organising nunneries, and the Beguine movement; the comparative indifference shown by lower clergy to representation in the late fourteenth century Parliaments; the relation of Christian rites, including particularly *rites de passage*, to general community in the period fourteenth to seventeenth centuries in Europe, in terms of civilising agencies precariously at work on basically pagan folk-attitudes. Post-Reformation papers explore Quaker teaching on 'overcoming the world', sanctity versus 'worldliness' in eighteenth century Dutch Protestant thinking, or the tensions between creation-affirming but 'worldliness'-denying spirituality in nineteenth century England.

The title of the collection of studies itself implies a problematical issue that has not perhaps been thought through by either the contributors or the editor. What is 'secularity' and the 'secular'? Is 'secularity' the same as 'worldliness' and are both to be equated with the whole natural order, or corrupt uses of it for selfish ends? Is the church, when closely related to the necessary

activities of society 'secularised', and 'holy' only when ascetically removed; or does 'secularisation' take over when society organises itself without any reference to religious conviction or principles at all; and the church then become 'holy' because unrelated institutionally to its cultural context? All these questions are raised by remarks or interpretation in these papers, and one might urge that some discrimination be practised between using 'secular' and 'worldly' to describe tensions within homogeneous communities of almost complete socio-religious inter-relation, as well as situations where (as in the final essay on religious publishing) processes can be identified that illustrate growing polarisation. It is here that the first essay, 'The Desanctification of Nature' by Philip Sherrard, lecturer in Orthodox Church history has importance. It is a quiet indictment of Western philosophic theology as responsible for the banishment from modern minds of a spiritual ('sacramental') understanding of the created order, the natural world. It needs to be read in close relation to Charles Davis' *God's Grace in History* (Fontana, 1966) where a 'Western' view will be found. In all this, Mr. Sherrard is probably somewhat too preoccupied with the theoretical both in philosophy and science, and not enough aware of the practical influence of technology in forming attitudes. As an historian of thought he makes some interesting comparisons and connections; but as a propounder of solutions for contemporary problems and attitudes in society, he needs to show that Orthodox pneumatology has had a more integrating effect in societies where it is influential, than 'Western' religious philosophy has had elsewhere. History, at least, must keep its feet on the ground. Together, the papers make a fascinating kaleidoscopic pattern of religious concern that provides valuable data for any student of comparative spirituality in terms of Western Christendom.

G. J. C. MARCHANT

NO EASY ANSWERS. *Enoch Powell*. Sheldon Press, 1973. 135 pp. £1.95.

'Christ and the Church have no instructions to give the world in which men and women live, they have instructions for the men and women themselves.' 'The Gospel is not a social gospel; it is not a gospel about society. The Gospel . . . is to individuals and announced a kingdom not of this world, which comes to men and not from men.' Mr. Powell argues that Christians as citizens may declare his speeches mistaken, but as churchmen (and this goes for bishops and theologians alike) they are not in a position to describe them un-Christian. Against the impassioned attack of Trevor Huddleston he coolly argues that he and Huddleston are not differing on a religious matter at all, but are discussing as 'two citizens comparing prognostications and judgments outside the religious sphere'.

The important point about the book is that it argues against the drift of a century in alleging that the church (both here and abroad) has sought to be heard by being involved in social, psychological-economic activities, and is at present saying and doing everything except the one thing to which it was sent. Mr. Powell makes a trenchant criticism at this point, and his deep commitment to the church and the gospel, as well as his faith not only in God but his grasp of Christian doctrine, command a respectful hearing. His capacity to distinguish things that are different is most compelling, and to study (not simply read) this little book is a most refreshing and chastising experience. He makes his point that there are 'no easy answers' and seeks to

clarify the muddled waters of contemporary preaching.

The reviewer is moved to make two points. First, a disquietude in the way Mr. Powell sometimes manipulates the Greek text: I cannot accept such subjective terms as 'an officious busybody' (p. 41), 'an interpolator' (p. 57), 'a hailstorm of notes and explanation have forced their way into the text' (p. 69) without textual and manuscript evidence. Perhaps there was no room here for discussion?

Secondly, I would like to have advanced the argument within an historical setting: the two swords in one sheath of the medieval Roman Catholic Church; the preaching of the two kingdoms of Luther; the anarchical, individualism of the 16th century radicals and their successors; Calvin's theocentric theology and that of the Puritans. From there to have shown the classical theological 16th century Anglican handling of these problems within the broad framework of its clear distinction between law and gospel, justification by faith alone, and the role of a Christian man in a fallen society. In short, Mr. Powell's thesis has more historical support than he indicates in his book (though this is not to say that he does not know that as well as the reviewer). Chapter 12 on 'What shall we do?' is very fine indeed, and his page and a half on doubting Thomas is most sensitive and illuminating. Altogether, the book is a tour de force.

JAMES ATKINSON

**BROADCASTING, SOCIETY AND THE CHURCH.** CIO, 1973. xiii + 119 pp. £1.00.

This report from the Commission set up by the General Synod is an extremely important document. Realistic, informed, theologically aware, tentative in some places but remarkably outspoken in others, it speaks to the church and to the world in a way that so many of our excellent commissions fail to do. The plain speaking here is partly a product of the rapid secularisation of the BBC (uncompromisingly faced in chapter and analysed in detail by Professor Basil Mitchell in a brilliant appendix) and partly to the refreshing doctrinal clarity of the report which knows good from evil, and takes note of theological truth from both Anglican (Archbishop Ramsey in paras. 17 and 110) and classical Presbyterian (Professor T. F. Torrance paras. 18 and 19) sources.

Chapter 1 deals with broadcasting and society, tracing the BBC's move away from a broadly Christian position, the advent of commercial TV with its materialistic, entertainment-oriented ethos and the impact of TV as an integral part of the individual consciousness of all but a handful of the nation (how many church folk know and reflect upon the implications of the fact that the *average* adult spends 16-18 hours per week watching TV?). After a brief discussion of that elusive concept, the 'plural society', the alternatives of neutralism or purposive broadcasting are considered. Many nails are hit hard on the head here, though—perhaps rightly—the deeper issues of political and social philosophy are never squarely tackled. The writing here is forceful, but a little untidy and cramped. Committee authorship showing perhaps?

The second chapter deals with structures—BBC/IBA competition, finance and the fourth channel. Consideration of control and responsibility leads to a discussion of the idea of a broadcasting council; the case for and the case against are put in detail, since the Commission were not of one mind.

Chapter three on Broadcasting Standards begins rightly with an outline

of the nature of the media (sound and vision) and with their stated purposes—information, education and entertainment. There follows a brief treatment of the advantages and disadvantages of using the different channels—audio and audio-visual. Each medium almost inevitably conditions the use to which it is put, the material favoured by the producers, the emphases struck. After a mild section on the influence of broadcasting comes a brief consideration of the family viewing situation. The proposal is made (following the suggestion from the Festival of Light delegations to the BBC and the ITA in 1972) that family viewing should be regarded as extending to 10 p.m. rather than only to 9 p.m. as at present. Then follows a careful analysis of the BBC's recent document *Taste and Standards* which at bottom seems to be based on a fuzzy middle-ground pragmatism together with a professed respect for the individual and a recognition of the need for some sort of consistency. The report is surely right to ask for more explicitness on these principles, and for more vigilance in seeing that they are adhered to. The commission comments ironically

'Already we should take note of the appearance of a kind of broadcasting-manual jargon as, for example, when broadcasters speak of "relevant nudity" or "violence with integrity". Soon, perhaps, as for Caiaphas, it may be "expedient execution"' (p. 36).

Chapter four is the longest and most accomplished piece of work—a splendid treatment of Religious Broadcasting. The whole field is judiciously reviewed, the assessment is alert and probing (does the BBC *really* spend £2,000,000 per annum on religious broadcasting? Can anyone seriously maintain that the nation is getting its money's worth if that is the case? Why can't we be told the exact figure?), the proposals for change sensible. Of the two taxonomic tables, the second on religious educational broadcasting (though it contains a misprint) is better than the first. Perhaps in a general report of this type it is wrong to expect a more accurate or elaborate analysis. Paragraphs 110-116 on the theology of religious broadcasting are excellent. The scandal of the suppression of the *Life with Johnny* series is highlighted (para. 131). There is a balanced evaluation of *Stars on Sunday* (paras. 134-138—no easy task!) and the great omission of religious television for children is rightly underlined (paras. 126, 156-159). It is good to see the theological stance of the Church and State Commission adopted with conviction (paras. 161-163) as the basic rationale of Christian religious broadcasting. The chapter concludes with organisation and personnel questions—clergy, producers, advisers and advisory bodies, including the (at present) lamely ineffective CRAC. Useful proposals for reform are made.

The final short chapters deal with Anglican advisory systems and with training for broadcasting work. The conclusions are summarised (note especially 'It is not obvious . . . that we need more television' (para. 209)—how about debates in diocesan synods on that?) and there are some fascinating appendices on which a short review does not allow space for comment.

This report has now been received and commended to the church for discussion. *It must not be ignored*. It must be studied in theological colleges; we have not had a Christian guide of this type before. Being comparatively short and readable, it provides something for clergy and laity to get their teeth into in PCC or parish discussion group, in deanery and diocesan synod. Questions are provided—though not always the best ones for debate. Those appointed by the General Synod have illuminated for us some

of the most powerful influences in society today. If we read this report we shall be far better equipped to appreciate the problems—spiritual, moral, social and political—posed by broadcasting. If this report does not enable the church, collectively, locally and individually, to engage in constructive dialogue, to give praise where praise is due and to call for change where change is needed, it will have failed. It is hard to envisage any truly Christian alternative. If we continue to goggle uncritically, or if we only switch off, we shall not only be losing the opportunity to be thinking Christianly. We shall lose the chance to help our neighbour. In that sad event, let no one say that the Church of England did nothing to help us to retain our savour in a corrupt society. This report provides some leadership in thinking and in suggestions for praxis. Who will follow it? O. R. JOHNSTON

PAUL TILLICH: AN ESSAY ON THE ROLE OF ONTOLOGY IN HIS PHILOSOPHICAL THEOLOGY. *Alistair M. Macleod*. Allen & Unwin, 1973. 157 pp. £3.50.

Paul Tillich is one of the dominating figures of twentieth-century theology. His neo-orthodoxy has inspired a good deal of awe for the way in which it uses philosophical insights to restate biblical theology in a new and compelling way.

Gone is the old-style natural theology which tried to prove the existence of God by reason. For Tillich it is as atheistic to attempt to prove God's existence as it is to deny it. For God does not 'exist'; he is beyond existence. For Tillich being is the ultimate reality. The reality that in religious circles is called God is rather the ground of being or being itself. Tillich put forward his thought as a theology of correlation. It correlates philosophical questions with theological answers. 'The search for ultimate reality,' wrote Tillich, 'is the ontological question, the root question in every philosophy.' 'We philosophise because we are finite and because we know that we are finite. We are a mixture of being and nonbeing, and we are aware of it.' Man, therefore, asks the question of being (the ontological question); Christian theology supplies the answer.

Part of Tillich's appeal is due to the apparent fact that it is much easier to talk about being to modern man than it is to talk about God. After all, even the most hard-bitten empiricist philosopher, scientist and man-in-the-street are all convinced that we are there. But this is precisely the difficulty with Tillich and this is the point of Dr. Macleod's monograph. Is Tillich's ontology one which will stand up to close scrutiny? Is there not some (perhaps unconscious) sleight of hand or mistaken assumption somewhere? Dr. Macleod sees a double question: has Tillich succeeded in vindicating the ontological enterprise in the face of philosophical doubts about it; has he succeeded in demonstrating the relevance of ontology to theology? In both cases the answer is in the negative. For Tillich has not one conception of ontology but several, between which he regularly oscillates. In my view, the root difficulty is that it is one thing to affirm that we are there; it is quite something else to tie up with a speculative ontology which is ultimately monistic and explains evil and finitude in terms of non-being.

Dr. Macleod deliberately refrains from tracing the development of Tillich's ideas. It would be very instructive if someone were to show the relation of Tillich's later thought to his own studies of Fichte and Schelling and assess the impact of his teacher, Dr. Fritz Medicus. It would show that Tillich's decisive ideas belong not to the twentieth century but to the idealism of the

early nineteenth. But that is another matter. Dr. Macleod has confined his attention to the Achilles' heel of Tillich's thought. He has shown ironically that what is often regarded as Tillich's most important contribution to philosophical theology is, in fact, its gravest defect. As Tillich himself believed, the ontological cast of his system is not incidental to it; to object to the ontological cast is to object to the system itself. So much has been written on Tillich in the past ten years that the question might be asked whether yet another monograph is justified. But here at least is a judicious and lucid piece of work that will not have to be done again, and could well put a stop to all future excavation of this barren ground. COLIN BROWN

**THE SPIRIT OF THE REFORMED TRADITION.** *M. Eugene Osterhaven.* Eerdmans, 1971. 190 pp. \$3.45.

Dr. Osterhaven, who is a minister of the Reformed Church of America (not to be confused with the Christian Reformed Church, though both are Dutch-immigrant in origin), and who has served for more than twenty years as professor of systematic theology in Western Theological Seminary (Holland, Michigan), wrote this book to answer at layman's level the question: what is characteristic and distinctive of the Reformed tradition, viewed from the perspective of its four centuries of history? His answer is that it is a spirit and a method rather than a set system of beliefs, a sense of God's presence and of the consecration of all life to him, created and controlled by divine-human Scriptures, which finds expression in the personal piety of the Heidelberg Catechism and in a world-affirming, community-centred asceticism and cultural creativity. He expounds this briskly, knowledgeably and accurately, but with the minimum of reference to other positions in or outside the church, so that his book has the unintended effect of proposing the toast—'Here's to us.' It is, of course, hard to state one's own tradition without seeming parochial in this way. Osterhaven is unhappy at current American secularity, and wants to see the state and the educational system set on firmer Christian foundations. To opt out of the state school system and set up Christian schools in parallel is for him very much a second best. On certain aspects of Reformed theology he is, perhaps, a bit cagey, but it is good to see Richard Hooker quoted at length as a Reformed divine in the matter of justification.

J. I. PACKER

**FRONTIERS FOR THE CHURCH TODAY.** *R. McAfee Brown.* OUP, 1973. 149 pp. £2.70.

This volume suffers from one glaring fault. It has been published seven years too late. Time and again the reader will recall the feel of the theological battlegrounds of the mid-Sixties, and the inevitable sensations of *déjà vu*. It's all here: the 'presence' theology, the 'world-providing-the-agenda', the all-inclusive definitions of *mission* and, dominating everything, the American liberal *angst* about Vietnam and the tearing-apart of transatlantic society by which that era was characterised.

To say that is in no way to devalue the book as such. As an introduction to the long hot radical summer and as a cautious critique of some of its more outrageous excrescences, Robert McAfee Brown's new volume is not without its merits. He has a liking for the memorable phrase and while rarely minting his own has an eye for other people's graphic gifts. The Church, he tells us, has been described by others as 'the bland leading the bland', as a 'non-



prophet organisation', as a 'luxury cruise-ship' steaming pleasantly through an ocean 'thick with numbed humanity hopelessly clinging to drowning wreckage' and as dying from 'the silent haemorrhage . . . draining her life-blood for several centuries'. All good imagery for the preacher and writer to purloin. Brown's most crisp phrase—this time his own—points to the fact (presumably an American phenomenon) that whereas in the past faithful ministers were burnt, today they are 'not burnt but fired'.

The first three chapters form a summary of the radical critiques of the Church of the early and middle Sixties—some of which cancel each other out—and then there are short discussions concerning revolution, technology, liturgy and structures. All are set in the 'frontier' imagery either of the American Western tradition or of the Biblical pilgrimage theology. The book is based on lectures originally delivered in 1966 and regularly revised in the intervening years.

MICHAEL SAWARD

**CHRIST'S LIVING BODY.** *Edited by J. P. Baker.* Coverdale House, 1974. 221 pp. £0.75.

Here is a very useful survey of current Anglican evangelical thinking about the nature of the local church, her ministry and mission. It comprises nine essays arising from a Latimer House study group which was convened in 1966 and reflects the popular modern attempt to search for New Testament patterns of church life. The church is seen throughout in relation to her calling to be the body of Christ. There is therefore a strong emphasis upon mutual responsibility and upon a proper recovery of the gifts for ministry which have been given to the church for her edification. Each chapter ends with a short bibliography and a few questions which may be pursued in group discussion.

The most important task which the book seems to set itself is the rediscovery of New Testament principles and the application of those principles today. By and large the writers, who are all experienced pastors, agree that the Bible offers us no model to be copied but rather a series of illustrative examples. The key principles include; one church in one place, a diversity of functions and gifts within each church and a corporate oversight in the hands of worthy presbyters properly appointed for the purpose. Some of the essays explore the Biblical evidence and some give very practical comments on the lessons which the church needs to learn.

The fascinating value of the book, however, is to see in it an over-view of the local churches and what has been happening to the thinking of clergy and people during the last twenty years. As well as revealing useful developments, frequently pioneered by the charismatic movement, the collection also tends to show up weakness in the local church and to offer guidelines for future study groups. For instance, with ecumenical leaders increasingly recommending a steady growth into union at the ground level, it will be important to be sure that we know a true church when we see one. It is all very well saying that it is the nearest one where the Word is preached 'in all essentials', but that clearly begs so many questions. Or take the confusion about what is meant or should be meant by ordination; John Baker's suggestion that ordination should be reserved for those whose ministry is recognised by the 'wider regional church' could well be explored further. Then again, much is made in the book of the corporate nature of the oversight in the early church. This is a valuable insight but one fears that in rebelling against

the old heavily structured patterns, we are in danger of over-reacting. Sometimes one fears that there is a retreat from real leadership by the clergy and a failure to give weight to other New Testament models of the church which call for bolder styles.

IAN D. BUNTING

A CASE FOR INFANT BAPTISM. *Colin Buchanan*. Grove Books, 1973. 32 pp. £0.20. CONFIRMATION IN THE CHURCH TODAY. *P. E. Hughes*. Eerdmans, 1973. 56 pp. \$1.45.

Mr. Buchanan sets out in the introduction to this Grove Booklet, the reasons which have led him to write it stating that he is concerned here 'to oppose solely the case that there is no such thing as infant baptism'. At the same time he recognises that while the case against infant baptism can be put very succinctly yet the case for it needs to be made carefully and in detail, resting upon a cumulative assessment of New Testament evidence.

Mr. Buchanan has chosen to present his arguments in the form of the Case for the Prosecution as if in a Court of Law; to this reviewer the forensic setting does not seem very helpful, as it leads to a somewhat abrupt and staccato style, almost as if the Law Court has become a battle field, and he is spraying his opponent with machine gun fire. This effect is added to by the bursts of footnotes on each page which doesn't make the booklet any easier to read.

The arguments which Mr. Buchanan marshalls are cogent as would be expected. In particular his argument about the time of Baptism in the New Testament—that it was ministered at the very point of professing conversion—is at the heart of his case against the traditional 'Baptist' position and is deadly in its effectiveness. The Scriptural evidence is reinforced by an appeal to early Christian history and finally by putting a 'Baptist' into the witness box, asking him to explain how he would bring up his own children, and exactly when it is possible to infer that a child can believe.

Mr. Buchanan says that he is hoping one day to write a 'bigger and more scholarly work' for which this booklet is a 'working drawing'; to take that metaphor further, it is clear from the evidence of this booklet, that his final work will be a veritable theological palace.

Dr. Hughes' booklet is written to some extent with an American public in mind though he sets out its arguments with reference to the Anglican Church as a whole. After a brisk glance at the New Testament evidence he devotes five chapters to a review of the understanding and meaning of Baptism and Confirmation in church history, with particular reference to Anglican writers from the 16th century to the present day. This section is well documented and a most useful source book for those concerned about historical attitudes to the subject, with the views on different sides carefully set out and fairly presented.

When Dr. Hughes comes on to a discussion of the state of the debate today, he seems to be on less sure ground. He summarily dismisses the notion of vicarious faith as being 'as unbiblical as it is unrealistic', whereas the Gospel evidence of the father of the epileptic boy and the SyroPhoenician mother and the paralytic brought to Jesus by four friends would seem to be clear examples of faith exercised on behalf of others. When Dr. Hughes comes to consider the declaration of faith and the promises made by Godparents he treats them simply as undertakings for themselves and their own duties, and not seriously as made on behalf of the child. His emphasis on a verbal response to God's

word is helpful as establishing the importance of confirming and entering into the promises of Baptism, but his tilt against the psychologists' argument about non-verbal understanding is rather over done.

In conclusion, Dr. Hughes comes out strongly against any service of Thanksgiving and Blessing as a preliminary to Baptism, but clearly in favour of the Pastor's responsibility for deciding whether Baptism can rightly be administered or not. This concern to safeguard the importance of Baptism is excellent, but in a pastoral situation it leaves entirely unanswered the question of what to do with those who wish to express a general and natural desire to thank God for the birth of a child without entering into the commitments of church membership, either for themselves or for the child.

PATRICK BLAIR

**EVANGELISTIC SERVICES: THEIR VALUE AND LIMITATIONS.** *Michael Botting.* Grove Booklets, 1973. 24 pp. £0.20.

Traditional evangelistic services have less and less appeal to the average non-churchgoer and are less likely than in the past to bring home the bacon.

Mr. Botting recognises this very well and quite properly draws attention to it in the earlier pages of the booklet. Yet he does not make the mistake of writing off such services, but suggests rather that we should consider the ways in which they may still be valid in some areas.

In a practical way, he provides ideas as to how services may be used for evangelism—the statutory services, family services, seasonal and the occasional services, and services deliberately designed for evangelism. He also briefly mentions some evangelistic alternatives.

The book is a useful reminder of what can still be done—and an encouragement to those who feel that evangelistic services still have a part to play in the evangelistic responsibility of the local church.

BILL PERSSON

**AGAPES AND INFORMAL EUCHARISTS.** *Trevor Lloyd.* **ALTER-NATIVE EUCHARISTIC PRAYERS.** *Derek D. Billings.* Grove Booklets on Ministry and Worship, 1973. Each 24 pp. £0.20.

We see from 1 Corinthians 11 that agape and eucharist were originally very closely connected; but it is well known that the abuses against which St. Paul inveighed eventually resulted in their separation, so that now only the eucharist has survived. But since Christian fellowship ought to include table-fellowship, may we not revive the agape? Yes, provided we guard against the abuses; and provided we keep to the scriptural principle that an agape without eucharistic elements is not an agape. Trevor Lloyd gives a sample pattern—hymn, confession, absolution, soup, main course, scripture and exposition, intercessions, sweet course, prayer of humble access, consecration, distribution, hymn, coffee, washing up. If it all sounds a bit unnatural (or even, as so baldly stated, somewhat risible), it only shows how far our congregations are from linking what goes on at the Lord's Table from what goes on at other tables. Personally, I would prefer to have the ministry of the word before the meal, then all three courses, then the ministry of the sacrament, followed by informal conversation and fellowship: but that Christian fellowship-meals and the eucharist could with profit be combined seems to me self-evident.

Trevor Lloyd then goes on to discuss possible informal eucharists not associated with agapai. Some of his suggestions are strongly reminiscent of

the Lord's Supper of the Open (Plymouth) Brethren. When he says that 'the urge to do something different simply because it is different should be discouraged', he has my fervent 'Amen'. Liturgy which expresses the beliefs of worshippers in a manner consonant with their lifestyle is to be encouraged; the introduction of gimmickry in the belief that it is 'relevant liturgy' is sheer eyewash. But there is a lot to be said for loosening up in liturgy, and if we are to experiment in informal ways of celebrating the eucharist, the alternative texts suggested by Derek Billings for the Prayer of Thanksgiving may be useful, though some will think them poor as literature and repetitive in style. On p. 11 line 37, 'his' should read 'this', and on p. 15 line 16, for 'of' read 'for'.

A 'not' has slipped in by mistake on line 7 of page 11 in Trevor Lloyd's booklet.  
M. C. PERRY

**PSALM PRAISE.** Edited by Michael A. Baughen. Falcon Books, 1973. Full music, £0.90 paper, £1.25 hardback; words only, £0.20, £0.35.

No enterprise could well be more praiseworthy than to make a collection of psalms that brings them within the singing capacities of ordinary people. I suppose that the only traditional communion to do this successfully was the Church of Scotland in its metrical psalter; this gave psalms the outward form of hymns and made them singable—if only by those to whom the astounding verbal carpentry of the metrical psalter remained tolerable.

But it seems to me to be a good idea to present a modern metrical psalter in which most of the psalms are presented in hymn-like form. This is what the editor of this collection seems to have had in mind. There are a few Anglican chants, and one or two chant-like settings; but mostly these are hymns. Well, our worship has become gravely impoverished by the disappearance of the psalms from its structure; intolerance of the choral tradition has been responsible for this. But one has to say that from the days of 'O God, our help in ages past' hymn-writers have metricised and paraphrased the psalms, often with great distinction; and one can also mention Fr. Gelineau's stress-rhythm psalms, and all the psalmody that has more recently grown out of that.

If we then say that all this has been virtually ignored in this book, we are warning the reader to look for a standard which will compare with that of Watts, Montgomery, Gelineau, Bevenot, Stephen Dean and a formidable company of others. This, we have to say, has not been attempted. The whole collection is written and composed by a quite small number of people, who have admitted the occasional piece from an older tradition (Stanford's Psalm 150, for example) but who have on the whole approached the whole project in a style whose limitations they cannot be expected to apologise for.

The words are often fresh, simple and faithful: Timothy Dudley-Smith contributes some of the best. One finds, by the way, that the 151 pieces do not comprise the whole psalter; there are a number of New Testament hymns (of which I find that on Philippians 2: 5ff. very attractive), and most of the awkward psalms are omitted, while some of the attractive ones get several settings.

The music is best described by saying that it is written in the idiom made familiar in the same editor's *Youth Praise*. In the space available here I can say no more than that you either approve this style or disapprove it. Its

vocabulary is very small, its rhythmic interest rather far to seek, it is easily picked up; and some may think it easily wears thin. If the book has a manifest weakness, this would have its source in the restricted circle of authors and composers who have contributed to it. It's bound, in those circumstances, to be a specialised taste. But I would far rather sing the texts given here than the lyrics in *Youth Praise*. **ERIK ROUTLEY**

**BALTHASAR ON PRAYER.** *Hans Urs Von Balthasar.* SPCK, 1973. 246 pp. £2.25.

If you are looking for a book to instruct you in 'techniques' of prayer, this is not the book for you. If you are looking for a history of mystical prayer in the church (a modern *Spiritualité Chrétienne*) this is not the book for you. But if you are looking for a book which exposes you to the 'necessity of contemplation' (one of the chapter headings) this could well be the book for you. It is divided into three parts—the Act of Contemplation, the Object of Contemplation and the Polarities in Contemplation. The book abounds with felicitous passages. Take this for example, 'The word addressed to us by God is a word of love, uttered loud and clear in the full light of day, and almost menacing, so as to rouse man from his dreams and make him inwardly alive to what sounds in his ears; but it is also a secret whispered in the night, gentle and alluring, impenetrable, incredible to the most robust faith, a mystery no creature will fathom.' But for all that it is not an easy book to read. It boasts a clear literary structure, but the inward structure proves strangely elusive—until one realises that the book is really an extended commentary on the central mystery of our religion—'the Word made flesh'. It is the chapter with this heading that I found the most instructive and satisfying. My copy at this point is heavily underlined, e.g. the contemplative when confronted with the Word made flesh 'ought to feel his mind reeling at the idea, feel as if the ground were giving way under his feet, and experience the same "ecstasy" of incomprehension which seized Christ's contemporaries'. Prayer, as Balthasar understands it, does not banish mystery; it drowns us in its depths. **STUART LIVERPOOL**

**NEW EVERY MORNING: A BOOK OF DAILY SERVICES FOR BROADCASTING.** Edited by *Hubert Hoskins.* BBC, 1973. xi + 166 pp. £1 boards, £0.50 paper.

Attitudes to prayer change. In this book, first published in 1936, revised in 1948, and now up-dated in language and content, the earlier rather magisterial foreword is replaced by simple sharing of convictions and recognition of questionmarks about prayer. Described as a handbook for listeners to the Daily Service, and a devotional aid, it will prove a useful resource for public worship.

The prayers are linked to a theme for each day. Daily intercessions for a week are given, with Prayer Book collects for Holy Days and additions for Saints George, David and Patrick, the Naming of Jesus, the Transfiguration and All Souls. There is minimal indication of origin and authorship. A useful index shows the improved subject range which is not greatly church-centred but is good on creation and the concerns of daily life. Justice and freedom feature prominently. Spill-over into the pray-er's personal life is prompted but the praying comes across as that of an individual alone, not of one caught up in corporate prayer activity. In a section headed 'All

Departed Souls' there is less petition for the departed, and more affirmation of hope and togetherness in Christ. The Holy Spirit section expresses little charismatic hope. It is good not to find many 'may' prayers, but is a request to be 'worthy' a valid one? On page 31 this seems a weak climax to a prayer about the sacrificial death of Christ.

A book of prayers is to be prayed, not read. This one could deepen and stretch anyone's prayers and bring life to much congregational praying. It is a tribute to the BBC's Religious Affairs Department's success in keeping prayer 'on the air' as a valid use of broadcasting time.

PETER R. AKEHURST

**GODFACTS.** *Dick Williams.* Falcon Books, 1973. £0.35. **LORD OF OUR WORLD: MODERN COLLECTS FROM THE GOSPELS.** Falcon Books, 1973. £0.40.

These two books are a family affair by the vicar of a Liverpool parish and his wife. *Godfacts* is a series of mostly one-page investigations, statements, meditations, prayers, covering the subjectmatter of the Apostles' Creed. Reason, revelation and faith are investigated; also the Person of Christ, the Bible, Holy Spirit, Church and Last Things. These are not so much prayers as shared discourses printed in short verse-like lines. Some move into direct prayer to God, others keep the conversational form—with self, with God or with a listener/reader.

Neither pages nor meditations are numbered despite a reference to 'page 16' on the credits page. This seems a catastrophe and is quite devastating for a reviewer. Even the headings do not help the reference problem as it is often not apparent which slot in the creed they fit.

*Godfacts* could be seen as a series of meditations on a soul or mind's journey to faith which might become steps in a shared journey. For some this could be an evangelistic journey; for others teaching and encouragement in the faith.

*Lord of Our World* is a collection of 288 prayers taking up a sentence or idea from a gospel passage. Both yearly cycles of readings for the Series 3 Lectionary are covered. There is a Foreword by the Bishop of Liverpool and a short Introduction. These are not strictly collects for the service but prayers from the gospel readings.

The prayers are numbered in sequence for the Sundays in each cycle with the name of the day and the gospel reference, followed by those for Saints and other Holy Days listed from January 1st (with addition of the Transfiguration) and a final section of 16 prayers for the 12 Prayer Book Gospels not included in the new lectionary. An index lists the Sundays and days covered, with the numbered prayers for each. A second index lists the prayers relating to each chapter of each gospel. It is thus a simple matter to turn to a relevant prayer for any passage.

There is a good deal of repetition; cross references indicate where this occurs. As the prayers are evoked by only a phrase or two from each passage, it seems a pity other phrases were not used for the second prayer when the same passage recurs. Easter 49 and 50 are the same as 171 and 172, though different passages are used each year. No. 12 seems a bit of a *non-sequitur* and in No. 73 one phrase hangs uncertainly at the end. Nos. 120 and 174 are the same from different passages, but not so acknowledged. The use of capital letters for the divine 'you' is inconsistent between prayers

and even within the same prayer occasionally.

The language is direct and always fresh. The prayers are well earthed in today's world in real situations and feelings. Easily memorable and helpful phrases abound and we may be grateful for a book which will help many in 'praying the gospel'.

PETER R. AKEHURST

**HEADLINES FOR GOD.** *John Stephenson.* Mayhew-McCrimmon, 1973. 94 pp. illustrated. £0.60.

Each morning the tide of world affairs breaks upon the shores of our consciousness in a cluster of newspaper headlines. A Christian has a special duty to take note of them, be sensitive to them, and to search out the news behind the news. For his own spiritual well-being and for the good of the world he must try to understand what is happening around him, and work out a Christian attitude towards it. To help him do this he has the Bible and a vast Christian literature to call upon.

In this book we are able to see how John Stephenson engages in this very necessary Christian work. He takes twenty themes which occupy our newspapers, and illustrates them with headlines and quotations culled from many sources. After each group of quotations he tries to work out a viable Christian attitude to their subject matter. This he does in an informal prayer-conversation with God which he terms a meditation. He then concludes each section with short passages of scripture and other quotations which provide their own commentary on what has preceded them, and return the reader's mind to a harsh and troubled world with renewed poise and vigour.

*Headlines For God* will be a helpful stimulus to preachers, discussion group leaders, and to those who prepare acts of intercession. It will also help many individuals not to run away from today's headlines, but to grapple with them in the name of the Lord.

DICK WILLIAMS

**JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES, MORMONISM, SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISM, CHRISTIAN SCIENCE.** *A. A. Hoekema.* Paternoster Press, 1973. 147, 101, 103, 68 pp. £0.60, £0.45, £0.45, £0.30.

Every serious student of modern 'heresies' knows Dr. Hoekema's large book, *Four Major Cults*, and consults it frequently. It is one of the best documented of all writings on these faiths, and supplies a good Biblical critique.

Since not everyone is concerned with all four cults, it is useful to have the four chapters split into four paperbacks. So far as I can see, these are identical with the sections in the major book, apart from additions to the recent history and statistics of each movement. Each book follows more or less the same pattern—history, source of authority, and specific doctrines, with more than one appendix on special points except in the book on Christian Science. Dr. Hoekema refers to an appendix in his larger book on soul-extinction or conditional immortality, but wisely omits a discussion of it in these extracted chapters, possibly because he has realised that many orthodox Christians also hold it.

J. STAFFORD WRIGHT

**THE DEVIL AND SCRIPTURE.** *Leszek Kolakowski, translated from the Polish by Nicholas Bethell and Celina Wieniewska.* OUP, 1973. 150 pp. £2.50.

Set David Kossoff and C. S. Lewis to pull down the God of the Bible, and

you would have something like this book, a book that is dazzlingly clever, but an *advocatus diaboli* if ever there was one. Whereas Kossoff naturally fills in the Bible stories in retelling them, this author twists his stories, sometimes coarsening them, so as to show God as a bumbling old fuddy-duddy, tangled up in His own creation, and outsmarted by men, women, and the debonair Satan.

This volume incorporates two different Polish originals, and the second section recreates sundry occasions of temptation by Satan in Scripture and history, but again the God of revelation comes off worst. It would have been no loss if these books had never been translated into English.

J. STAFFORD WRIGHT

**FIRST LIGHT: A STUDY IN BELIEF.** *W. H. Boore.* Search Press, London, 1973. 192 pp. £2.50.

This book would have been more satisfying if it had been written by a Christian instead of by one who is sceptical of Christianity's claims for its divine origins. But one can be thankful for small mercies if we see this book, as the author intends, as a prolegomenon to belief in an after-life.

The author moves easily in the realms of science, religion, and the arts, showing the adequacy and inadequacy of each to unfold the sum total of reality. 'Nor can we be certain that matter and energy sum up the total of existence' (p. 45). 'To want immortality or extinction is not to prove either' (63). '... to knit together the identity and the integrity of his person, and convince him of the wholeness of his and every other life' (78). 'A suspicion persists that personal phenomena are the mechanics of something else' (116).

After an interesting discussion of the persistence of values, of precognition, and of mediumship, the book closes with 'it is my belief that we shall all live on. This book is designed, not to assert such faith, but to render such faith feasible' (191).

Finally, in these slipshod days Mr. Boore's style of writing is a great treat.

J. STAFFORD WRIGHT

**SOUNDINGS IN SATANISM.** *Assembled by F. J. Sheed.* Mowbrays. 236 pp. £2.25.

In these days of lurid books on Satanism and demons, it is good also to have a quiet look at the whole field. This book brings together a number of authors who each concentrate on a single aspect. A few chapters are reprinted from an earlier excellent collection, also mainly Roman Catholic. Three dips into history include Loudun, Anne de Chantraine, and a most lively dissertation on the unfortunate Puritan, Cotton Mather.

Two chapters deal with the Old Testament and the Gospels, the former including the demonic personification of diseases and calamities, and the latter giving a well-reasoned defence of Christ's attitude to invading spirits. This latter chapter links possession with some psychological factors, on the ground that a demon may use and intensify mental and physical unbalance. This is important, and the two chapters on Exorcism and Pseudo-possession take the matter further. Dream demons are scrutinised psychologically. The up-to-date chapter on Satanism Today gives a reasonably full treatment, but its sober tone is counterbalanced by a description of a black mass (presumably from a novel based on fact) and a goody and baddy tale by Graham Greene.

The book is overweighted by five chapters on Satan in art and literature,



and, if there should be a paperback reprint, the price could be reduced by omitting these. The Protestant, John Updike, in the introduction is, I think, the only contributor who is agnostic about Satan's existence, but F. J. Sheed as editor has no doubts in his summing up. J. STAFFORD WRIGHT

**DYNAMIC OF LOVE.** AN EXPLORATION INTO BELIEVING, PRAYING AND BEING HUMAN. *Mark Gibbard.* Mowbrays, 1973. 117 pp. £0.80.

This is essentially a book about holiness. But whereas such a subject could be rather frightening, this book is full of encouragement. Mark Gibbard is himself the explorer, not giving all the answers, but skilfully leading us along with him. He writes in the first person singular, with plenty of personal reminiscence. The style reveals the warm personality and true humanity of the author. Holiness makes a richly human person, and without some experience of the love of God no-one can be completely human. Such experience is for all who say 'Yes' to God with joy. There is a strong basis of doctrine in the book, particularly clear and helpful on the Resurrection. Man's response in worship, Bible study and prayer is outlined with a sensitivity and depth of understanding which the simplicity of language makes all the more arresting. One quotation must suffice to illustrate the wisdom of experience packed into a few words: 'No individual can meet all the claims that press on him. There is neither time nor energy enough. He need not feel guilty about this.' A book to lead people forward, whatever stage they have reached. I found the chapter on meeting God through the Bible particularly heartwarming. MARTIN PARSONS

**MISSION OR MAINTENANCE: A STUDY IN NEW PASTORAL STRUCTURES.** *Michael Winter.* Darton, Longman & Todd. 139 pp. £1.95.

Renewal in the church, the revitalising of its worship, fellowship and mission, is the concern of this Roman Catholic parish priest. Whereas many would see that objective almost exclusively in terms of the Spirit's work in the hearts of Christians, Michael Winter convincingly argues the absolute necessity also for reform of pastoral structures. Present structures dating back over centuries now prevent the translation into effect of new insights derived from study of the Scriptures and expressed within his own church at Vatican II. His analysis of the Roman Church's position in this country is ruthless. The church is weak and ineffective in its mission to a post-Christian society. Less than one third of its members attend Mass regularly. Lapses outnumber conversions, and the exodus of priests from orders has assumed serious proportions.

Features of the Roman Church, long regarded by Catholics and non-Catholics alike as essential to its mission, are now dispensable for Michael Winter. Catholic schools, clerical celibacy, traditional concepts of priesthood, legal requirements on Mass attendance, marriage and upbringing of children are all hindrances to renewal. His chief criticism of the medieval structures still operating is their failure to recognise the basic freedom of the act of faith and the present missionary situation.

He is primarily concerned for the recovery of a biblical doctrine of the church and to make the ordering of the parish and diocese and the work of clergy and laity fit in with it. The church must build itself up as a community with a four-fold programme—worship, charity, witness and apostolate (evangelism)—effectively fulfilled at all levels. Basic to restructuring must be

the establishing of cells of twenty to thirty people, the maximum number for every member to know all the others and assume his own responsibilities in the four-fold programme. The celebration of Mass will normally be in houses, many self-supporting priests working in teams with full-time priests will be needed, and the laity must recognise that only they can act as 'the normal ambassadors of christianity'. Where Michael Winter's theology of salvation and priesthood shows through he is seen to reflect the sort of reformed teaching for which Hans Kung has been criticised by some Roman authorities.

Evangelical Anglicans will do well to weigh his arguments particularly in relation to our parochial organisation. One reader at least is confirmed in the view that our traditional structures can be a barrier to renewal in worship, fellowship and mission.

R. C. CRASTON

**CALLED TO AUXILIARY MINISTRY.** *David Saville.* Falcon. 32 pp. £0.15. **CALLED TO THE MINISTRY.** *David Saville.* Falcon. 24 pp. £0.12. **WOMEN LIKEWISE.** *Joyce Baldwin.* Falcon. 32 pp. £0.15. **READERS.** *Jack Wallace.* Falcon. 24 pp. £0.12.

These four booklets aim to give a practical guide to those who are considering God's call to one of the recognised ministries in the Church of England. With one exception, they may be warmly commended as being both informative and helpful. Each tries to outline some of the opportunities provided by the ministry concerned together with some of the Biblical principles, a sketch of the selection and training procedures and a useful little bibliography for further reference.

Perhaps the one which is going to be used increasingly is David Saville's booklet on Auxiliary Ministry. He knows from experience exactly what ordinands want to know and enters realistically into the issues raised, including the thorny questions about the relationship between APM and Readership and APM and the full-time ministry. Only one emphasis in the booklet leaves me feeling uneasy. It is the point, not infrequently made, that APM has some particular reference to 'one's present employment and the opportunities it may give of pastoral ministry'. In most cases this can only be sustained at the expense of a true understanding of lay vocation. APM must, if it is to be near the Biblical pattern, be viewed in the context of a local congregation.

A criticism of David Saville's booklet on the full-time ministry is that he seems to perpetuate the overemphasis on some kind of 'subjective' call. Surely the ministers of the early church, and indeed the twelve, were summoned to their office not by some supernatural vision but by the direct invitation of our Lord, the Apostles or the local church leaders. Paul stands out as an exception to this rule. A man's call must be tested, so far as possible, by the willingness of the local church to support him in every way. The local church leaders may indeed be the source of a man's vocation, they may represent the voice of God himself.

Joyce Baldwin's booklet on Women's Ministry majors, as one would expect, on the Biblical evidence which is tackled honestly at the critical points. She gives a wide selection of examples of Women's Ministry but does not, regrettably, include a section on the selection and training procedures. The issue of Women's Ordination is wisely left to the Church to decide, although the author leaves us in no doubt about her own convictions

in the light of the scriptural evidence and the return to more Biblical patterns of plural ministry in the local church.

Jack Wallace, in his booklet, is on a hiding to nothing in his attempt to promote the office of Reader, in the midst of the contemporary search for new patterns of ministry. The fact is that it is an anomaly; and the one argument that Jack Wallace puts forward seems to be the Reader's ability 'to move among his fellow men, as it were "incognito"'. The sooner the Church of England stops training new Readers the better.

IAN D. BUNTING

PRAYERS FOR TODAY. *Norman W. Goodacre*. Mowbrays. 134 pp. £1.50. PRAYING THROUGH THE CHRISTIAN YEAR. *D. W. Cleverley Ford*. Mowbrays. 90 pp. £1.25.

People who conduct public worship in contemporary language have two persistent requirements. One is for a supply of good contemporary prayers, the other is for ways of employing the treasures of former generations in a way which does not conflict with the demands of a contemporary liturgical setting.

In *Prayers For Today* Norman Goodacre has done much to meet both needs. In an attractive and well produced volume we are provided with a selection of contemporary prayers, and with careful adaptations of an equally valuable group of older prayers in which God is addressed by 'You' and 'Your'. But this is not all. The 185 prayers in the book are grouped in five sections each of which has its distinctive character.

The first seventy-seven prayers are arranged into twelve sequences, each of which can be used as it stands for the act of intercession in morning or evening prayer. The second section brings together thirty-six classical and traditional prayers 'restudied', as the author puts it, 'with "You" and "Your"'. Section Three presents a series of eighteen meditations which draw upon contemporary literature as well as the Bible and lead into intercessions. The fourth section assembles thirty-five contemporary prayers from seventeen different sources, and relates them to the Christian Year. Section Five brings together thirty-seven prayers of this century, also 'restudied'. And there is a sixth section which presents an impressive list of intercessory themes to guide prayer-making during different seasons of the Christian Year.

This is a valuable and pleasing book. In matters of contemporary worship it will encourage the conservative and guide the radical.

*Praying through the Christian Year* is of similar value but with more restricted aims. It is a firm contribution to the available supply of genuinely contemporary prayers.

The connections between prayer and preaching are many and profound. Prebendary Ford is a famous preacher, and the author of many books of prayers. Just as his prayer life is evident in his sermons so too his concerns as a preacher are evident in his prayers. These prayers bring together the Gospel and the world into the particular relationship which is achieved in the author's experience and ministry.

The first half of the book consists of nineteen extended prayers written for the major festivals of the Christian year. For those who wish to conduct reflective intercessions, or meditations with intercessory relevance, these prayers will be valuable as ingredients of morning or evening prayer after

the third collect, or on more informal or less structured occasions.

The second half of the book comprises thirty-two shorter prayers designed for private use, many of them having something of the character of poems. Things observed, experienced, perceived; moments of vision or knowledge; these are captured in a moment of prayer. As in the case of good poetry things necessarily personal to the writer can have validity for many people. As such many of these prayers, too, will serve to enrich public worship as the right context is found for them by an alert liturgical ministry.

DICK WILLIAMS

PEOPLE PRAYING. *Ian Cowie*. St. Andrew Press, 1973. 173 pp. £1.25.

In this book the major themes of Creed and Calendar are the basis of fifty-eight extended prayers in the 'long-prayer' tradition of most non-episcopal churches. As such they will be of genuine value to all who conduct worship in that particular way.

The theme of each prayer is rooted in the text of Scripture quoted at its head, and all but eight of the prayers are divided into two parts: the first, preparing the way for a sermon on the given text or theme, the second responding to the most likely message of such a sermon. The eight exceptions are prayers designed for celebrations of the Lord's Supper.

Adherence to the Creed ensures that the book's theological range is a comprehensive one, while the author's evident concern for the people of his (Scottish) parish makes the prayers as relevant to the world as to the Bible.

Although Mr. Cowie is concerned to achieve modern thought forms and contemporary language God is addressed throughout by 'Thee' and 'Thou', and phrases like 'we thy covenanted people' are found side by side with such modest colloquialisms as 'might-have-beens' and 'dead-ends'. But the overall impression is of a fresh and vigorous piece of work, clearly the fruit of a strong parochial ministry. I would commend it to all those who need a ready-made way of giving theological content, liturgical structure, and intercessory relevance to their conduct of formal worship in a Free Church setting.

DICK WILLIAMS

ESSAYS IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION, BASED ON THE SARUM LECTURES, 1971. *H. H. Price*. Clarendon Press, OUP., 1972. 125 pp. £2.25.

Professor Price combines philosophical expertise with a long-standing interest in psychical research. His main theme in five of the six lectures here printed is the logical relation between experience of the supernatural on the one hand and the paranormal on the other. Convinced of the genuineness of the latter, he asks whether it provides a way of circumventing the scepticism about the possibility of a supernatural order that has stood in the way of religious belief for the past 200 years. He argues that we have latent, but in general thoroughly repressed, capacities for paranormal experience. Recognition of this blunts the edge of Hume's critique of the miraculous and removes some of the difficulties connected with petitionary prayer, which could be seen as a sort of telepathic Coueism. However, it will not do to equate the religious with the psychic, nor does the reality of the latter point to more than the possibility of the former. The paranormal does not demand involvement on I-Thou terms, but Christian faith does—incidentally, though

Price does not say this, on terms that preclude deliberate cultivation of the paranormal.

Two essays discuss survival beyond death, one pointing out motives for disbelief as well as belief, and the other exploring two models of post-mortem existence, spatial and non-spatial. The latter, a dream world of memory and imagination, need not be totally private and fits better the realm to which mediums allegedly have access. The biblically minded might retort that Scripture cares little for mediums and stresses bodily resurrection.

FRANKLYN DULLEY

THE SENSE OF GOD: SOCIOLOGICAL, ANTHROPOLOGICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACHES TO THE ORIGIN OF THE SENSE OF GOD. *John Bowker*. Clarendon Press, OUP, 1973. 218 pp. Boards £5.00, Paper £1.75.

This book represents the first of three sets of Wilde Lectures given annually at Oxford; while it is, in itself, a complete argument concerning the behavioural sciences and their views of the origin of the sense of God, it remains part of a wider argument which is to include in the subsequent lectures a study of the theistic approach to the subject. The present discussion is wide ranging as the subtitle indicates and may help readers to gain an idea of what various disciplines have been saying over the last fifty or more years. An informed consideration of the current anthropological dislike of historical conjecture leads to the suggestion that a more tolerant approach to intelligent guesses be adopted in the field of religious development.

Two central ideas emerge from the argument: the first is that religion is to be seen as a 'route-finding activity' by means of which human lives are made significant in the presence of certain spheres of limitation such as death; the other argues that there may be 'a sufficiency of reality in existence in the external universe for there to be a groundwork of perception on which interpretation can be constructed' (p. 34). Bowker argues against the sociological orthodoxy of Peter Berger's *Social Construction of Reality* which emphasises the meaning men ascribe to the world and hence the cultural relativity of values, but he accepts with approval Berger's later stance in *The Rumour of Angels* with its notion of signals of transcendence which correspond to his own idea of cues of meaning. One fault in the book may be the undue attention paid to Berger with practically no reference to anthropologists like Mary Douglas whose work on symbolism might have reinforced Bowker's argument whilst enabling him to relate external cues to man's socially constructed world of meaning in a more direct way. Lévi-Strauss' structuralist method is taken as useful in understanding religion as a system of meaning but is regarded as inadequate because of its inability to admit individual factors of innovation into the argument.

Other chapters deal with questions of death and burial, the Freudian outlook on religion as illusion as well as with the relation of drug to religious experience. Other than the two points noted above no firm conclusion is made to this work, but Bowker's easy style with numerous literary illustrations makes these lectures readable to those not usually given to the social sciences and stimulates a desire to pass on to the arguments which we now await from the Queen of Sciences.

DOUGLAS J. DAVIES

**SCIENCE AND RELIGIOUS BELIEF: A SELECTION OF RECENT HISTORICAL STUDIES.** *Edited by C. A. Russell.* University of London Press (Open University Press), 1973. 323 pp. £1.70.

This set of fifteen readings from books and journals has been compiled by the Open University for use in conjunction with two other books and broadcast and correspondence material. It is therefore not an attempt to give a complete account of the period that it covers (Copernicus to Darwin). However, the choice is excellent in giving a historical perspective to the problem of relating Science and Christianity, and generally very readable, and so it can be commended to a wider audience than the one for which it is intended. After a rather novel article on 'Moses and Atomism', the book really divides into four parts: the first deals with the question whether Protestantism provided a special impetus to the rise of modern science; the second with Newton's contribution to science and his metaphysics; the third links these two parts with the last one, concerned with problems of evolution and creation, by giving the reader an excellent account of the dangers of basing a Christian apologetic on scientific discovery. The article on apologetic by Dillenberger contains a telling contrast between Bishop Butler's 'scientific' apologetic and Wesley's preaching of Christ crucified and the impact they made. The approach of most of the articles is historical and philosophical rather than theological or scientific, and non-scientific readers are not likely to experience difficulty, except perhaps in the articles by Burt on Newton and Coleman on Cuvier. Owen Chadwick's questionable conclusion that there are now no problems in relating Science and Christianity ought to be a fruitful topic for a few essays!

D. W. WOOD

**RELIGIONS OF THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST.** *H. Ringgren.* SPCK. 198 pp. £3.50.

This comprehensive survey of Near Eastern religion fills a long felt need in this field. Despite its title it does not deal with Israelite or Egyptian religion, only with Sumerian, Babylonian and Assyrian, and West-Semitic religion. Under these headings Ringgren discusses the beliefs and practices of each group: the gods, their names, their character and the mythology associated with them; the cult and kingship; religion, morality, and their view of the afterlife.

Ringgren does not offer any startling new interpretations of Near Eastern religion, but he brings together in a most convenient form the studies of various specialists in the field, and then gives his own judicious assessment of them. The overall picture that results helps us to reach a much deeper and richer understanding of the background to the Old Testament. Ringgren stresses that it is important not to make comparisons between the Old Testament and cognate literatures simply on the basis of isolated texts, but that an understanding of the whole religion and culture is indispensable to an intelligent evaluation of the individual texts. This volume therefore makes it possible for the non-expert to utilise Near Eastern materials to illuminate the Old Testament and its message. It underlines again the vast differences between the complex polytheisms that were the common property of other nations and the amazing simplicity of Israel's faith.

G. J. WENHAM