

in the discussion when asked the role of preaching in helping people with their marriages: 'My impression is that most preaching on marriage is concerned with morals and the moral aspect of marriage. I think there is a great opportunity for more doctrinal teaching on marriage; marriage as the expression of love, as the means of expressing God's love too, as a means of completing the Mystical Body and particularly as a reflection of Christ's relationship with His Church. All these things we hear about in conferences like this; I doubt if anybody hears about them from the pulpit. We are told about marriage in terms of what you ought to do or ought not to do, and we are not given the basic thing of the ideal of marriage as the state of holiness that it is meant to be for most people in the world.' Dr Marshall outlined in his paper and in the discussion the work of the Catholic Marriage Advisory Council in this country in promoting suitable educational, medical and counselling services for engaged and married couples to enable them to achieve the aims and ideals expressed in the conference.

J. DOMINIAN

THE BIBLE AND THE UNIVERSE, by Evode Beaucamp; Burns Oates, 30s.

Scriptural studies at the Pontifical Lateran University achieved some three years ago an unfortunate notoriety because of the obscurantist activities of Mgr Antonino Romeo. It is reassuring to discover that at the same time one of his colleagues was publishing a book that evidences a proper willingness to discuss scriptural matters in a modern way. Fr Beaucamp's work is enlightening not only in various marginal insights about etymology and archaeology, but in its presentation of the central theme of Israel's growth in understanding of God through his material creation.

There is a pluralist conception of theological studies which makes the distinction between natural and supernatural sciences, between the arguments of philosophers and the songs of the psalmists, extend even to the objects of their speech. The God of Philosophers is somehow in parallel with the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. This produces odd results. Men begin to think of the relation between natural theology and scriptural revelation as that of a rigid essentialist 'ergo' followed by an exhortatory 'dixit dominus'. Beaucamp shews that this is not the way of scripture. Any new knowledge of the world about them told the Jews something about God who made the world for them, and entered into a covenant with them. And God's revelation of himself taught them the proper value of the material universe. As they grew in knowledge of their physical environment so they grew in knowledge of God. Thus before the Exile no need was felt for Yahweh's power to extend beyond the confines of the promised land, but the political upheaval and consequent geographical knowledge gained produced a realisation of God's greater power. Evidence for this is shewn by, for example, a comparison of the genealogies in Genesis 10. Further, the dispersal of the Jews all over the world brought them to understand God as Lord of the entire universe, and therefore the Jewish understanding

of history, and the part they had in God's will, led them to understand that God must have created the world. They did not begin with creation, they began with the covenant and the people of God, then they thought about their environment and only lastly the origin of the world in the will of God.

There is a small demonstration of this gradual realisation in the enlargement of the content of the divine title, 'Lord of Hosts'. The hosts of God were first thought of as the men who fought Israel's battles in the period of the conquest, later Yahweh was understood to be Lord of other hosts, of the stars, and, with the introduction of elements from neighbouring religions, of angels. Men, natural phenomena and angels are linked together in one creation, they all belong to God and all are involved with one another. This theme, made familiar to us in the New Testament by St Paul, leads on to another. The creation of material things and the saving of men are seen in the same terms. God made his world in light, a light that shone before the stars, and a light in which they participate. The final editor of the Genesis narrative did not make a scientific blunder or an error in everyday observation, he wanted to show the same power at work with things as with men. God has made his people, 'numbered like the stars of heaven', to come from darkness and chaos into the light and to participate in his life and light. It is this ancient biblical theme that St John takes up and enriches, and which the Church has placed at the centre of the Easter liturgy. As St Justin pointed out in the *Dialogue with Trypho*, the Church has always desired to unite in the one eucharist the creation of the world and the redemption of mankind.

This is a Franciscan book, shot through with a sense of 'the gift of the soil' and the wonder of science. It is not a work of great scholarship, nor is the translation distinguished by a felicity of language, but it is a book that opens the mind to the goodness of the world that God has given us.

HAMISH SWANSTON

WE ARE CHRIST'S BODY, by Pius Parsch; Challoner, 8s. 6d.

This booklet is an astonishing mixture of mumbo-jumbo and bad theology. It is hard to credit that it could have been published at a time when the theological revival is at last beginning to have its effect in England. It is so bad that it is hard to pick out a particular area for attack.

The horrors begin in the very first paragraph. 'A message from the Vicar of Christ is a message from Christ himself' (this apropos the encyclical *Mystici Corporis*.) Its theology of grace is a dark commentary on the state to which theology can fall. It contains an account of grace as a 'created share in the life of God', a phrase which in itself needs careful explanation if it is to have any meaning—despite its common use—but its handling here sounds not unlike a Samuel Beckett travesty of true doctrine. The sacraments are presented as things in precisely the way most consistently attacked by modern continental theologians. In the account of the establishment of the Church (pp. 21-22) no