

in those passages concerned with the chronology of the Gospels; one might also question M. Zeiller's statement that no oriental religion was ever organised into a church (p. 19). It is too a little troublesome to have to seek out the original sources for some statement through the medium of a secondary authority, though this method of reference would appear to be the deliberate intention of the general editors of the work. The inclusion of a few maps would prove a valuable addition to the book. But these are minor criticisms. The wealth of references to both original and secondary authorities, the judicious footnotes and the well selected bibliographies make it an invaluable aid to students, while not detracting from the appeal it will have to the general reader who wishes merely for an interesting and readable account of the early history of the Church.

N.G.

A DIALOGUE IN THE DESERT. By Gerald Heard. (Cassell; 1s. 6d.)

An imaginative reconstruction of the temptations of our Lord. They form a logical sequence: 'three steps, each leading . . . to a clearer height.' The stones: why not win the leadership of a group by using miracle to free them from material want? But they would rest in their prosperity instead of seeking the living Bread; and the call is to more than a small sect. The Temple: why not force the allegiance of the people by a spectacular gesture, out-manoeuvring at once the opposition of ecclesiastical vested interests? But they will not be led by a trick to worship the real God in spirit and in truth; and the call is to more than a nation. The kingdoms: wolves will keep lambs from Shepherd unless they themselves are overpowered: only Mammon and the sword can establish the Kingdom. But we may not do evil that good, however great, may come; we cannot serve God by betraying Him.

The first step is illustrated by a moving account of the healing of a starving maniac; the third leads on to an encounter with a Nationalist Zealot, a Party man following the Party line with amoral ruthlessness, and the final lesson is reinforced. One imagines that readers may find a discordant ring about some of Christ's speeches, some of the dialogue difficult to read a second time: not indeed that He is made too human—that couldn't be—but that He is made too middling human, too un-divine, too wordy perhaps. But elsewhere there is real perception and congruity; and the main lesson is made vivid. 'My faith, in the hands of those who would spread it, may have a worldly success far more tragic than my personal failure.' Our cause is just, so there is nothing further to worry about—endlessly the same blind fallacy repeats itself. Is it so hard to grasp that good ends are made evil if they are fought for with evil weapons—the holier the end, the deeper the degradation and wickedness? Apparently it is.

G.V.