

offensive. . . . Anglo-Saxons are especially fond of the gospel of John and radical criticism at this point may offend'. Käsemann's thesis is that the gospel is actually a work of Gnostic tendency moving towards heresy, and got into the Church canon by a sort of providential mistake. There is much illuminating interpretation in the working out of this thesis, but what a world of insensitiveness and polemic one has to enter! Here I think is a book which

shows up by contrast the real excellences of German scholarship in a work such as Schnackenburg's. One may crave a little more 'Anglo-Saxon' literary imagination when reading Schnackenburg's monumental work, but one cannot accuse him of the sort of cul-de-sac exploration that seems to me to mar the small work of Käsemann.

TIMOTHY MCDERMOTT, O.P.

THE TITLES OF JESUS IN CHRISTOLOGY, by Ferdinand Hahn. *Lutterworth Press*, 1969. London. 415 pp. 75s.

'If anywhere in Christological titles, in regard to the "Son of Man", it may be considered that Jesus himself made use of this predicate': this is a specimen sentence from the work to be reviewed. If one estimates 15 such sentences to a page and about 300 pages of reading text, it will take you 4,500 times as long to read the whole book as it does for you to puzzle out that sentence. Well, no, not quite as long, since on quite a number of occasions puzzling out one sentence will give you a clue to the ones immediately before and after. Still, it will be quite a struggle.

Another thing you will have to consider is why you wish to read the book. There are books about Shakespeare concerned with the plays as works of art, and with reading, attending and understanding them as such; and there are books designed rather to explore how Shakespeare came to be written, from where he borrowed his ideas and plots, what certain sentences would have meant not precisely to him and his contemporary audience but to other authors and other audiences if they had occurred in other plays. Such work is often extremely interesting in its own right, and sometimes throws up information which is useful in actually understanding Shakespeare. So it is with books about the New Testament. Hahn's book is a really excellent work for those who wish to know what certain titles given to Christ (*viz.* Son of Man, Lord, Christ, Son of

David, Son of God) might have meant before Jesus' time, to Jesus himself, or to certain early circles in the Church. And occasionally this is of use in determining how the gospel-writers were using them; but the book is not explicitly about that. One must therefore avoid thinking that reading this book will make clear the gospels' view of Christ; it will on the contrary often make it more obscure. Only on condition that one knows where to fit such a book into a balanced study of the gospels, will its deep and thorough-going scholarship satisfy one rather than frustrate one. And even on occasion amuse one, as happened to me on reading the following comment on Mark 8, 27-33 (note the verse-numbers: 27-33): 'If we eliminate vv. 30, 31, 32a, b as also vv. 27b-29, the question naturally arises whether completely disconnected fragments do not remain.'

But then, if you are ready for such scholarship, would it not be better to learn German and buy a copy of the original work? For even in order to read the English translation you may well have to learn German and have a copy of the original by you. How else will you discover that the sentence with which this review opened really means: 'If there is any Christological title that Jesus himself may be considered to have used, it is that of "Son of Man" '?

TIMOTHY MCDERMOTT, O.P.

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE CHURCH, by Patrick Verbraken. *Gill*, Dublin, 1968. 171 pp. 7s. 6d.
CETTE EGLISE QUE J'AIME, by Y. Congar, O.P. *Les Editions du Cerf*, Paris, 1968. 124 pp. N.P.
ONE, HOLY, CATHOLIC, AND APOSTOLIC. Studies in the nature and role of the Church in the modern world. Edited by Herbert Vorgrimler. *Sheed and Ward*, London, 1968. 236 pp. 42s.
THE AGONY OF THE CHURCH, by Theo Westow. *Sheed and Ward*, London, 1968. 232 pp. 32s. 6d.
CHRISTIANITY IN WORLD PERSPECTIVE, by Kenneth Cragg. *Lutterworth Press*, London, 1968. 227 pp. 30s.

First-rate reading matter on the Church is becoming less and less difficult to obtain in England—books on ecclesiology in the narrow sense, on Church structures and authority, on Church reform. To this rapidly growing pool

these present volumes must be welcomed, though with varying degrees of enthusiasm. To begin with perhaps the less significant—the two paperbacks by Verbraken and Congar.

Fr Verbraken's book is a survey of the first

six centuries of Church history in 170 pages. It is essentially, as the cover proclaims, 'for non-historians'. None of the specialist problems of interest to the historian of theology or liturgy are dealt with in any depth; nor can it hold a candle to the masterly account of Henry Chadwick in his volume of the Pelican History of the Church, with which it is only obvious for an English reader to compare it. There are occasional generalizations—inevitable in a work of this short size and vast scope—which are at least questionable, e.g. 'there were many similarities between the Montanists and Wesley's Methodists of the eighteenth century' (p. 63). Concerning the translation: it is always slightly annoying to find proper names, which have a recognized English form, left in the French usage. There are numerous examples in this book—Novat (p. 80), Lactance (p. 50), Zenon (p. 155), Verceil (p. 112)—and on page 103, 'menos' surely is an error. The short bibliographies seem to have been left as in the original French edition, and scarcely one English work is referred to. There is no index. With these provisos, however, as a short and simplified introduction to the events and issues of the early Christian centuries, it could help the interested general reader.

Fr Congar's little volume in the French 'Foi Vivante' series contains five articles previously published elsewhere. They all bear some relationship to the theme of the Church, and all witness to that breadth of learning and scholarship, which ranges from Scriptural insights, through the Fathers and the Scholastics, down to the moderns, all of which erudition Fr Congar carries so lightly. Reading through these essays, one is conscious, it must be admitted, of encountering nothing completely new, but of basic truths, e.g. the Church as people of God, the value of the Church's prayer for unity, expressed very convincingly.

One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic represents a selection of six essays extracted and translated from the Rahner Festschrift, *Gott in Welt*. They range over a wide field, and the list of authors contains some of the most outstanding theological names—Congar, Schnackenburg, Jungmann, Ratzinger, Feiner and Witte. The learned essay by Père Congar on the theology of Conciliar assemblies discusses the special nature of the presence of the Spirit promised to the 'two or three gathered in my name' (a text which Congar shows to be seminal in traditional thought on the subject of councils). He shows, too, that the necessity of assembly

flows from the very nature of the Church. These themes have been the subjects of other writers too, especially in the period since the Council—cf. H. Kung's *Structures of the Church*. One feels just a little bit, though, that the conciliar theme has already been overplayed; not, of course, wishing in any sense to return to a 'papalist' Church, but simply feeling that the time has come to stop repeating that the Church is a communion, and to get down to doing something about it in practice. All the other essays are of a high theological standard and make specific contributions in depth to their own particular field—even if Fr Jungmann's excellent summary of the development of liturgical forms and attitudes takes us no further than his earlier writings. The only disadvantage of the book is its comparative expense.

Kenneth Cragg, the Anglican priest and author of several books on the Islamic-Christian and Judaeo-Christian dialogues, has presented a book which ranges wider still. He analyses the forces, motives and attitudes at work in Christianity's relations with other world ideologies. Besides chapters on Judaism and Islam, there are studies of Christianity and the African mind, and Christian relationships with the secularism of today's world. He looks at past missionary techniques, especially nineteenth-century ones, in the light of New Testament universalism and in the perspective of our twentieth-century situation, and then attempts to work out a 'Theology of Religious Pluralism'. This seems to me to be a very distinguished book by a man of first-rate mind and of front rank in his field. The central problem of relating Christ to other religions, especially Karl Rahner's solution associated with the phrase 'anonymous Christians', is tackled head on. Fr Rahner's views, such as found in *Nature and Grace*, are analysed and assessed most fairly. Cragg admits that 'certainly it is a theology which faces the right way' (p. 83), and that it must be welcomed 'for its practical consequences in banishing hardness of heart and pride of absolutist belief, and in mediating on the personal level, between custodians of faith' (p. 82). Yet a certain disquiet or suspicion persists that the whole thing is a little too contrived, too tidy and systematized, and raises as many problems as it solves.

Theo Westow has again given us a very stimulating volume, consisting of a number of essays on various aspects of the present Church situation. In his first essay, from which the

book takes its title, Mr Westow sees the present agony of the Christian churches as consisting in a process of shedding the old layers of comforting securities, and a commitment to the true mission of the Church, on which she will be judged, namely, that of bearing witness to the standards of Christ's love in the relevance of our time. This theme runs through the other twelve essays, and accounts for the strong sense of dealing with real problems, that, combined with his sense of history and considerable native perception, make Theo Westow such an exciting writer. Only over his assessment of the Catholic public schools would I like to modify any of Mr Westow's comments. He rightly points to the insularity of attitude and milita-

ristic assumptions which to some extent still pervade these institutions. But he might also have shown how some of the institutions involved, especially the Benedictines and the Jesuits, have been saved from the worst excesses of the public school syndrome by their close contact with industrial working-class areas through their parochial work in such places as South Lancashire, Preston, Cumberland and Northumberland. This has ensured that many O.S.B.s and S.J.s have been kept in contact with reality through constant movements from, say, Ampleforth to Warrington, or from Stonyhurst to Manchester, and vice versa.

ÆLRED BURROWS, O.S.B.

AGAINST ALL REASON, by Geoffrey Moorhouse. *Weidenfeld and Nicholson*. 436 pp. 63s.

One of the more important consequences of Church renewal, sanctioned or even inaugurated by Vatican II, has been the *official* ending of a whole variety of styles of theological thinking and practice. This has been particularly so in the areas of Ecclesiology, Church/World relations, Liturgy, Ecumenism and (importantly for understanding the significance of some of the findings of this book) Religious Life. The development in the theology of the laity (witnessed to in *Lumen Gentium*, for example) has dealt a death-blow to that theological language which gave the religious a privileged and élitist position in the Church, which offered the religious life as the better, more secure way of saving your soul, the life of perfection, and so on. In retrospect one can see that this shift would inevitably lead to a massive soul-searching among religious and an equally massive exodus from religious communities and a dramatic fall in vocations. This Angst had, of course, been with religious orders for some time, but the really dramatic period has been from the Second Vatican Council up to now and one presumes that it will go on for some time yet. This book is an attempt to analyse and record the present state of affairs in that strange world in which men and women live 'against all reason'; an apt and attractive title.

Of course, the task Geoffrey Moorhouse sets himself is an impossible one. You cannot hope to write adequately 'about the religious life in its technical sense', or take a 'last look at a deeply traditional way of life that may not be with us much longer' in 240 pages (pp. 243 to the end are taken up with Bibliography, Appendices and Index). The spectrum is too

broad, the tradition too long, the styles of life too numerous and diffuse. But he does succeed by a clever, kaleidoscopic, journalistic style (though that at times is irritatingly gossipy) in giving us the flavour of the present scene. Throughout the book one has the sense that the traditional orders are being measured by two modern orders which have clearly impressed the author, the Taizé community and the Little Brothers of Jesus. The first chapter is devoted entirely to a good and moving description of the history and life of Taizé, though marred for me by the 'whiff of incense and damp wool' Muggeridge-type language of his description of the liturgy: 'As he raises his torch the wide sleeves of his white cassock fall away down his arms and his shadow trembles huge against the yellowed backdrop . . .', etc. (p. 12).

For me, the best parts of the book were in chapters 6-8 where he discusses the areas which give religious life its classical definition, the vows and prayer, and Moorhouse puts his finger on what must now seem a very raw spot in the religious malaise. There can be little doubt that certain recommended interpretations of the vows have had a constricting and suffocating effect on the lives of many religious. The trivialization and tedious legalism of obedience: 'It would not . . . be disobedience to refuse to keep a fast to death imposed by an imprudent superior' (p. 157, quoted from a commentary on Obedience published in 1953). The aridity and puritanism of chastity: 'It was in 1965 that a novice-mistress replied, when a postulant asked her some question about sex, "I do not speak of such things. I am a virgin"' (p. 167). And poverty, on the one hand its