

dissociate certain actions from the Church in such a way as to suggest that these actions belong *only* to individuals. It seems to me simply dishonest to say that 'the Spanish Inquisition tortured uneducated men and women' but to insist that the Spanish Inquisition is so far not to be identified with the Church that there is no reasonable way in which one can call this the action of the Church and so on. Hans Küng has covered this ground extremely well and I am sure that Mr Westow basically agrees with him.

Having got my minor carps out of the way I want now to consider for a short space just what it is that Mr Westow has done for us. We are accustomed to thinking of ourselves as members of the Christian Church. Precisely what we make of this depends upon our degree of integration into, and understanding of the Church. But any kind of understanding is bound to be informed by the emotional and intellectual attitudes to which we have been bred. Many of these will constitute valuable insights into the Church for us, but others are merely the blindnesses of our time and situation. It is these that we must overcome. In order to make clear just how this process of conditioning has worked in the Christian community the author gives a concise and very valuable historical survey of past Christian ways of looking at themselves, and their world. Clearly such a survey, in a book of this size, has to be highly selective, but it would be hard for anyone to deny that the account is not only fair, but extremely illuminating. What he is concerned to illustrate is the constant tension between the idea of the Church as a community and that of the importance of the individual.

Mr Westow feels, and clearly he is right about this, that the primitive Christian understanding of the perfection of the individual within and through the community has been swamped and very nearly destroyed today by an excessive individualism. It is not enough, however, merely to condemn this 'attitude': in order to combat it we must understand its origins, and also grasp the germ of truth hidden in its excesses. Any disagreement one might have with small details of Mr Westow's argument can in no way affect its total excellence.

The book is pleasantly written and is precisely the kind of thing we all ought to read if we really want the *nouvelle vague* to wash over England. If this book has the success it deserves then English Catholic jingoism will be firmly on its way out.

NEIL MIDDLETON

THE MAKING OF A CHRISTIAN, by Charles Davis; Sheed and Ward, 8s. 6d.

Charles Davis' latest book is concerned to provide a critical interpretation of baptism and confirmation, and in doing so to return them to their true status as central and splendid events in Christian culture. As usual with Fr Davis, the theological exploration is controlled by a pastoral concern, the felt need to re-fruit an impoverished Christian community deprived of its own meanings, to make baptism something more than a fumbling around the font in a remote corner of the church, and confirmation more than a mere interior strengthening. Much of

the book is spent in tracing the history of both sacraments, but this is never a mere filling in of background: instead, historical scholarship is utilised to communicate the sense of an evolving, adjusting continuity on which we must draw critically, selectively. The whole point of the historical retrospect is to show how the sacramental rites have constantly adapted to specific cultural needs, and this emphasis is made the basis of the pastoral argument.

It is difficult to say that this book is just about baptism and confirmation, because the more the author probes his central concern with the sacraments of Christian initiation, the more they open outwards into an exploration of the whole biblical and liturgical field. Our response to baptism must be shaped by our responsiveness to the whole biblical culture, and Fr Davis illustrates the point by a discussion of the Old Testament themes and images which form the sacrament's heritage of meaning. In the chapter on Death and Resurrection, baptism is seen in relation to the central Christian mysteries, as a personal enactment of the saving acts of Christ, and this involves pushing the book's perspectives out further into a consideration of the nature of sacraments in general. The last chapters of the book are devoted to a discussion of confirmation, and here there is some critical analysis of the familiar formulas; confirmation, rather than being merely an interior strengthening, a matter of the personal confrontation with evil, is the sacrament which gives our membership of Christ's body its 'social and apostolic dimension', the groundwork of the living encounter between the individual and community. Confirmation, like baptism, draws meaning from its relation to the community, and it is here that the theological and liturgical concerns in Fr Davis' book merge into a unified attempt to return the sacraments to their function within the community, to fight the attitude which sees baptism as a family affair and confirmation as a preparation for manhood. Finally, in discussing the relations between baptism and confirmation, the author examines the question of the age at which confirmation should take place, and thus anchors the exploration in a directly pastoral matter; his final support for confirmation at an age when a full personal response is possible, rather than at an early age in accordance with early tradition, emphasises both his insistence on the significance of the personal response in understanding the nature of the sacraments, and his readiness to adapt tradition to actual need, to a changed culture.

What is most admirable in the method of this book is the way in which historical and theological scholarship is never allowed to blur the liturgical, imaginative emphasis, but is harnessed at every point to a fuller and deeper cultural understanding. Factual and imaginative elements are held in precise fusion: the author manages to communicate a whole poetic structure while concerning himself with specific, pastoral problems, and the vision is controlled by the clipped, pointed style which gives a tight logic to the argument, pushing it forward continually; there is never a wasted gesture, always a sparse urgency directing deeply imaginative activity.

Ultimately, it is the unity of vision underlying the new theology which comes through most forcefully: the discussion of baptism and confirmation can't be

isolated off from a living liturgical context, and themes are constantly extending outwards to show new interrelations, new unities of meaning. What is communicated is not merely the particular argument, but the whole structure of feeling of modern theology, so that someone who read only this book would understand the stresses and values of the new ways of looking. Fr Davis' books do more than supply brilliant insights: they also supply the kind of education in sensibility, the imaginative training, which is part of the distinctive method of modern theology and symptomatic of its values.

TERRY BAGLETON

REDISCOVERING EASTERN CHRISTENDOM: Essays in memory of Dom Bede Winslow, edited by E. L. B. Fry and A. H. Armstrong; Darton, Longman and Todd, 21s.

All who knew Dom Bede Winslow must remember him for three qualities; his translucent and very personal charity, his capacity for close friendships and his indomitable tenacity. The first two qualities were interwoven, the third was perhaps a heritage from Victorian England. Just as there were great Victorian Englishmen who were married to Bulgaria or to Greece, so Dom Bede retained an unswerving love for eastern Christendom from about 1909 until his death fifty years later. Few books could have given him so much pleasure as this volume of essays in his memory.

The list of contributors illustrates the width of his contacts. It includes scholars of the eminence of Joan Hussey, Francis Dvornik and Norman Daniel, Orthodox like George Florovsky, Anglicans like John Lawrence. It is particularly fitting that there is an essay by Brother George Every who is in so many ways Dom Bede's Anglo-Catholic successor. The subjects covered range from 'Gibbon Rewritten' to 'Edmund Bishop and the Epiclesis' and 'Orthodox-Catholic relations'. Sometimes the conclusions might be controverted; 'East and West' by R. P. Deyaïfve contains generalisations at which other specialists will blench. But then Dom Bede always enjoyed starting a discussion group. The volume opens with an admirable photograph of Dom Bede followed by a live and moving memoir by Miss Barbara Fry.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.