

without them he can be doctrinaire and propagandist. This is the more damaging in that his theological method has been moving in the direction of a New Testament fundamentalism. It is axiomatic for him that all later developments of church tradition are in principle reversible, p. 53. Granted that, the need to read the New Testament evidences aright is absolute, and the temptation to set up a canon within the canon to be resisted absolutely, as Küng once knew.

Küng plainly states his belief that every Christian is, in principle, able to celebrate both baptism and eucharist without benefit of ordination or deputation. This position is perhaps to be linked with his belief that Christ's institution of the sacrament of ordination is an open question. It is true that the New Testament does not present us directly with presbyteral celebrants of the eucharist, but it is

difficult to believe that the presbyters of the Pastorals were not leaders in Christian worship. And surely we must distinguish between institution by Jesus of Nazareth this side of the tomb and institution by Christ who is the Lord active throughout the New Testament?

Or take Küng's preference for Paul as an exemplar of ministry explicitly over against Peter, who is always presented in the New Testament as a defaulter and denier, p. 114. This seems to miss the whole point of the placing of John 21, 15-19, and to leave the first part of Acts out of account entirely. Küng presumably has Gal. 2, 11ff in mind; but surely a 'defaulting' minister who repents of his default provides a very useful exemplar?

All in all, *Why Priests?* will be found useful more for the questions it raises than for the solutions it offers.

JEROME SMITH, O.P.

YOUR CHILD AND RELIGION, by Johanna Klink, trans. R. A. Wilson. *S.C.M.*, 1972. 247 pp. £1.95.
THE CHRISTIAN IN EDUCATION, by Colin Alves. *S.C.M.*, 1972. Paperback. 127 pp. 50p.

Dr Klink's book is subtly woven from several strands. There is a wonderful variety of quotations from children from the ages of three to twelve (with the earlier years predominating). Interspersed with these children's voices there is a rich anthology from adults, whether anonymous parents, professional educators, or other writers who have reflected with insight on the mystery of childhood, their own or that of others. This is drawn from the whole tradition of European literature from Plato and Augustine to Sartre and Buber. These sections alone, with telling extracts often ironically juxtaposed without comment, would make the book well worth reading. Apart from the more illustrious names, it is good to see an appreciation of such writers as H. C. Rümke and Frances Wickes. The general tone of these observations is quietly sympathetic, if often, perhaps inevitably, a little sad. (Connoisseurs of vituperation, however, should not miss the splendid outburst from Frederik van Eeden quoted on p. 185.) These various elements are skilfully combined into a most convincing and eloquent whole by Dr Klink's own contribution.

She protests that her book 'has no scholarly pretensions'. It is true that many authors are quoted without detailed references; there is also no index. These are minor irritations. But if scholarship depends as much on a gift for asking the right questions and a sense of where to look for the answers as on the diligent gleaning of other men's thoughts, Dr Klink is

too modest. Of course, her approach has limitations; she makes no secret of them. Her own thinking is based on the Bible; underlying it all is the question, 'In what way can you pass on to your children something of your own faith, or bring them into contact with Christian faith?' (p. 213). But it would be foolish to dismiss this book as just one more example of the old-style confessional handbook. She is, above all, deeply concerned with 'the theology of children': 'The purpose of this book has been to draw attention to the importance of taking children seriously in this respect, and of not brushing aside their "theology" too hastily on the grounds that "it is not their own"' (p. 238).

Your Child and Religion will come home to many as an accusation. Here is a little girl playing at being a priest and giving a sermon: 'People, you must be nice to each other. Anyone who believes in people believes in God. Anyone who doesn't believe in people doesn't believe in God. That's the end of the sermon' (p. 196). It is the children, Dr Klink points out, who so often have the initiative. 'Just because of God's invisibility and mysterious presence, the child is fascinated by him. He goes on asking, and without his parents having anticipated or wished it, they find themselves once again treading the hard path of theology' (p. 82). With penetrating simplicity Dr Klink exposes many of our cherished evasions and follies—the identification of God with the voice of conscience, and the threat of

divine justice, each so handy for the preservation of our own comfort or status; the superficiality of our common answers to the questions 'Who is God?', 'Where is God?' and 'Can God do everything?' Some theologians may, perhaps, feel her treatment of these mysteries oversimplified, but she offers no facile answers; we must do the work ourselves.

Throughout the book, one is aware of her passionate conviction that there is something in the child's vision that we cannot afford to miss; that each stage of life has its peculiar insights. 'Nor is it true that a little one first of all receives somewhat superficial impressions and later comes to appreciate the depth of life. It may even be that the person whose life is just beginning goes through depths of which we have lost all recollection. . . . Anyone who attains to faith realizes that this is a process that has gone on throughout his whole life' (pp. 16, 18). The patronizing attitudes which have their origin in Rousseau's romantic 'discovery' of 'the child', and which still persist in the devaluation of childhood implicit in some contemporary writers (see Ronald Goldman *passim*), receives a most wholesome corrective here. We should indeed all be grateful to Dr Klink for a book whose aim is—and note the order—'to help you to gain a more profound understanding yourself, and in your attempt to explain these things to your children' (p. 2).

Mr Alves has attempted something quite different, though his concerns do coincide with those of Dr Klink at one or two points. *The Christian in Education* offers a review of the contemporary English educational scene with particular reference, indeed with very copious reference, to the Newsom, Plowden, Gittins, Durham and Carlisle Reports, as well as to other official documents which have been influential in moulding public attitudes to the problems of religious education in the schools of today. His book will, I am sure, be a most useful guide to students in Colleges of Educa-

tion as well as to others whose business it is to keep themselves well informed on recent pronouncements in this field. It would be unfair to complain of a lack of personal commitment in the book; rather, it is here that its chief merit lies. It is a deliberately detached survey of a notoriously difficult subject. Mr Alves has done a very professional job in presenting so lucid and well organized an assessment in so compact a form.

As is inevitable in any such study, the current notion of 'open-ended' religious education tends to dominate the foreground. That it is ultimately a delusion Mr Alves recognizes clearly enough. He would, I am sure, agree that in the last resort the Christian teacher must base his claim to be listened to on something more than an open-minded readiness to hear all sides of a question. But only in the last resort? 'The openness of the present situation in Religious Education derives from a concept of man which is basic to Christian thought' (p. 95). There are, however, other aspects of the Christian concept of man that have a right to be heard. 'The Christian', says Mr Alves, 'is one who is struck by the biblical story.' He is also, I suggest, one who knows of an order of reality which transcends, and may also interpenetrate, both the physical and the psychical, and of a source of power within that order of whose impact he can speak from personal experience. If he is to call himself a Christian he must no doubt be more than that; but he can hardly be less. I do not mean it as a criticism of *The Christian In Education* when I say that the Christian in education cannot afford to be merely defensive about such convictions. Mr Alves is here very much concerned with the art of the possible. But he is also too sensitive an observer not to be aware that if the Christian is not prepared to commit himself on these matters people will just go and inquire about them elsewhere.

This is a useful little book which will provoke as well as inform.

E. A. ROBINSON

PROBLEMS OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE, by Terence Penelhum. *Macmillan*, 1971. £2.80.
CONTEMPORARY CRITIQUES OF RELIGION, by Kai Nielsen. *Macmillan*, 1971. £2.80.

Each of these books is a worthy addition to a series which has already started well. Penelhum is most fair and judicious, able to see both sides of the case of religious belief and unbelief to a degree given to very few authors. Nielsen only sees one side of the case, and is, in his way, all the more readable for that.

Nielsen attacks a view rather fashionable

among contemporary philosophers, which sees religion as a kind of island of discourse and behaviour, susceptible neither to attack nor to defence by considerations drawn from philosophy or the sciences. He argues that the religious believer is either committed to a naïve anthropomorphism in his discourse about God, or has subtilized and etiolated his