

Book Reviews

FREEDOM AND GRACE. *J.R. Lucas*. S.P.C.K., 1976. 138pp. £3.95. With this volume of essays established philosopher with major contributions to metaphysical and political thought behind him (another new book on *Democracy and Participation* appeared almost simultaneously with this) steps modestly onto the theological stage. A few of the eighteen pieces are familiar from journals or symposia, and a few are so insubstantial that they contribute little or nothing to an assessment of Lucas' thought. But most of the material is new, and conveys the impression of a fresh and original mind exploring important topics with subtlety, wit and (in places) tentativeness. One would need to be very *blase* not to find *Freedom and Grace* stimulating.

By modern criteria Lucas is a theological conservative, polemically disposed towards demythologisers and apologetic reductionists. But one might infer an intellectual ancestry neither in Catholic nor in Evangelical orthodoxy, but in the post-Schleiermacherian romanticism which used to be loosely dubbed 'liberal'. This influence is most apparent in the pair of articles on the Fall and the Atonement. Adam's problem is not his wickedness, but his nakedness (p. 50); the Fall is a necessary condition for autonomy; the moral interpretation of the doctrine of original sin is false, the true understanding is existential and relational; the legal theory of Christ's atoning work makes it seem either unnecessary or impertinent. All of which drives the thickest possible wedge between love and justice, between relating and evaluating (a stance which gets some moral-philosophical support from the adoption of a sharp distinction between 'E-type' and 'U-type' moralities, p.97). In criticism we may reasonably ask whether man's existential situation does not include a sense of *moral* plight which is not reducible to loneliness and inadequacy. To say that we deserve, but do not want, justice, while we want, but could not (in principle) deserve, love (p.17) seems to over-simplify the complexity of human wants and needs. Yet elsewhere Lucas himself goes some way to subvert his own radical romanticism and to bring moral evaluation back into relationships again. In 'Reasons for Loving and Being Loved' he repudiates the simplistic thesis that love is absolutely irrespective of its object's characteristic; writing on 'Forgiveness' he argues that a sinner's changed moral attitude is necessary to the recovery of a damaged relationship, though not sufficient for it (p.82). The more subtle Lucas of

these articles appears to be saying that approval may be an essential condition for love, even though the relationship cannot be reduced to the evaluation. Suppose that the author of these articles were to rewrite the work of the more radical Lucas: might he not find more value in concepts of sin and atonement which, even by means of potentially misleading legal analogies, assert the central significance of moral considerations in the meeting of man and God?

A particular interest attaches to the first five papers, in which the author, who has previously written a philosophical treatise on the freedom of the will, addresses the controversy between Pelagius and Augustine. Like Pelagius, Lucas is a strong libertarian, but he believes he can sidestep the 'Pelagianism' which has often followed from this premiss. For all that he got the metaphysics wrong. Augustine was right to insist that man cannot take God for granted. The logic of commitment demands St. Paul's 'Yet not I . . .' in the face of the divine initiative. It was a mistake on Augustine's part to read off a determinist metaphysic from this religious truth, but it was equally a mistake on Pelagius' part to deny the religious truth on the grounds of a libertarian metaphysic. But how do the traditional features of the doctrine of God fare when we boldly abandon any kind of theological determinism? Here Lucas shuns one popular move for enabling us to have our cake and eat it. A certain school of thought maintains that the claim 'God foreknew that I would . . .' is entirely compatible with the claim 'I decided that I would . . .' They belong to different 'stories' about the same event, each story valid on its own terms. For Lucas they belong to one story, and are incompatible (p.36). Consequently we must revise our conception of certain divine attributes, especially foreknowledge and providence. By 'providence' we are to understand God's infinite resourcefulness, his ability to outflank all man's devious evasions. 'God does not have just one plan for the world, but an infinity of plans, and with the changing course of events selects those that are applicable to the actual circumstances that obtain' (p.39).

'God is a deeply compromised God'(p.40) – a revealing observation made, not about the Incarnation, where such language might be expected, but about the Creation. Such a picture has its advantages (a straightforward account of petitionary prayer, for example) but poses some puzzles which Lucas does not help us solve. How much flexibility in God's plans is consistent with our continuing to talk about providence and omnipotence at all? It seems that Jonah will get to Nineveh somehow, and if he declines to take the overland route God will arrange for him to travel in the belly of a fish. But in that story God got his way easily and quickly, without a great deal of adaption, and he got his way *both* with respect to Jonah's vocation *and* with respect to the Ninevites' conversion. But presumably it might have

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been necessary, had Jonah been yet more tiresome, for God to rewrite his plans for converting the Ninevites, leaving Jonah out of them? That, too, would be infinite resourcefulness; but it would have lost one of the traditional strengths of the doctrine of providence, which is to guarantee God's good purposes for the individual as well as his good purposes for the world. I dare to hope, not only that God will be all in all, but that somehow he will beat my failings and enable me to realise whatever purposes he has in mind for me. If God is driven too much back on flexibility and manoeuvre, I begin to fear that individual destinies may be dispensable. I hope that Lucas will return to the doctrine of providence and assuage my fears.

OLIVER O'DONOVAN.

CONTOURS OF A CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY. An Introduction to Herman Dooyeweerd's Thought. *L. Kalsbeek* (edited by Bernard and Josina Zylstra) Wedge Publishing Foundation, 1976. 360 pp. No price given.

In the inter-war years Herman Dooyeweerd, Professor of Jurisprudence at the Free University of Amsterdam, attempted to develop a Christian philosophy, building on the religious insights of Kuyper and Bavinck, and ultimately of Calvin. A prolific writer, he had a considerable following in Holland, where an academic journal is devoted to discussing his philosophy, and in Dutch circles in North America, particularly in Canada. It is from Canada that this English translation of an introduction to Dooyeweerd's thought comes. It contains an interesting introduction by Bernard Zylstra who has also contributed extensive bibliographies.

The central idea of this philosophy is that all philosophy has non-theoretical religious presuppositions, and that the claim to autonomy of thought can only be a pretence. Dooyeweerd thus develops a worldview which is consciously Christian. But can such a programme be *philosophy*, which depends on argument? And what is the relation between philosophy and theology? Is there a confusion here between *Only if what Scripture says is true can men think properly* and *Only if men base their thinking on Scripture can they think properly*?

Dooyeweerd's philosophy, and this book, seem to be light-years away from current philosophical pre-occupations in Britain. But Kalsbeek's book looks useful for anyone who is interested in Dooyeweerd, as he starts from the beginning and writes in a straight forward and lively way. PAUL HELM.

THE CONTRADICTION OF CHRISTIANITY. *David E. Jenkins*: SCM Press 1976. 162 pp. £4.50.

Anyone who read with gratitude and profit Canon Jenkins' earlier writings, his *Guide to the Debate about God* and his Bampton Lectures *The Glory of*

Man will find himself in a rather different experience in this latest book. Whether it reflects the years since 1969 when he has been involved with the WCC as Director of Humanum Studies, to suggest that encounters and situations in many parts and with many different types of people should have deeply affected his thought processes, is the right conclusion or not, certainly he offers here a book in a very different style, and way of presentation, than before. For the most part, the disciplined, crisp presentation of a well-developed argument is gone, to be replaced by a verbose, discursive, repetitive unwinding of a theme, which so far from being lectures (the 1974 Edward Cadbury Lectures in the University of Birmingham) seem rather like a series of sermons in strong WCC terms, heavily laden with exhortation and imperatives – the word ‘must’ is exceedingly frequent. There is also what will be irritating to many, a too great concern to be sure that everyone is clear about the theme, so as to imitate the old preacher (‘I tells ’em what I shall tell ’em; I tells ’em; I tells ’em what I told ’em!’) here to the point of weariness. Perhaps it implies that the lectures were not sufficiently tidied up for publication.

On the actual content, the theme is to confront ‘the white, bourgeois theology’ of Western Christendom with its own tribal contradiction of the universal gospel which holds out the vision of a universal and glorious humanism, which is itself the full expression of the Christian meaning of love. It is a further exercise in the methodological conviction that the further one goes into the significance of man, the more a theology is demanded (using ‘theology’ here in its proper sense, a doctrine of God, instead of its debased current popular use to mean ‘a doctrine of . . .’). Thus the book which begins with aspects of the human condition – identity, obstacles and impoverishments to true humanity, sin, – leads on to the consideration of the meaning of the Transcendent in the midst, which Jenkins holds out as the abiding critique and vision of all our variant aberrations whether forms of Christianity or human aspiration; and ends up with the final chapter on ‘The Trinity-Love in the End’. In the course of the discussion the Marxist critique of capitalist society and forms of its Christian expression, is accepted upon our Western manner of life. At the same time however, the positive Marxist solutions with their underlying political and social philosophy are totally rejected as failing in genuine humanism, shutting men up into the historical process and so denying genuine hope, and thus ultimately irrelevant to the true human situation. It is perhaps in the penultimate chapter, ‘Concerning violence and more about contradiction’ that the earlier style of David Jenkins is found, is one’s relief. While he is obviously sympathetic to struggles Christians have in areas of the world where oppressive regimes hold sway, he has not accepted altogether the embracing of active, violent

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programmes as a fully Christian response; yet at the same time with great sensitivity he brings us into the soul-searching anguish of making decisions in situations where no ideal solution is possible, in order that, while the harsh tensions of responsible action are truly felt, there is no attempt to justify the ambiguities of the active response in terms of a new theology.

It is not altogether clear as to the intended reader that the book has in mind. If, as is likely, it is to those with some kind of Christian conviction, then the assumptions that seem to be accepted are admissible. But there are times when it seems as if Jenkins is wanting to justify the basic nature of the Christian vision for ultimately genuine humanism, as in, Chapter 6: 'Always be ready with an explanation for anyone who asks you for the grounds and shape of the hope that is in you' (1 Pet. 3.15). Here he disclaims any idea of finding a demonstration of the truth or falsity of any insight into the nature of reality. 'Truth' he remarks, 'here is not something which we can grasp but that of which we know ourselves to be a part'. It is a question about what persuades us to commitment, and as the rather obscure discussion goes on, it seems to emerge that this is in fact the promises of God, 'glimpsed through Jesus' which combine with insights into genuine humanism. Yet this is more by way of a personal testimony, of individual experience – no 'all-embracing theory about the nature of the universe and the realities of being human'. The individual testimony is also consciously part of a church affirmation – despite the contradiction of it by actual churches and Christians. It is also that which arises from prayerful obedience to God, as response to his purposes. Jenkins urges the re-instatement of the corporate 'orthodoxy' and 'orthopraxy', a re-valuation of the spiritual tradition, over against attempts at objective intellectualist, independent theological or philosophical approaches. Understanding, therefore, is the outcome of living, acting within the insights and obedience of a faith, grounded in the revelation of God and man seen in Jesus, summed up in terms of sacrificial love.

If a debate can be expected with those who wish to be more convinced about the revelation of God at all, it is possible that Jenkins would avoid any usual apologetic response and place the issue firmly in terms of total personal involvement, in which the testimony of faith and readiness to be given up to fulfilling the ultimate goals of true humanism were seen to be far more important than a structured intellectual rationale. Jenkins could no doubt argue, in defence of his position here, that almost all, if not all, the historical forms of Christian apologetics have been engaged in by those who have in fact come to faith along the lines he urges here, who then sit down to try to bring the 'cultured despisers of religion' to faith by means of an intellectual pilgrimage which was not indeed their own path. But what Brunner called 'eristic' theology would go no further than to attempt to show that the

objections of non-Christian outlooks were not themselves watertight, and that non-Christian commitments to life were shot through with problems and insufficiencies that Christianity as known from inside 'had a word for'. This book makes a bid in that direction. There are a number of other themes that arise in the course of it that would be worth following. All in all, it ranges around areas that anyone who is aware of WCC discussions of late, or modern missiology, or the writings of Christians in S. America or the Third World, would be familiar with. Hacking ones way through the verbiage, the response of the author is sensitive, balanced and somehow conservative, even if a thread of radical individualism pulls at the argument. It's a pity it wasn't a paper-back at a cheaper price.

G.J.C.MARCHANT.

FROM BELIEF TO UNDERSTANDING. *Richard Campbell*. Australian National University Press, 1976. 229 pp. \$6.95.

Anselm's Ontological Argument, according to Dr. Campbell, has been wholly or partly misunderstood both by his critics, from Gaunilo onwards, and also by his latter-day defenders. The standard criticism, that the argument treats existence as a predicate in order to extract the conclusion that God exists from the definition of God as the greatest conceivable being, applies to the Cartesian version rather than to his. In any case, Anselm is not primarily trying to prove God's existence, but rather to explore the logical consequences of a way of thinking to which he is already committed; though not irrevocably, and hence the challenge in the Fool's words. From a minute study of Anselm's text in the light of modern theory Campbell plausibly contends that Anselm's reasoning is in fact valid, but its force for us is limited by the difficulty of sharing the preconceptions on which it is based. However, the preconceptions of our own thinking which underline the root-and-branch rejection of the Ontological Argument have their own difficulties, as Campbell observes in his last chapter.

The discussion is closely textured and requires some previous knowledge of formal logic. Nevertheless it is far from arid. Indeed, one of its features is the way in which Anselm emerges not merely as a supple intellect but as a Christian who succeeded in combining *engagement* with rigorous honesty. Despite the cultural gap between him and ourselves, he has more to say to us than often has been appreciated.

FRANKLYN DULLEY.

THE HISTORICAL-CRITICAL METHOD. *Edgar Krentz*. SPCK, 1976. 88pp. £1.95

It is true enough, as Kierkegaard complained, that study of the Bible with commentary, dictionary, etc., can be a way of 'defending oneself against God's Word' rather than hearing it (p.3). Nevertheless, the historical-critical

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method, whereby the Bible is studied against its historical background and subjected to the same kind of historical tests as any other book, has come to stay.

The method is to be welcomed, Dr. Krentz argues, as part of the Reformation legacy of concern for the historical sense of the Bible. After an introduction and a historical survey on the development of the method, he describes how scholars use it, and then lists ten achievements which the method has contributed to our understanding of the Bible. There follows a discussion of some problems it raises, such as the relationship between faith and historical 'proof', and the question as to whether the resurrection is historically verifiable. To end this chapter the author urges the need for the interpreter to live in the community of faith, combining 'dedication to historical truth with the recognition of his own humanity and need for forgiveness' (p. 72). The last chapter summarizes discussion of historical criticism since 1945, mostly in Germany.

Professor Krentz sometimes has to sacrifice clarity for the sake of brevity. For example, I doubt whether a student would understand the summary of Bultmann's viewpoint (p. 31) unless he understood Bultmann's viewpoint already — which is not what one wants in a book written as an introduction for students and interested laymen. And the presentation would have been even more helpful if space could have been found for a few more examples of how scholars deal with actual historical texts. But on the whole the author has worked wonders to compress into so few pages such a useful guidebook. And anyone wondering what to read next need look no further than the footnote references to a remarkably wide range of literature.

STEPHEN TRAVIS.

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY: Old and New Testament. *Geerhardus Vos*. Banner of Truth, 1976. 426 pp. £3.50.

Despite the title, this book does not survey biblical teaching on all significant theological themes. For instance, there is almost no theology of creation in it, and no reference to the influence of the Exile on the Jews' theological thinking. Biblical books such as Joshua — 2 Kings and the Wisdom Literature get hardly a mention, and the New Testament section concentrates solely, except, for four pages, on the Gospels. What we are offered instead is a study of the Bible's teaching on salvation, organized around the main 'foci' of revelation — the Garden of Eden, Noah, Abraham, Moses, the prophets, John the Baptist and Jesus himself.

The book is based on lectures given over fifty years ago, and was first published in the United States in 1948. Inevitably, therefore, discussions of critical questions have an antique ring to them. One may marvel at the

courage and skill with which Professor Vos resisted the works of Wellhausen and his kind. But one must also recognize that Old Testament scholarship has become both more positive and more complex than it was in those days, and Vos' arguments are unlikely to convince readers today who are not already sympathetic to his views.

The best part of the book are Vos' expositions of the theological significance of the various high points in Israel's history – God's choice of the patriarchs, the Exodus, the teachings of the prophets. And best of all is his discussion of Jesus' teaching about the kingdom of God. Passages such as these will be worth reprinting for a long time yet.

Two detailed points – Vos claims that 'revelation' is concerned only with what God has objectively revealed in the biblical story, and not with subjective experiences of individuals throughout history. Theological language would be tidier if that were so, but unfortunately the Bible itself (e.g. in Romans 1:18 and Galations 1:16) sometimes speaks of 'revelation' in this more subjective sense. The second point is that 'revelation' is not in alphabetical order in the index (p. 413).

STEPHEN TRAVIS.

SOMA IN BIBLICAL THEOLOGY, with emphasis on Pauline Anthropology.
Robert H. Grundy. C.U.P., 1976. 267 pp. £9.50.

It is generally agreed among scholars today that in Paul's letters the word *soma* 'frequently and characteristically refers to the whole person rather than especially, or exclusively, to the body' (p. 5). R. Bultmann relates this more-than-merely-physical understanding of *soma* to his existentialist theology and his dematerialization of the resurrection. For J.A.T. Robinson, it is part of his argument for a corporal identification between the glorified body of Christ, the eucharistic body and the church as the body of Christ. And between then they have won the day.

Or have they? Dr Grundy is prepared to argue that *soma* always refers to the individual physical body, and to demonstrate the importance of this conclusion for a proper understanding of Paul's doctrine of man, death and resurrection, sin and salvation, and the church as the body of Christ.

In his discussion of the crucial passages in Paul's letters, he is quick to pounce on any inconsistencies or logical weaknesses in the exegesis of scholars with whom he takes issue. He pleads – refreshingly – for a larger dose of common sense than is present in some scholarly exegesis. But surely common sense deserts even this author when, in order to support his thesis, he claims that in 1 Cor. 5. 3-5 Paul clearly conceives of his spirit's presence in a place far removed from that where his body stands (p. 141. Incidentally, his reference in note 2 on that page to Best, *One Body in Christ*, should be to Page 218, not 208).

Nevertheless, I am in no doubt that Dr. Grundy's book deserves to throw the whole issue of Paul's use of *soma* wide open again. In particular, his insistence that Paul is speaking only metaphorically when he calls the church 'the body of Christ' is both more convincing and more manageable than the mysterious constructions of Bishop Robinson and others.

STEPHEN TRAVIS.

OLD TESTAMENT INTRODUCTION 3: THEOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. *David F. Hinson*. S.P.C.K., 1976. 176 pp. £2.50.

In recent years there has been debate about how an Old Testament Theology should be written. One aspect of the problem is whether a traditional structure, reflecting the usual interests of Christian dogmatics—God, Man, Sin, Salvation, the Future and so forth—is an imposition which prevents the Old Testament from presenting clearly its own theological structures. The approach of this book, the third of a trilogy of Old Testament Introductions aimed at meeting the educational needs of younger churches, is essentially traditional. By posing questions common to all forms of religious belief Hinson avoids many of the pitfalls of this approach. The Wisdom Literature, for example, often undervalued by traditional methods, is used effectively.

Unfortunately, as so often the case with a traditional structure, there are gaps, and some of the distinctive theologies of the Old Testament fail to emerge as such. The theologies of the divine presence, notably the important Zion theme, are largely overlooked, while neglect of the Chronicler, though commonplace, is still regrettable. Some of the books' categorical assertions are at least debatable — for example the statement that patriarchal religion was 'closely related to Animism' (p. 14).

Overall, however, this is a stimulating book. There is much that is instructive, while the Questions and Study Suggestions are never less than interesting, and sometimes quite demanding. The juxtaposition of pictures showing a Chinese peasant watering his crops, and a wartime Scottish (!) congregation praying that 'God will take their side and give them a victory over their enemies' (p.25) is challenging as well as startling. The overseas dimension of the Series is refreshing, and it could be very valuable for use among the 'parochial' here at home.

P.J.BUDD.

JOB: TYNDALE OLD TESTAMENT COMMENTARIES. *Francis I. Andersen*. IVP, 1976. 294 pp. £3.75/£2.95.

This is a valuable addition to the series. Professor Andersen is widely known in Old Testament circles for his sensitive and original approach to literary questions, and in this commentary he shares some of his insights with a wider circle of readers, with a minimum of technical language. But the

bibliographical information is surprisingly full, and many detailed points in the Hebrew are discussed, so that students too will find this a useful addition to the literature on Job.

The commentary assumes the theological unity of the book, but recognizes that its literary history is a separate question. The commentator's own approach is conservative but not obscurantist (e.g. chapter 28 may be an aside of the author and not part of Job's speech; the Elihu speeches may be intentionally in conclusive to heighten the contrasting effect of the divine speeches). His overall theological position is shown in his acceptance of the penal substitution theory of the atonement, but this does not obtrude on his exegesis of Job, and his discussion of the famous passage 19. 25-27 is exemplary for its cautious but positive approach. Only rarely does Professor Andersen beg a burning question as in the sweeping assertion that the Israelite 'cultus was devoid of dramatic representations of either theological stories . . . or national history' (p.33).

By present day standards this is very good value for money, and the publishers are to be commended for a clear and compact presentation. It is to be hoped that this commentary will be widely used. A. GELSTON.

MICAH: A Commentary. *James L. Mays*. SCM (Old Testament Library), 1976. 169 pp. £5.75.

It is more than sixty years since a detailed commentary on Micah appeared in English. Problems of exegesis and frequent changes of theme make it a book that is anything but easy to interpret. Yet it is perhaps the best suited of all the prophetic books to serve as an introduction to that literature. Within its brief compass are represented most of the main themes and patterns of classical prophecy. Professor Mays' commentary is an excellent companion for the study of the book. He does his basic job of explanation well, in the readable style that is familiar from earlier volumes of the *Old Testament Library*. At the same time it is clear that he is master of the methods and results of the most recent scholarship.

The author's treatment of the composition of Micah deserves special mention. Unlike the majority of recent commentators, Mays holds to the older view that authentic sayings of Micah are only to be found in chapters 1-3. But he is far from disregarding what he considers to be later additions to the original nucleus. In fact his method, as seen in the fine Introduction, is to work backwards from the present text of the book, which has its own message to the nations (1:2; 5:15) and to Israel (6:1), seeking the stages by which the basic collections of sayings were given new meanings by successive generations in Israel. In his own succinct phrase, he is interested 'not in what makes (the book) come apart, but in what holds it together'. The process of

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composition was not in the hands of mere editors: it was 'a self-conscious act of prophetic work'. A recognition of this not only helps us to make sense of the arrangement of the book – it reveals the continuity of outlook between the prophet and his first expositors which transcends their differences.

G.I.DAVIES.

REDATING THE NEW TESTAMENT. *John A.T. Robinson*. SCM Press, 1976. 369 pp. £8.50.

Dates, as John Robinson says in his latest book, 'remain disturbingly fundamental data' (p. 358). It is salutary, therefore, that fashionable and often unexamined presuppositions regarding the (inevitably uncertain) chronology and dating of the New Testament documents should be subjected, as here, to close and searching re-appraisal. If most of the New Testament beyond Paul appeared, as is usually claimed, after AD 70, why is the Fall of Jerusalem not mentioned more specifically by the New Testament writers? Why *should* the Fourth Gospel (Dr. Robinson's starting-point in his redating quest) be placed after AD 85, if there is no clear allusion to the Test Benediction in John's treatment of the church-synagogue relationship? Why in any case should such criteria as these be regarded as crucial for dating the New Testament material? It is questions of this nature that Dr. Robinson raises so usefully, and with the incisiveness we have come to expect from him.

Surprisingly, especially perhaps for those who cannot dissociate Dr Robinson from the radical approach of *Honest to God*, the conclusions reached in this study are uncompromisingly conservative. For example, John's Gospel is dated AD 40-65 or so; the captivity of letters were written by Paul (from Caesarea) in AD 58; Jude and 2 Peter ante-date 1 Peter (itself apostolic); and the Pastorals are Pauline and early (between AD 55 and 58). Such conclusions in themselves are not original; but the over-all thesis – that the New Testament in its entirety was composed before AD 70 – is refreshingly novel, and has far-reaching implications for fundamental questions relating to the origin and transmission of the primitive Christian tradition.

Nevertheless, in exposing the unwarranted presuppositions of others in the dating exercise, it is possible that Robinson builds arguments on presuppositions of his own. Why *should* a pre-70 date be accepted in cases where (as Robinson himself admits) the evidence is inconclusive? And how do we really explain the vacuum which remains in Robinson's scheme (despite his arguments in its favour) between AD 70 and 100? In more detail what about the nature of John's theology in relation to the Synoptics if the Fourth Gospel appeared virtually at the same time as the other three? And

why do the Pastorals have an 'ambivalent' appearance if they are, as Robinson suggests, unashamedly primitive? In these and other respects Dr Robinson's arguments do not by any means solve all the problems related to New Testament dating.

Despite such reservations, however, this is without doubt an important book; even if few will be able to agree with it completely, no one in future will be able to ignore it. Dr Robinson's study is honest and undogmatic, well and persuasively written. Readable and compelling as a detective story, the thesis is presented with an erudition and scholarship which few detective novels can hope to match. All shades of opinion are represented, as may be seen from the comprehensive bibliography; and information of vital import to all New Testament students is marshalled here in a way which clearly highlights the significant issues for understanding the placing of New Testament documents in early Christian history. If all Dr Robinson's statements in this book are to be taken as questions, as he maintains (pp. 12, 357), these are certainly questions worth asking. STEPHEN S. SMALLEY.

JESUS AND THE LANGUAGE OF THE KINGDOM. S.C.M.Press (New Testament Library), 1976. 225 pp. £6.00

Norman Perrin distinguishes four steps in the process of New Testament interpretation: textual criticism, historical criticism, literary criticism, and hermeneutics. His aim in the present work is to shed light especially on the third and fourth steps with particular reference to the kingdom of God and parable-interpretation. He argues that the Kingdom should be interpreted not as a 'concept' but as an open-ended symbol, the natural function of which is to evoke a myth. Interpretations of the kingdom, he urges, have been bedevilled by the fact that scholars have thought of it as a conception rather than as a symbol. Using Philip Wheelwright's terminology, Perrin further argues that the kingdom is not a 'steno-symbol', which has the one-to-one relation to its referent, but a 'tensive' symbol, in that it conveys a set of meanings which cannot be exhausted by any one given referent. In the course of comparing particular interpretations of the kingdom in New Testament scholarship he criticises Bultmann's proposals about demythologising the symbol of the kingdom. He writes, 'If the Kingdom of God is a tensive symbol . . . then the mythology of Jesus has not been discredited by the subsequent course of history' (p. 78).

In the second main part of the book Perrin turns to the subject of parable-interpretation. After re-examining the work of Jeremias he goes on to discuss the new hermeneutic, under which he includes Linnemann and Jungel as well as Fuchs, and then the movement in American scholarship represented by Wilder, Funk, Via and Crossas. It is high time that a

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convenient survey of these fruitful approaches should be made available to students, and for this reason Perrin's survey is useful. However, the discussion is often disappointingly thin, especially on Fuchs. My main criticism of this section is that Perrin is too eager to show the distinctive value of the American contribution as over against that of the new hermeneutic, so that the point which they have in common are too quickly passed over. A close comparison between the writings of Fuchs and Funk, for example, will clearly demonstrate the extent of Funk's indebtedness to the new hermeneutic. It is in keeping with Perrin's approach that certain features of hermeneutics which can be found in the later Heidegger and Gadamer are presented as exclusively literary insights. Thus what Funk calls the 'underground springs' of his approach are credited to literary criticism rather than to philosophy. Via's valid stress on the aesthetic nature of the text was pre-dated by a deeper discussion of the relation between art and truth in Gadamer.

Perrin's book will prove to be of value if it sends the reader to the actual writers whom he discusses. Perrin's own work in the kingdom as a tensive symbol is distinctive and valuable, but for the publisher to call it an 'exciting and controversial study' is justified only for readers who are approaching this field for the first time. ANTHONY THISELTON.

PETER'S PORTRAIT OF JESUS. *J.B. Philips*. Collins and World, 1976. 185 pp. £2.95.

A catch-penny for the popular market? Well, I suppose publishers publish in order to make money. But anyone expecting as much as the author's name suggests will feel badly let down. A brief introduction informs us that the Gospel of Mark is a collection of the stories Peter told ('the sort of Gospel Peter himself would have written, had he not been so modest'), and that 1 Peter is a genuine letter from the apostle, though certainly not 2 Peter, compiled about AD 130. After that preamble, the rest of the book is a reprint a Phillips' translation of these three biblical documents, with brief linking comments to bring out something of the promise of the title. Since 2 Peter is supposed not to be Petrine, it is by no means clear why that epistle has still been included. By way of pleasant decoration there are eight colour photographs, and also a simple outline map. NORMAN HILLYER.

EXPOSITORY DISCOURSES ON 1 PETER. *John Brown*. Banner of Truth, 1975. (2 vols) 577, 650 pp. £5.50 set.

First published in 1848 in three volumes, this classic has now been reprinted in a two-volume edition in the *Geneva Series of Commentaries*. John Brown was, in Spurgeon's tribute, 'a Puritan born out of due time. Everything he

left us is massive gold. He is both rich and clear, profound and perspicuous'. That is near enough. These two volumes on 1 Peter are not a commentary in the usual sense of verse-by-verse plod, nor are they sermons, although addressed to Brown's congregation at Broughton Place, Edinburgh, over a period of sixteen years. He divides the epistle into sense-paragraphs and draws out the leading thought in each in 'expository discourses'. In his acknowledgements, Brown marks his special indebtedness to Archbishop Leighton's famous *Practical Commentary*. But his own work richly deserves this new lease of life. The dry bones of needful scholarship in many modern commentaries too often form dead hands. Brown's learning is none the worse for being nineteenth century. And he does *expound*, i.e. he unwraps the meaning the writer is intending to convey. In a word, he makes the epistle live, and then goes on graciously and firmly to apply the truths unveiled. This is a fine exposition. What is it is also at Puritan length? It is worth investing the time, doubly so at the bargain price. There are useful indices: subjects, Greek words for the learned (though nothing discourages the Greekless in the text), authors quoted, and other biblical passages discussed en route.

NORMAN HILLYER.

THE USES OF SCRIPTURE IN RECENT THEOLOGY. *David H. Kelsey*. SCM., 1975, 227 pp. £5.50.

Professor Kelsey asks what is involved in the process of 'proving a doctrine from scripture'. His argument is that this process takes a wide variety of forms. He concludes that there is no single normative concept either of scriptural authority or even of scripture itself. Theologians begin, he argues, with different concepts of what is implied by the term 'scripture', and then they use scripture in a variety of different ways in order to try to validate their theological proposals. The author then suggests that because of the multiform ways in which such concepts as 'scripture' and 'authority' are understood, it is virtually meaningless simply to ask whether a given theological position actually accords with scripture, unless we have first stated how we understand the phrase 'accords with scripture'.

Different attitudes towards scripture are illustrated from the writings of B.B.Warfield, H.W.Bartsch, G.E.Wright, Karl Barth, L.S.Thornton, Paul Tillich, and Rudolf Bultmann. Warfield understands the Bible not only as a record of revelation, but as revelation itself. Moreover he appeals not to isolated texts but to scripture as a whole. Indeed in this respect Kelsey argues: "Warfield expressly rejects a proof-texting method and aligns himself with the most unlikely of allies: Friedrich Schleiermacher" (p. 23). Kelsey relates Warfield's approach with that of Hans-Werner Bartsch. What is authoritative for both writers is the content, or more strictly the 'concepts' of

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scripture. The problem of this position, according to Kelsey, is the kind of pluriformity or variety of concepts found among different Biblical writers and emphasized by such theologians as Barr or perhaps Kasemann. G.E.Wright locates authority not in Biblical doctrine or concepts, but in a confessional recital of historical events as acts of God. He stresses the uniqueness of the Biblical understanding of God's relation to history. This is not without affinities, Kelsey claims, with Barth's approach. The emphasis falls on recital or narrative. Kelsey concludes that it is difficult to see how this way of construing scripture can be assessed. (p. 49). L.S.Thornton and Paul Tillich stress the revelatory value of Biblical images or symbols, whilst Rudolf Bultmann also lays emphasis on the capacity of certain passages to constitute revelation-events in the present. A kerygmatic statement is an utterance which is heard as personal address. The difficulty of Bultmann's position, Kelsey concludes, is that the locus of revelation is shifted from events in the public world to experiences in the subjectivity of the man of faith.

The moral drawn by Kelsey from all this is that no one appeals simply to scripture, but to scripture as construed in terms of a certain pattern. However, it is possible to choose as a matter of principle that scripture should perform certain functions within the Christian community and the thought of the individual. 'No more systematically or logically compelling reasons can be given for taking scripture as authority than for becoming a Christian. Nor, of course, need they be any less compelling either' (p. 165). Historically, attention to the exegesis of particular passages of scripture has prompted major new insights and reforms in the life of the church.

I was not convinced by every part of the author's argument. For example, his insistence that the vast majority of theologians are wrong in viewing theology hermeneutically as 'translation' rests to my mind on an outdated view of what linguistic translation entails. It is not a matter of following a one-word/one-concept pattern, but of allowing a stretch of language to come to speech within the world of the receptor-language. This is not of course to deny Kelsey's point that there is a difference between cultural and linguistic translation, but it is not a clear-cut black-and-white one. Kelsey is right to pinpoint some of the problems, however, which result from premature appeals to the authority of scripture which are put forward before the speaker has considered what exactly is entailed by his claim. He is right to point out that the meaning of such a claim is nowadays not self-evident. But he makes rather heavy weather out of what it, after all, a fairly obvious state of affairs. Everyone is already agreed that questions about Biblical authority cannot be isolated from questions about hermeneutics.

ANTHONY C. THISLETON.

NATURE AND SUPERNATURE. *E.L.Mascall*. Darton, Longman and Todd, 1976. 94 pp. £1.50.

This little book contains three public lectures given by Prof. E.L.Mascall at St. Michael's Jesuit School of Philosophy and Letters in 1973. He followed as lecturer the outstanding contemporary philosopher Fr. Bernard Lovrgan, and the first lecture is in fact a friendly examination of his predecessor's contribution as lecturer. The St. Michael's Lectures were established for the purpose of ventilating the question of God in modern thought. Thus they move very largely in the domain of natural theology. Despite his reputation in the Science-Religious field therefore, Prof. Mascall's present contribution concerns something quite different, and there is little here of specific interest to the scientist.

The first lecture deals with Fr. Lovrgan. It is hard going for one not trained in the language and style of philosophical debate; it takes a good deal of concentration for a non-specialist to see the distinctness and comprehensiveness of the 'three basic questions: What am I doing when I am knowing? Why is doing that knowing? What do I know when I do it? In spite of Prof. Mascall's gentle tone there is a good deal of punch in his criticism of Fr. Lovrgan: 'I am not convinced that [he] has sufficiently protected the primacy of the Christian revelation over the speculations of the human reason'. While we can rejoice that such an outstanding thinker is in the Christian camp, Paul's words in 1 Cor. 1.21 seem very apposite.

Prof. Mascall goes on in his second and third lectures to discuss Nature and Supernature, and Nature and Grace. His standpoint is Catholic rather than Reformed; in this complex field of discourse many would prefer the ideas of common and special grace. But if we feel that the latter do more justice to the biblical view of things we can still be profoundly grateful for Prof. Mascall's robust defence of the miraculous element in Christianity against the very prevalent 'anti-supernaturalist reductionism'. And we can be glad too of the reminder that when we discuss the deep things of God and the soul none of our categories *quite* fits the facts; it is always a question of which does so best.

DOUGLAS C. SPANNER.

CREATOR, CREATION AND FAITH. *Norman Young*. Collins, 1976. 219 pp. £3.50.

Prof. Norman Young is a methodist who holds the chair of Systematic Theology at Queen's College, Melbourne. In this book he sets out to examine the difference it makes to men to believe in God as Creator; that is, how it influences the way men live in the present, and how they plan the future. This difference of course is bound to depend on *how* men see God as Creator; those who stress His transcendence will do so in one way, those who put the

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emphasis on His imminence in another. Their conclusions will therefore certainly be diverse, though each alike subscribes to the doctrine. Prof. Young traces out the sort of diversity which is to be expected by a careful examination of the conclusions of four leaders of twentieth-century thought: Barth, Tillich, Bultmann and Moltmann. The comparison is very illuminating.

The author starts with a statement of the importance of the doctrine itself. It has been or is in fact central to at least four issues of this century: the science-religion debates at the start; the struggles of the Confessional Church in Hitler's Germany; the debate over the validity of science and technology in a world facing the ecological crisis; and the theological justification for social revolution. He follows with an examination of the place of the Genesis accounts; they hardly seem to encourage as revelation. Rather the purpose of their human originators was "to talk about the beginnings in order to give reassurance about the present". This is unsatisfactory; it will hardly do to assign the records such a lowly status and then to go on to treat them as authoritative. The subjects of Creation and Fall, and Creation and New Creation occupy two further chapters. Many things here are well and forcefully said; others seem less convincing, as when to God's *creative* power is attributed both the parting of the waters of chaos at the beginning, and also those at the Red Sea.

The next section examines the main issues which have been pinpointed, from the perspectives in turn of Barth, Tillich, Bultmann and Moltmann. What do they mean when they say that God is Creator, than man is made in His image, that man fell, and the Jesus Christ recreates him? Hardly surprisingly, some quite different things; the tower of Babel epitomises man's clinging to the *status quo*, or his rejection of it!

Prof. Young expresses his own conclusions in a final chapter. Very helpfully he enumerates the viewpoints which have been variously held as to how men are to live in the world which God has created: as aliens (Jertullian, the monastic life and the Puritans); in coalition (Hegel, the American way of life); as innovators (Richard Niebuhr); as revolutionaries (Richard Shaull, the theology of revolution). Naturally enough, he offers no final solutions; it is probably impossible in a single formula what is right for each of us.

I am glad I have read this book. It could have been biblically more broadly based; it could have introduced the fact of universal death as extremely to the point of how we face life and plan for society; it could have related itself to many important and unfashionable elements of our Lord's teaching. But it has been rewarding to read it nevertheless.

DOUGLAS C. SPANNER.

ERNEST TROELTSCH AND THE FUTURE OF THEOLOGY. Edited by J.P. Clayton. CUP., 1976. 217 pp. £7.50.

To most readers who have not actually read him, Ernest Troeltsch was a theologian *manque*. If he is remembered at all, it is as the author of *The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches* and a handful of articles in *The Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, and as the leading advocate of the school which sought to see Christianity in the broader perspective of history, culture, sociology and religion. It was a school which had its hey-day before the first world war. Those who approach him via Barth remember him as the Heidelberg professor of theology who quitted his chair of systematics in 1915 to become professor of philosophy at Berlin. A question which preoccupied Troeltsch's mind was that which found expression in the title of one of his books, *The Absoluteness of Christianity and the History of Religions*. How can Christianity claim to be unique and authoritative amid the relativity of history? The fact that this work was first translated into English in 1972 is a token of the renewed interest in Troeltsch. Ten years ago B.A. Reist published a survey of his thought under the title *Towards a Theology of Involvement*. The present work consists of six papers presented at an international colloquium on Troeltsch at the University of Lancaster.

Hans Georg-Drescher sets the keynote in a paper on 'Ernst Troeltsch's Intellectual Development'. Drescher not only provides a general perspective but looks critically at other interpreters of his thought. The remaining essayists take up particular aspects of Troeltsch's thought: Robert Morgan on 'Ernst Troeltsch and the Dialectical Theology'; A.O. Dyson on 'Ernst Troeltsch and the Possibility of a Systematic Theology'; B.A. Gerrish on 'Ernst Troeltsch and the Possibility of a Historical Theology'; S.W. Sykes on 'Ernst Troeltsch and Christianity's Essence'; and Michael Pure on 'Ernst Troeltsch and the End of the Problem about "Other" Religions'. A valuable bibliography has been compiled by Jacob Klapwijk. The picture that emerges is that of a figure who was of a stature no less than that of Ritschl and Harnack, and who was more acute and sensitive than either of these in terms of the questions that he asked.

To Barth, Troeltsch was a theologian who had lost his way in the deserts of religion and culture and who could find no way out because he had grown deaf to the Word of God. Kaftan described Troeltsch as one who was 'condemned to the labour of a Sisyphus'. And yet the questions that Troeltsch was asking were valid questions, and the present minor Troeltsch revival is evidence of the fact that questions which are suppressed have a habit of coming back to haunt us. If this symposium does not answer these questions, at least it helps us to formulate them. COLIN BROWN.

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LIFE AFTER DEATH. *Arnold Toynbee, Arthur Koestler, & others.* Weidenfeld and Nicolson. 272 pp. £4.95.

The advantage of this book is that it is the work of 14 writers of quality, and there is no attempt to harmonise them. Each contributes to a kind of encyclopaedia of man's thinking on life after death.

Arnold Toynbee launches the book with a general review of man's concern, and he is followed appropriately by six experts on the ideas of death and the after-life among primitive societies (Cottie Burland), in the religions of Africa (Adrian Boshier), in pre-Columbian America (Crispin Tickell), the East (Geoffrey Parrinder), Near East (Fr. Joseph Crehan), and Islam (M.S Seale). Thus the first half of the book is primarily historical and descriptive.

The second seven include Doris Jonas on the evolutionary aspect, including primitive man, and conclude with a heavyweight chapter by Arthur Koestler via modern physics. Otherwise we are in the lively realm of contemporary experience. Two American psychiatrists, Stanislav Grof and Joan Halifax-Grof, compare LSD and similar experiences under controlled conditions with those of the dying — something new to me.

The chapters by committed Christians are written against a background of orthodoxy and Christian reasoning rather than using 'the Bible says' texts. Ulrich Simon on the resurrection is lively, and dares to discuss hell, his conclusions being not unlike those of C.S.Lewis in *The Great Divorce*. Martin Israel takes the mystical approach — a kind of mini run-through of his fine new book, *Precarious Living*. Renee Haynes and Rosalind Heywood, both active in the field of psychical research, write respectively on Christian Imagery and on the relevance of personal ESP experience.

Conclusions of different authors range from ultimate loss of personal identity in a cosmic psi-field; a gradual fusing of individuals into conglomerates of great beings; reincarnation; and the Biblical hope of the experience of the glory of God.

J.STAFFORD WRIGHT.

THE INDEFINITE BOUNDARY: An Investigation into the Relationship between Matter and Spirit. *Guy Lyon Playfair.* Souvenir Press, 1976. 320 pp. £4.25.

Reincarnation is a new talking point. Alleged memories crop up continually in the popular press, but there are more worthwhile studies, such as this book, by the author who dared to produce a serious book under the title of *The Flying Cow*. His new book is a well worked-out hypothesis of the nature of man and his lives this side and the other side of death. God is seen as 'The Intelligent Principle, the ultimate source of all energy' (153). This is the only book I know which gives a step by step description (from the 'other side') of

how the reincarnating person links up with the cell at the time of conception (144).

The scope is of course wider than simply reincarnation. There is a lengthy review of such scientific thinking as has gone beyond bare materialism. But much of the elaborate description comes through a Brazilian, sensitive, with little education but with a facility for automatic writing. He makes no profit from his many popular books. The whole subject of the sources of such inspiration needs fuller scrutiny. Are there perhaps storehouses in the collective unconscious partially available to sensitives, but having no more intrinsic authority than any other body of ideas?

In an attempt to find reincarnation in the NT, Playfair quotes 'Before Abraham was, I am', and hastens to say that there may have been similar statements in the original gospels 'before they were allegedly censored by the sinister Byzantine empress, Theodora' (159). This piece of anti-Christian folklore is not typical of Playfair elsewhere. J.STAFFORD WRIGHT.

A HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY. *Paul Johnson*. Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1976, 556 pp. £7.00.

This substantial book is, on any reckoning, a *tour de force*. The amount of ground is immense, and the amount of research called for in producing the book must have been equally large. The feat of producing such a book is the greater when it is remembered that it comes from the pen of one who, though a writer of acknowledged skill and experience, is not a professional church historian.

It might have been thought that a book which covers the birth and growth of a movement over a period of two millenia and which traces its spread, its triumphs and defeats, its glories and its aberrations, all over the world, would be a dull record of facts and sources. The reverse is, in fact, the case. It is possible to pick up the book almost at random and read a story told with absorbing interest. That is quite an achievement.

Not that one concurs with all the judgements of the author. He would hardly expect one to do so. For instance, the present reviewer is immensely grateful for the deeply perceptive estimate of the life, teaching and influence of St. Paul as Dr. Johnson gives it to us in his first long chapter: 'The truth is that Paul did not invent Christianity, or pervert it; he rescued it from extinction. Paul was the first pure Christian: the first fully to comprehend Jesus's system of theology, to grasp the magnitude of the changes it embodied, and the completeness of the break with the Judaic law.' Well said (even if we put a question mark against the idea of Jesus's 'system of theology'). But need we be as sceptical as the author about Paul's knowledge

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of Jesus? 'We probably know more about the Jesus of History than he did, despite the interval of nearly two thousand years.' *Even if we take the view that Jesus and Paul never met in the flesh, Saul the Pharisee must have picked up a wealth of material about Him from those followers of His whom he questioned, no doubt in great detail, before hailing them to prison. But that is a small point compared, for example, with this: 'Most theological revolutions begin with Romans, as indeed did Paul's own.'*

Or again, turning to the other end of book, one blushes at the record of the church in its opposition to the Nazi menace before and during the World War II. But one may question whether Paul Johnson does full justice to the record of those who witnessed 'even unto blood'. He pays a moving tribute to Bishop George Bell, but he was really 'the *only* Christian prelate in either of the world wars who tried to think out what a churchman ought to do in these circumstances?' (*italics mine*).

I hope this book will be widely read. Church history can be a cordial for drooping spirits. It can also, in some of its phases, be profoundly depressing! To read the story of some of its members' activities is to marvel at the patience of the Lord of the church and at the power of the Spirit in reviving and renewing its life. And the story of past obtuseness and disobedience can serve as a timely warning to us who, in our own ways, are sharing in the making of the present history of the church. To give but one example: Paul Johnson is considering the story of Christianity in Latin America. He writes: 'It was the inability of Christianity to change, and above all to de-Europeanise itself, which caused it to miss its opportunities? How different would the story of missionary endeavour have been in many parts of the world if this warning had been heeded! The lesson needs constantly to be heeded. *Semper reformanda!*

In a work of such complexity as this there are bound to be minor error which can be rectified in a second edition; for example 'Neimoller' should read 'Niemoller' (*passim*), Krapf worked for the Church Missionary Society, not the Christian Missionary Society (p. 441), and it was Dr. Ramsey, not Dr. Ramsay, who visited the Pope (p. 514).

DONALD CANTUAR.

CUP OF LIFE: A Short History of Post-Biblical Judaism. *Albert Polack & Joan Lawrence*. S.P.C.K., 1976. 187 pp. £2.95.

Many ministers and teachers have wanted an elementary work on Judaism, in which the main outlines are not obscured by undue detail. This may well be the answer to their problems. The authors, the former of a Jew, the latter a Christian, have through their work with the Council of Christians and Jews gained a real insight into what is needed. They have tried to make what can

be a rather abstract subject more concrete by linking their account with details about outstanding figures in the development of Judaism, and by giving an account for the persecutions, expulsions and other manifestations of antisemitism, as well as of Zionism and the state of Israel. Far less adequate is the treatment of the influence of mysticism on Judaism; there is also too little on the influence of American Jewry today as well as of socialism.

Whatever the reason, the final revision has not been adequate. There are a number of errors – for example, the study of the Zohar has not been prohibited by the rabbis (p. 79) but only restricted – and also misleading statements – for example that the Marrano families in London in the time of Queen Elizabeth 1 and the early Stuarts (p. 108) were descendants of the Jews who escaped expulsion by Edward 1, or the implied suggestion that Tel Aviv was built after 1918 (p. 159). If there is another edition, it is to be hoped that it will contain an index, for it is difficult to trace individual items of information.

H.L. ELLISON.

PRISCILLIAN OF AVILLA: *The Occult and the Charismatic in the Early Church.* Henry Chadwick. OUP, 1976. 250 pp. £10.00.

A full scale study in English of the fourth century Spanish heretic Priscillian is long overdue and has been superbly filled by Henry Chadwick. The available sources (including some rescued from anonymity or pseudonymity in recent years) are carefully assessed and adroitly used. The footnotes and detailed discussions in the text indicate the range of the author's reading and his encyclopaedic knowledge of the patristic and secular literature of the period.

The first chapter gives an excellent account of the condition of the Spanish Church in the latter half of the fourth century. Its ecclesiastical organisation had not yet attained the tighter structure familiar in Italy or further East, and the boundaries between the specifically Christian and permissibly pagan were not sharply drawn, particularly in remote country districts. Whether the provocative chapter heading 'The Sorcerer's Apprentice' is fully justified by its contents is more doubtful.

In the second chapter the teaching of Priscillian is fully discussed. The charge that Priscillian was a Manichee is dismissed even though some of his opinions can be described as 'para-Manichee'. His Trinitarian opinions are markedly Sabellian and his Christology as an Apollinarian shape. Ethically he held strongly rigorist views, particularly on marriage and vegetarianism. Not unnaturally therefore he found support in the New Testament Apocrypha, to which he appealed for instruction in morals though not for doctrinal purposes. The criterion here was whether they are confessed Christ

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as God. The third chapter continues the story of Priscillian's trial and its consequences. Neither the manner in which the prosecution conducted its case nor the method of execution reflect any credit on the orthodox. The subsequent history of Priscillianism in Spain concludes the study. The possibility that the shrine of St. James at Compostella was founded on or near the site of an original martyrdom to Priscillian remains an intriguing possibility.

Whether the sub-title of the book affords the real key to the problem of Priscillian is more doubtful, though the state of the evidence makes a definitive conclusion virtually impossible. Neither clue is unduly emphasised in the body of the work. Priscillian's knowledge of and interest in the occult is not in question. It was a matter much canvassed even in secular antiquity, and the line between devotion to the occult and high treason was not drawn too precisely. Much depends here on the veracity of the charges brought against Priscillian by his opponents. The policy of slinging as much mud as possible in the hope that some of it would stick is fatally easy when the prosecution is unsure of its ground. The penalties against sorcery in the secular courts might be an additional attraction. The heretic seems to have paid an altogether excessive price for an interest in the occult and the possession of an amulet with the name of God. His Christian motivation is a good deal stronger than the evidence for deviationism under this head. How far Priscillian can be described as a charismatic is equally disputable. Martin of Tours is a more promising candidate for the title. It appears from Chadwick's discussion that the charisma which Priscillian regarded most highly was a particular form of biblical exegesis suitable for more advanced study of the Scriptures. But these numerological speculations are shared by fathers with a more orthodox reputation.

The complex problems of Priscillianism do not however admit of any easy or definitive solution. The present work represents an important contribution to the subject as well as a valuable survey of previous literature.

H.E.W. TURNER.