

bound together than the present. Mr Daiches, clearly, would never wish to revive a Yiddish tradition like that recently advocated by Mr Wolf Mankowitz. Instead, though this no doubt was not his intention, he seems to underline the choice offered to western Jewish communities by Mr Arthur Koestler in *The Trail of the Dinosaur: Israel or assimilation*. It is a crude and cruel choice, and socially not an easy one to make; but if this skilfully drawn portrait of a rabbinical family is any guide, the choice is in fact being made all the time.

LOUIS ALLEN

THE PRAYERS OF KIERKEGAARD. Edited with a new interpretation of his life and thought by Perry D. LeFevre. (University of Chicago Press; London, Cambridge University Press; 27s. 6d.)

No reader of Kierkegaard and his numerous commentators can long remain blind to the fact that all his work—philosophical, ethical, aesthetic—is primarily the work of a religious thinker, ‘of a man struggling for his own soul’, as Dr LeFevre says. The author of this study is certainly right in stressing this fact in his interpretation of Kierkegaard which follows the ninety-nine prayers (‘over one hundred’, according to the ‘blurb’) which he has selected from Kierkegaard’s writings. His insistence, however, can scarcely claim to amount to ‘a new interpretation of his life and thought’; indeed, it verges on the trite. What such an essay might much more profitably have attempted to discuss, is Kierkegaard’s place in the tradition of Christian prayer and devotion. But Dr LeFevre is content to outline—once again—the great themes of Kierkegaard’s reflection, with a last chapter in which Kierkegaard’s views on prayer are expounded.

The prayers themselves, which form the first part of the book, are well worth printing as extracts torn from their contexts. They at once illustrate many sides of Kierkegaard’s mind, and can serve to feed the Christian reader’s own devotional life. A Catholic will, of course, find many gaps, sides of Catholic devotion which are not here represented at all. But he will not find much in these prayers—soaked as they are in the Scriptures, keenly aware of the worshipping community of the faithful, and uttering a deep concern to work out his salvation in fear and trembling—that he cannot make his own. One example (No. 8, p. 13), selected almost at random must suffice:

Father in Heaven! Thou hast loved us first, help us never to forget that Thou art love so that this sure conviction might triumph in our hearts over the seduction of the world, over the inquietude of the soul, over the anxiety for the future, over the fright of the past, over the distress of the moment. But grant also that this conviction might

discipline our soul so that our heart might remain faithful and sincere in the love which we bear to all those whom Thou hast commanded us to love as we love ourselves.

The repose and serenity of this, by no means uncommon in these prayers, serves to remind readers of Kierkegaard of an often too neglected side of that *Angst*-ridden soul.

R. A. MARKUS

FREUD AND RELIGIOUS BELIEF. By H. L. Philp. (Rockliff Press; 18s.)

This book should be of great interest to readers of BLACKFRIARS. It is written by a man who is both psychologist and theologian. Dr Philp, before presenting Freud's attitude to religious beliefs as set out in his published works, attempts to account for it by looking into his early environment.

Freud was a member of a minority, a Jew in a Christian society which was not tolerant of Jews. The isolation and difficulties which he experienced can only be fully appreciated by reading the detailed account in Dr Ernest Jones's *Biography* of Freud, but Dr Philp gives enough of the picture to make it easily understood that the young Freud, while remaining vividly aware of his racial origin (it would not be easy to forget it in the Vienna of his youth), rejected Judaism as a religion and with it all religions.

Freud, in his search for the mainsprings of human behaviour through the observation of neurosis, inevitably needed to find the source of religious belief, which he classed with the neuroses. His findings he set out in four essays: *Obsessive Acts and Religious Practices*, *Totem and Taboo*, *The Future of an Illusion*, and *Moses and Monotheism*. Dr Philp takes each of these essays in turn; analyses and criticizes it. This is the most valuable part of the book, because he gives enough of the original material to make it possible to follow and assess the fairness of his argument. In the controversy that has followed its publication, Dr Philp has been criticized for not seeing that if he denies Freud's theory that the origin of religious belief lies in the early experiences of the human race (the 'primal father' and the 'horde' of *Totem and Taboo*), experiences which are psychologically relived in every family situation, then he should have stressed the importance of enquiries into the early religious experiences of children.

While Dr Philp admits that the manifestation of religious belief has in many people a decidedly neurotic quality, he points out the necessity of separating the true from the false, but does not provide an adequate measuring rod, largely because of the lack of detailed work on the subject.

It will be a great pity if readers of this book, while following the