

JOHN—JOHN, by G. Hibbert; 1 JOHN, by B. Robinson; JAMES, by L. Bright. *Sheed & Ward*, London, 1972. 256 pp. £1.45.

PAUL I—PAUL'S THEOLOGY, by D. Macpherson; 1 & 2 THESSALONIANS, by M. Davies; GALATIANS, by L. Swain; ROMANS, by A. Walker; EPHESIANS, by D. Macpherson. *Sheed & Ward*, London, 1972. 224 pp. £1.30.

LAST WRITINGS—HEBREWS, by L. Swain; PASTORAL EPISTLES, by J. Smith; REVELATION, by J. Challenor. *Sheed & Ward*, London, 1972. 192 pp. £1.15.

(SCRIPTURE DISCUSSION COMMENTARIES 9, 10 and 12 respectively, edited by Laurence Bright, O.P.)

Ideally, the commentator is a midwife—not a coroner. The text is to be delivered to the reader alive and well, the difficulties and complications smoothed out, the labour eased. The text should be communicated with its original God-given vitality. Too many New Testament commentaries, however, display a meticulous dissection and analysis of the text: its structure, date, authorship and original destination, the provenance of the theological ideas and images, and the text's later influence. The text is delivered as from a post mortem—neatly laid out but quite, quite dead. In these particular volumes of the *Discussion Commentary* we find both midwife and coroner, though happily there are more live-births than deaths-by-misadventure.

The metaphors should not be pressed since every good commentary must analyse and explain, must present the text in its context. The puzzle is to discover precisely what it is that transforms an academically competent commentary into one that seizes on the life of the reader. How is it that Barth's commentary on *Romans* presents us with an embarrassingly living word of God whereas Barrett's seems only able to handle the text as a foundation document of the Christian faith? It is not simply a matter of literary style. The contributors to *John*, *Paul I* and *Last Writings* display both scholarship and ease of expression, yet some texts have been brought to life while others have been neatly laid out. What is it that makes the difference?

In the *Discussion Commentary* it would at first sight appear to be the presence of topics and questions for group discussion. The text is not allowed to remain safely isolated from the reader by an objective and academic concern for its meaning (though what sort of a meaning is that?). It is brought sharply into the reader's everyday experience and problems. This is the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other. Swain's *Galatians* and *Hebrews*, though exegetically very competent, falls short of what

might have been achieved because his questions too often turn back on the text—e.g. 'Show how this section resumes the whole content of the epistle' (*Galatians* in *Paul I*, p. 81)—whereas Bright's *James* is vibrant and crackling largely because of its questions—e.g. 'Does it make sense to talk about rejoicing in one's trials? Ought we to seek them if we aren't lucky enough to have them anyway?' (in *John*, p. 234).

Yet this does not explain the animation of a Barth nor does it more than partly explain the life of Hibbert's *John*, Bright's *James* and Jerome Smith's *Pastorals*. The additional factor is surely that the commentator has grasped and succeeded in communicating the meaning that the text has for him, not simply as exegete but as a Christian in dialogue with the text. He presents the text not only in its original context but also in its context for us today. Perhaps it is easier to communicate this by way of topics and questions for discussion. However it be done, if the text is to live for the reader it must certainly first live for the commentator. Academic and literary expertise are not enough.

By any set of criteria *John* is a remarkably valuable volume, bringing together the Fourth Gospel, 1 John and James (three explorations of *agape*). The gospel commentary, which makes up 200 pages of the volume's 256 pages, combines close literary analysis, thorough and accurate exegesis, and an *enthusiasm* for the theology and spirituality of the gospel. A quintessence of Raymond Brown's outstanding work on the gospel with the useful incorporation of material from Dodd and Barrett, together with Fr Hibbert's own insights. If one cannot afford either the money or the time to read Brown, one ought at least to afford this. It stands well above any other commentary in this series and is correspondingly more demanding on the reader—but the effort is well rewarded.

*Paul I* forms a very pleasurable introduction to the main themes and preoccupations of Paul,

smoothing away the problems so efficiently—particularly in *Romans*—that Paul's thought is made to seem simpler than it is. It would be unreasonable to complain that there is a lack of theological depth since these commentaries are designed for the non-specialist; the contributors are rather to be congratulated for achieving clarity without doing violence to either the texts or Paul's theology. The book-lists (to which one might add W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*) may well tempt the stronger theological swimmer into deeper waters. It is only and surprisingly in Macpherson's introduction to Paul's theology that there is an imbalance. Too little attention is paid to Baptism, with the inadvertent result that it is the Eucharist which appears to be the primary sacrament of incorporation into the body of Christ (p. 15).

*Last Writings* offers its readers a rich variety of ideas, scenes and personages. Can it really be true that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and for ever? Hebrews, the Pastorals and Revelation appear to present at least three widely differing visions of the reality, and this ought to provoke lively discussion on

religious language and imagery. It could be argued that this miscellany of texts coheres around the concept of Christ as Mediator. Jerome Smith comments on the concept in *Pastorals (Last Writings, p. 73)* and refers back not only to Pauline texts but also to three texts in Hebrews. Lionel Swain's treatment of Hebrews is exegetically sound, reflecting the standard commentaries, but he could perhaps have given more weight to Christ as Mediator. The concept would also contribute some much-needed theological content to John Challenor's commentary on Revelation which, though it is a master-key to the book's symbolism, does not seem quite able to place it happily within Christian thought.

An exciting feature of this series is its bringing together in single volumes a wide variety of approaches and ideas; a commentator on one text can often spark off a new assessment of a text already studied. Ultimately, however, there is no substitution for the interaction of the New Testament texts themselves—and if a text has been delivered alive and well, it will certainly not allow itself to be put aside and be forgotten.

RICHARD PEARCE

JUNG, by Anthony Storr, *Fontana/Collins*, London, 1973.

Among the ranks of short and general introductions to C. G. Jung, Anthony Storr's contribution to the Fontana Modern Masters Series has one decided advantage over its fellows: it is not afraid to be critical. Unfortunately the results are not altogether convincing, due to inadequacies both in description and in evaluation.

*Ad primum*. There are any number of tell-tale omissions and inaccuracies in Dr Storr's account of Jung's life and work which combine to render suspect the research that lay behind the book. His resume of Jung's break with Freud ('foreshadowed in 1911, overt in 1912, and final in 1913', p. 19) is both simplistic and misleading; his references to Jung's statements about God (pp. 21, 102) omit essential qualifications which Jung continually insisted upon; nor does he seem to have appreciated the way in which Jung adopted Kant in defence of the archetypal theory; and the claim that Jung would have been unsympathetic to women's lib (54) seems oddly superficial. Moreover, he did not apparently know that the central archetype of the Self is in fact personified by Jung in the Christ-figure (p. 102); that the notion of the 'psychoid' is clearly not

intended by Jung as a 'third world' added to the realms of the 'internal' and the 'external' (105); and that Jung did not substitute Freud's aetiological approach to neurosis with a teleological one (74), but only suggested the latter as a theoretical complement. Similar hints of negligence appear in more trivial matters as well: for example, Dr Storr omits to note that the young medium of Jung's doctoral dissertation (pp. 12, 20) was in fact his cousin, and that the carving over his front door at Küsnacht was in Latin because he had first discovered it in the *Adagia* of Erasmus (pp. 97-8).

In a more general vein we are led to believe that after the publication of *Psychological Types* any further development in Jung's thought is unimportant. As a result, the dominant role which alchemy, mysticism, religion and oriental thought played in the last thirty years of Jung's life is passed over in silence. Symptomatic of this, not a single reference is made to the Eranos Society, to Jung's collaboration with men like Heinrich Zimmer and Richard Wilhelm, to the establishment of the Bollingen Foundation or to the more than fifty volumes of unedited seminar notes which followed upon *Types*. More space might have been allocated