

conditioning the 'life-situation' of the Jews in Palestine at the time of Jesus, 'that of the law and its adequacy as a norm by which they could find a meaningful and satisfying mode of existence within a life-affirming cosmopolitan culture which was constantly calling the separatist character of Jewish communal life into question'. Professor Farmer shows how the teaching of these parables—compassion for the sinner and rebuke for the self-righteous—is quite unlike that of rabbinic parables dealing with the same question. It is a teaching which tells us a great deal about Jesus. Similar conclusions from the same materials are set out in Professor J. D. M. Derrett's article 'Law in the New Testament: The Parable of the Prodigal Son' (NTS, 14, 1, Oct. 1967, pp. 56-74).

Professor Farmer's study of the historical Jesus arrives at similar results to those of Professor Niebuhr's work. We are shown that the redemptive work of Christ was the encouraging of the 'individual and covenantal renewal that was taking place in response to his preaching', and that Jesus worked a revolution against 'sinful attempts to structure human existence on some exclusive ground'. Professor C. F. D. Moule's consideration of 'Obligation in the Ethic of Paul' leads him to dispute Professor Knox's thesis (*Chapters in the Life of Paul*, 1950, *The Ethic of Jesus in the Teaching of the Church*, 1961) that Paul unconsciously relaxed the revolutionary demand of Jesus for repentance. Professor Moule sees Paul's attack on legalism as part of the Christian revolution.

The legalism of the Judaizers is 'Adam's self-centredness', and the attempt to prove one's justice is sinful because it is a refusal to acknowledge man's dependence on God; Paul's concept of 'Adam's primal sin', and the teaching of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, demand that the Christian realize his full dependence on his Father. The only proper attitude is meeting our failure with repentance, with the self-demand for not less than all. Professor Moule's demonstration of Paul's employment of Adam's self-centredness as a picture of our present, and his demand that God's initiative in Christ be constantly 'reappropriated by repeated becoming' complements Professor Niebuhr's account of the faith which precedes life; his discussion of Paul's assault on the Pharisees who 'use the law in an attempt to establish' their righteousness, makes Professor Farmer's construction of Jesus' teaching and its effect on his contemporaries doubly convincing. His final sentence epitomizes the temper of this *Festschrift* and tells us much of the theologian in whose honour these papers were prepared: 'I offer these reflexions on Professor Knox's delineation of Paul as a token of my serious concern to wrestle with the implications of what he writes and of the way in which he stimulates a reader; and I know that he will welcome friendly debate on paper in exactly the same spirit in which he has always welcomed and engaged in it, with lively and genial interest, in verbal dialogue.'

HAMISH F. G. SWANSTON

**THE CHURCH AND THE CHRISTIAN UNION: The Bampton Lectures for 1964**, by Stephen Neill. Oxford University Press, London, 1968. 423 pp. 63s.

**TOWARDS CHRISTIAN UNITY**, a Symposium edited by Bernard Leeming, S.J. Geoffrey Chapman, London, 1968. 167 pp. 21s.

'The Church cannot be understood except in its nature as an expanding and missionary body. Yet the Churches have always found it extremely difficult to take seriously this aspect of their being.' Bishop Neill proposes to take it seriously. After a neat survey of attempts in recent years to define the boundaries of the Church (including the tentative approaches of Vatican II) he concludes that it is impossible to do so in terms of what the Church now is. It can only be attempted in terms of a larger reality to which it is dynamically related. We can only ask meaningfully about the Church, what is it *for*? It is for the world, it is missionary—the only society, as William Temple once remarked, which exists for the sake of those who are not members of it.

With this key many doors open. His appointment as Bampton lecturer enabled Bishop Neill to focus on questions arising out of his many years of experience as an Anglican bishop, historian of ecumenism, Associate General Secretary of the World Council of Churches and the only surviving member of the commission which drafted the Church of South India scheme. What emerges (here fully revised) is a history and contemporary assessment of most of the important questions that have been asked about the Church, theological, pastoral and sociological, during the four decades since Bishop Headlam gave the first ecumenical Bampton. He enters on a sort of running debate with Headlam, scattering research projects liberally through his footnotes.

One of the central problems with which theology should concern itself is with 'the other', the non-Christian world of other religions and of the secular. He gives a fascinating account of the churches' record—at times fairly enlightened—in confronting other cultures since Greek world first met Hebrew. The Church must always maintain openness, even at some risk, if it is to find the language to speak to the world outside itself. Within the Christian family he asks what it would mean for our differences over sacramental theology and practice if the starting-point were the missionary reality of the Church, as it was in the early years. Take the vexed question of infant baptism, for instance. What if we were to transpose the problem from what happens to the person baptized to what it means to the Church as a whole on relation to its witnessing character, its mission? His most searching questions concern the ministry. What is the essential nature of the priesthood? Surprisingly enough this is one of the questions most rarely treated in ecumenical discussions. Following von Rad he analyses the Old Testament concept (access to the holy, knowledge, declaration of the will of God, intercession for the people, suffering) and shows how these marks apply to the priesthood of Christ and, by participation, of the Church as a whole. He seems to allow no place here for degrees of participation. He is more concerned to show that the threefold ministry grew up (by a process admittedly obscure) out of the needs of an already existing Christian fellowship which did not keep the missionary situation sufficiently in view. The work of further expansion had to call on other forces outside the strictly ecclesial structure: religious orders, missionary societies. The missionary needs of today pose further questions: women in the ministry, the function of the layman at the frontier where the Church meets the world.

Plenty of avenues to explore. For one thing, this book should make us examine afresh the theme of mission in Vatican II. But Bishop Neill would be the first to admit that his

approach cannot exhaust the mystery of the Church. In fact, it raises other questions central to the ecumenical debate. His emphasis (especially as regards the ministry) calls for a balancing factor, the element of order, some criterion of stability and continuity amidst adaptation and change. Which brings us to the heuristic problem that preoccupied the Faith and Order conference at Bristol last September: by what authority do we interpret the complex data of the Church in the New Testament and sub-apostolic age and in the light of sociological factors?

*Towards Christian Unity* is a collection of papers given at Heythrop last July when delegates came from the dioceses of England and Wales to discuss how the Directory on Ecumenism could be implemented and to exchange information on what had, or had not been done in their areas. In this temperature taking there are plenty of indications of how far our official ecumenism is sound in wind and limb and how much further exercise is needed compared with Heythrop I five years ago when Cardinal Bea presided just before the opening of the Council. What particularly concerned the delegates (apart from the question of reciprocity of pulpits which is somewhat muted here) was education in ecumenism at all levels, academic and grass-roots. This Symposium makes a useful contribution to that process with its handy bibliographies and the syllabus for multilateral discussion groups drawn up by Fr Henry St John, O.P., and printed here as an appendix. Especially valuable are the talks from the 'fraternal delegates'; a distinguished Congregationalist, Methodist, Evangelical Anglican and the General Secretary and Associate General Secretary of the British Council of Churches state their hopes and frank reservations *vis-à-vis* relations with the Roman Catholic Church. Here is a chance of getting one's teeth into the 'good red meat' of dialogue. But an important voice is missing. Perhaps the Eastern Churches will have their say at Heythrop III.

ANTHONY NYE, S.J.

**CHURCH AND STATE IN BRITAIN SINCE 1820**, by David Nicholls. *Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, 1967.* cloth 35s. paperback 18s.

The three great revolutions, the American, the French and the Industrial, which governed the political, social and economic development of the nineteenth century, inevitably transformed earlier notions or arrangements determining

the connexions between Church and state or Church and society. This became one of the most important constitutional issues of the time and ultimately its implications became evident everywhere.