

THE INDIAN CHRISTIANS OF ST THOMAS. By L. W. Brown. (Cambridge University Press; 40s.)

Relatively few people are aware of the existence of Christians of very ancient origin on the south-west coast of India, and fewer still know anything about them, for no adequate and up-to-date account of them has been readily available. The need has now been excellently met by the Anglican bishop of Uganda, the Rt Rev. L. W. Brown, who was formerly principal of the Kerala United Theological Seminary at Trivandrum in Travancore, where he learned Malayalam, the local language, and studied the subject at first hand.

The book begins with an account of the church of Malabar as it was during the century after the Portuguese first arrived there in 1500. Bishop Brown is of the opinion that the Malabar Christians were up to then certainly Nestorian, but that the Indians knew little enough about that heresy and the questions involved. As for the foundation of the Church in India by St Thomas, he agrees with Father H. Heras, S.J., that the tradition of the Apostle's death and burial at Mylapore is thoroughly unreliable, but recognizes that the view that St Thomas worked in south India is not wholly unreasonable. After a chapter on the references to the Malabar Christians in early history and monuments, Bishop Brown gives a moderate and balanced account of what happened in the later years between the coming of the Portuguese and their being driven out by the Dutch. It is not a happy story: the Synod of Diamper in 1599 made some very serious mistakes, which, with other clumsiness (not to use a harder word), led straight to the meeting at the Koonen cross and the schism of 1653. The partial mending of that schism was mainly the work of Italian Carmelites, sent out at once by Pope Alexander VII.

That the dissident Indians, of whose Nestorianism the Portuguese were so afraid, turned for help to the Jacobite (monophysite) patriarch in Mesopotamia shows once again that the concretely most important elements in a schism are not necessarily those on which the theologians concentrate. Bishop Brown, however, is unable to clear up the uncertainties about the Jacobite bishops in Malabar before the consecration of Mar Dionysius I in 1770 or 1772, or the exact time when the change-over was made from the East Syrian to the West Syrian liturgical rite—no doubt it was a gradual process.

The second half of the book is devoted to more recent times. Except for passing references, Bishop Brown does not concern himself with the history of the Catholic Malabarese of East Syrian rite ('Romo-Syrians') after about 1700, nor with the Mar Thoma 'reformed' church after it was formed and those Syro-Indians who became Anglicans. His concern is with the Malabar Jacobites proper, and how

they came to be split into the two existing parties, which he calls rather confusingly the Orthodox Syrian Church (autonomous under a *katholikos*) and the Jacobite Church: Patriarch Section (which recognizes the supreme jurisdiction of the Jacobite patriarch at Homs in Syria).

One of the most interesting and valuable parts of the book is the long chapter on the social life of the St Thomas Christians, about which very little indeed has been written in European languages, or for that matter in Malayalam. The public worship of the Jacobites is described in considerable detail, and proper use is made of the evidence of the liturgy in examining their dogmatic faith—indeed, there is hardly any other available. Bishop Brown remarks that 'the theological implications of the change of allegiance [from a former Nestorian connexion to a reputedly monophysite hierarchy] were certainly not realized at the time by many, if by any, Indian Christians'. He goes on to say that 'the teaching of the Indian Church about the Person of Christ is in no way different from that of the Jacobite Church in Syria', and that 'they believe that the two natures of perfect Godhead and perfect manhood inhere in Christ without change or diminution or confusion, but go on to use the questionable simile of the mingling of wine and water'.

*The Indian Christians of St Thomas* is very agreeably written, and the author handles the results of his extensive research with skill and clarity; a general bibliography of seven pages is provided, and the relevant sources are indicated at the end of each chapter. But the book deserves, and needs, a far better index.

DONALD ATTWATER

A HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN ANTIQUITY. By H. I. Marrou. Translated by George Lamb. (Sheed and Ward; 42s.)

The appearance of this translation of a notable work by one of the most distinguished of French Catholic scholars is a very welcome event to anyone who, like the present reviewer, has known, valued and constantly used the original since its first appearance in 1948. Professor Marrou combines sound scholarship of an amazingly wide range with a penetrating intelligence, great powers of synthesis, and a vivid sense of the relevance of his studies to contemporary life. His book is not only a very complete account of ancient education, but one of the best expositions available in any language of the meaning, value and limitations of classical humanism. His chapter which bears that title (the conclusion of his survey of Hellenistic education) is a summing-up which could hardly be bettered. But the book is so full of good things that it is hard to select. There is the account of the old