

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY IN AFRICA. By Bengt Sundkler. (*Studia Missionalia Upsaliensia*, 35 Swedish Crowns.)

Dr Bengt Sundkler, of the Faculty of Theology in the University of Uppsala, is a well-known authority on African missions and religious movements of all kinds, and he has some important writings already to his credit. In this very frank book he has made a comparative study of the Christian missions and churches in Negro Africa, a study all the more valuable in that he has been able to review the facts in the light of his own considerable experience as a missionary to the Zulus. Or rather, it is a study of the Protestant missions and churches, for, though Catholic activities are mentioned here and there, and always with sympathy and understanding, it is the Protestants in whom he is interested; though much that can be said about the one can be said about the other. When he speaks of the 'Church' or the 'Catholic Church' he appears to have in mind Christians of every denomination and of all sorts, and there are some pretty queer sorts in Africa. The author himself is a Swedish Lutheran.

The theme of the book is familiar. The missions now depart, the churches take their place. European missionaries belong to the colonial period; they were one facet of White domination. They shared with colonial administrators the prestige of a higher civilization, and the administrations supported them in so many ways that they were more or less looked upon, or looked up to, as a special type of government officials, ordained schoolmasters. They never had it so good, with all the power of government behind them and their schools the exclusive channel of advancement, both cultural and professional, for young Africans.

Now all is changing, and much has already changed. Apart from Africans becoming politically independent, African Christians want to run their own church affairs. They do not want always to have to take second place and to seem to represent a lower grade of European Christianity; they want their churches to be African, African run and African in idiom and expression. Professor Busia, the Ghanaian politician and sociologist, has warned us (p. 236) that 'for all their influence, the Christian Churches are still alien institutions (in Africa)'. The fundamental problem in this new state of affairs is obviously the place of the African pastor. All the churches are, at last, trying as hard as they can to hand over control to Africans, to turn mission into church. What of the pastor? Dr Sundkler deals faithfully with present difficulties, of which I mention only a few. The African pastor has also in the past never had it so good. He and the chief shared honours in the community. Now chiefs are losing their prestige, and pastors too, as the new African intelligentsia, better educated and better paid than either, begin to assert themselves. Then, Christianity has been only too often presented to the African as just a part of the European way of life, and the African pastor is now getting the come-back from this: the stooge of the Europeans, they call him. Also it has not escaped the observation of Africans that their European masters, other than the missionaries, are very often Christians neither by faith nor practice, and some have naturally concluded that there is something a bit phoney about missionary teachings.

Then, again, there is the linguistic difficulty. Many missionaries who have lived a long time among one or other African people think they know the native language because they can speak it, whereas only too often native words in their translations do not have the meanings they suppose. Consequently translations of the Scriptures, especially of the New Testament, can be unintelligible to Africans. Moreover, as Dr Sundkler points out, there is almost no pastoral, theological, and exegetical literature in any African language. A final illustration: the unspoken colour bar, the distance which still often prevails between the White missionary and the Black pastor. 'As a Protestant', writes Dr Sundkler (p. 185), 'I had reason to be disturbed by the fact that in many countries, not least in the Belgian Congo, African pastors would contrast their own position with the supposedly warm fellowship between Roman Catholic priests of both races. In Tanganyika, I was told by an influential pastor who has seen the world: "The Roman priests laugh at us, because there is no real fellowship between us and the Western missionary"'.

All this amounts to the plain fact that in future the Africans must run their own churches and create their own religious literature. Otherwise, Dr Sundkler thinks, the very survival of Christianity in Africa is at stake, threatened as it is by materialism, Communism, Islam, nationalism, and *satyagraha* ideas. A big battle is going on in this vast continent for the souls of its inhabitants. I know of no book which gives a better account of the issues involved and the present state of the conflict than the one under review.

E. E. EVANS-PRITCHARD

A HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY, Vol. 6. Wolff to Kant. By Frederick Copleston, s.J. (Bellarmine Series, No. 17. Burns and Oates; 35s.)

The industry that acquired this mass of material and the intelligence that mastered it all cannot be praised enough in any words the present reviewer could find; this volume, of 439 pages, not counting a bibliography and a really useful index, is the sixth of Father Copleston's *History*, of which there is more to come. The last chapter is a concluding review. The choice of Wolff for the title, though he does not come till page 113, may have something to do with his dates. The body of the book, sixteen chapters, is divided into four parts, the first three being respectively about the French Enlightenment, the German Enlightenment (much of today's outlook first taking shape in these two periods), and the rise of the Philosophy of History; Part IV is on Kant, who has nearly two-fifths of the total space.

What I have to say centres round the contrast between the first three parts and the fourth, which is quite unlike them. In a puff the *History* is described as 'interesting and very readable'. Do reviewers read the books? I can only describe the task of wading through the first three parts as tedious; the seven chapters on Kant are very different, and here 'readable' can mean that difficult stuff is made to sound fairly simple.

Do people read books like this, or is it a work of reference to be consulted? A sort of English Ueberweg perhaps? I estimate that on these dismal