

continue Jesus's own concern, the preaching of the Word and the living of the Will of God; but now they would not only continue his concern, but preach the person of Jesus himself, whom they had experienced as living.

Then follows a section on the foundations of the Christian Church, dealing with the role of Paul and early interpretations of the person of Jesus (as to his relationship with God) and his concern. Special attention is given to meanings generated by the experience of Jesus's death, the meaning of his exaltation, and the development of the notion of the virgin birth and the theological purpose of the infancy narratives.

At this point Küng shifts to a discussion of the contemporary Christian Church, particularly the Roman Catholic communion, where he retraces ground familiar from his book on the Church. Aficionados of the infallibility debate will no doubt devote much attention to his section on the Petrine Office.

The final section is devoted to the ethical consequences of Jesus and his message. Küng believes that to be radically Christian one must be radically human, and that a genuine human

autonomy in ethics implies a theonomy as well. He avoids taking up positions on most issues, presumably because he is more interested in presenting foundations of ethics rather than in dealing with current moral problems.

Küng sums up much research and reflection ably and even breaks new ground in certain areas. It can be recommended for those wanting a statement of what an educated person would believe about Jesus and Christianity today. It is very sympathetic to the queries of the unbeliever and walks with him a good distance of the way. The tendentious comments about the Roman curia do not really serve the purpose of the work and can be taken as part of the autobiographical that enters into most writing. And the liberal tendency to transcend concrete actualities and avoid social and political commitment hovers over many sections of the book: but this is almost as common in German academic theology as overlong footnotes. I suspect that it will be some time before we see a compendium of basic Christianity as useful and as well-written as this. It meets an important need, so it is to be hoped that it will appear in English soon.

ROBERT SCHREITER

WHAT ABOUT THE NEW TESTAMENT? Essays in honour of Christopher Evans. Edited by Morna Hooker and Colin Hickling. *S.C.M. Press*, London, 1975. 242 pp. £3.50.

This symposium, to celebrate the sixty-fifth birthday of Dr Christopher Evans, Professor of New Testament Studies at King's College, London, is called by the introductory letter a 'Festschrift with a difference', since, it is claimed, instead of the usual highly specialist articles in honour of a successful scholar, we are to be treated here with a much more wide-ranging series of articles, by contributors from various fields of vocation, most of whom had been students of Professor Evans at some time during their past life, and who wish to register their thanks in printed form.

The subject chosen for the symposium likewise is far from academic only. 'What about the New Testament?' is a title indicating what we may call the 'Scriptural crisis' which has been commonplace for some time in the Anglican and Protestant communions, and is already beginning also to afflict Roman Catholic theology now we are recovering from post-Vatican II scrip-

tural euphoria, and realising some of the problems involved. This crisis is nothing other than that of the 'credibility' of the Bible granted the modern approach to scripture study. Thus we have here a timely work on an equally relevant subject.

Where then, do these offerings to Professor Evans so obviously fall short? The primary and most important defect to my mind is that no evidence is given from the articles that any of the questions at issue have been adequately thought through *at the theological level* by the majority of the contributors. This would be excusable if the subject of the essays were simply popular exegesis: but, in this symposium, the main preoccupation is precisely that of hermeneutics, questions ranging through the whole field of the principles of form criticism, the relationship between Jesus and the primitive community in the formation of the Gospel tradition, primitive christology, biblical inspiration, and canonicity. In

this area, the Scripture scholar must do his theological and philosophical homework.

And this defect is what makes so many of the essays deeply dissatisfying. For instance, Clare Drury's article 'Who's In, Who's Out?', on New Testament canonicity, makes the valid point that the line between canonical and non-canonical books often appears blurred in the history of the formation of the New Testament corpus; but none of the authors tries in any way to get to grips with discussing any possible criteria whereby we might be able to determine how such books might be deemed by us to have some special authority, or even whether such authoritative books might be necessary for us, and why. Again, the article on Form Criticism (by Graham Stanton) makes some very useful points, and particularly the point that we must re-examine the presuppositions of the form-critical school, to test their validity; but no contributor to this book has tried in any sense systematically to deal with the criteria of authenticity, so basic both to form and redaction criticism.

Perhaps my complaint boils down to criticism of a common tendency in Anglo-Saxon biblical scholarship in general, namely doctrinal empiricism, a *Weltanschauung* which has its uses when dealing with grammatical and philological questions, but which shows up severe limitations when grappling with more speculative issues. For this, German thoroughness, Latin logic, and French profundity are often more useful virtues.

Thus, for me, by far the best article

was written by Eduard Lohse, Bishop of Hanover, who, with clear consciousness of method, kept strictly within the limits of biblical theology in writing an excellent article on 'Miracles in the Fourth Gospel'. And here perhaps the focus of our attention shifts back from the pupils to the teacher, and particularly to the doctrine of the inspiration and authority of the Bible as held by Professor Evans himself. To my mind, the contribution which came fully to the point was the last, by Ellen Fleeseman-van Leer ('Dear Christopher') who threw out a direct challenge to her former professor in the form of a letter rather than of an article since she considers herself a non-specialist.

The problem for Ellen Fleeseman-van Leer is a plain one. 'Dear Christopher . . . I asked you once in one of our discussions why you were devoting so much of your time to studying the New Testament when you considered it neither authoritative or normative, nor a primary source of faith-truth . . .' (p. 239). It is a pity that this question, and questions like it, were left until the end, and were asked by one who considers herself to be a babe and suckling in biblical matters: since it is this type of truly radical and honest questioning, demanding an equally radical and honest answer, which would have given more praise to the professor, who is admired for his ability to ask 'questions about the questions'; and would have given more indication that his students and colleagues are able at least to go about answering them armed with an adequate hermeneutical methodology.

JOHN M. REDFORD

HEALING, by Francis MacNutt OP. *Ave Maria Press*, Notre Dame, Indiana, 1974. 333 pp. £1.75.

INNER HEALING, by Michael Scanlon. *Paulist Press*, New York, 1974. 85 pp. £1.50. Both distributed in UK by Redemptorist Publications, Alton.

Healing by Fr MacNutt is on the whole a very good book, and I hope that it will be widely read by those concerned with Christian ministry. It is a gentle book, which is a rare quality in books on this subject, and stresses gentleness in the ministry of healing. It is God's love that must be seen, not just his power. And the author maintains very convincingly that we should see healing as a normal thing, not a spectacular wonder: God's will is that we should be whole, and, other things being equal, this will include physical and mental health. And therefore we

should pray for such things. One does not have to be anybody special to pray for healing: one's faith is not in one's own faith but in God. So one prays, and then leaves it to God. Nobody should feel threatened or pressurised; healing is not a test of faith either for the one praying or for the one prayed for. In fact, the chapters on faith are particularly helpful and encouraging. I think Fr MacNutt is singularly successful in reassuring us that healing is truly a part of the Church's ministry.

There are just a few serious flaws, though, which prevent the book from