

England is, gridironed all over with railways, yet there are many districts in it the abode of loneliness, where the centuries come and go with little outward change, and the country looks much the same as it did in the days of the Stuarts, or even before their time'. The Wessex world of Hardy was still a living one as Blériot flew the Channel, the first Garden City was built, the theory of relativity was discovered, transatlantic wireless was heard, and the first hundred thousand of Britain's cars were on the

road. In their very different ways these two books provide an unusually good complement to each other – the official portrait, the personal snap-shot album – the former without stuffiness, the second without eccentricity. Taken together, they do much to restore imaginatively an age which for reasons of great complexity, fascinates us and leaves us fresh to ponder its special set of enigma variations.

IAN GREGOR

CONSTANTINOPLE: ICONOGRAPHY OF A SACRED CITY by Philip Sherrard. *Oxford University Press*. 63s.

In recent years there have been many books on Constantinople but this study is unique, for it deals not only with the City but with a civilization and a polity. In one hundred and thirty-four pages Mr Sherrard deals in turn with the place, people and buildings, with Constantinople as the New Rome, with Constantinople as the New Jerusalem and with its conquest by the Turks as the destruction of an Image. On a first reading the first section seems far too compressed for it is concentrated on the Palace, the Hippodrome and Haghia Sophia, it is not only that so much is omitted like the function of the town monasteries and the beauty of the Chara, the organization of the craftsmen and the flow of inter-continental trade. The Constantinople that Mr Sherrard describes is a city without brothels. But gradually when the book is being re-read it becomes apparent that the excisions are all-intentional, Mr Sherrard was not painting a naturalist picture, he has achieved an ikon.

It is the Ikon of Byzantium conceived as the capital of an universal empire, no other Byzantinist has ever portrayed this so well.

Partly this is due to Mr Sherrard's skill as an anthologist. There are citations from so many sources often quite unfamiliar, quite different in their period and in their provenance, Greek and Western and Islamic and yet combining in an overall unity. This is a work of artistry as well as scholarship.

There is no idealization, an ikon painter may concentrate on aspects of a reality but he does not idealize. On page 119 Mr Sherrard develops a theory of the Byzantine sense of collective guilt which is the only statement or theory of his that I would query. Of course there was much that was fetid in Byzantine civilization, for it was a civilization. Of course much classical paganism survived interwoven with Byzantine Christianity; as late as the fourteenth century Bryennios could write, 'we are certain that Nereids live in the sea and that Genii rule over each spot'. But I would doubt if either led to much psychological tension beneath the baroque rhetoric of self-denunciation there lay the tranquil consciousness of an utter superiority.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.

EVOLUTION TECHNIQUE ET THEOLOGIES by A. Z. Serrand, O.P. *Editions du Cerf*.

The series in which this book appears focusses on the problem of working out a theology which will really answer the challenges and needs of the technological era. The volume under review, written with that attractively dry humour which is familiar to readers of the author's regular contributions to *Signes du Temps*, offers a schematized phenomenology of existing Catholic positions as regards the right relation

between the claims of the gospel and the purview of applied science, between Christ and Prometheus. In a subsequent volume Fr Serrand proposes to make sense of the variety of attitudes and to discuss the role the magisterium of the Church may play in recommending some particular one of them.

Fr Serrand discerns *eight* different attitudes 'Theology for Prometheus': the motto of

which Catholics may be found adopting with respect to the multifarious activities summed up under the heading of 'technology'. It is perhaps hard to credit but they do in fact seem to differ significantly. The author has picked out a key-word to characterize each of the eight positions: supernatural law (*intégrisme* in effect though Fr Serrand never uses the term); natural law (*Pacem in Terris*); incarnation (earlier French Catholic Action); assumption (humanist values 'assumed' into Christianity); eschatology (the word belongs to the devil); dualism (separating the spiritual from the material as far as a Christian possibly can); dialectic (synthesis of Christian and Promethean values); parallelism (coexistence of the two antithetical sets of values). As the catalogue proceeds the positions become less and less 'doctrinal', more and more 'pragmatic'

(Fr Serrand suggests that most middle-class Catholics in business and industry illustrate the tendency to unthinking or anyway unthought-out coexistence).

It is not easy to see how Fr Serrand is going to rationalize all these attitudes. From his concluding remarks we are led to suppose that he will now trace their emergence throughout the history of Christianity. Anybody familiar with German work on the philosophy of *Technik* would be much more inclined to tackle the problem *speculatively* rather than simply *historically*; but the French theologian always prefers making an *enquête* to undertaking a revision of basic categories. There is, however, plenty of work for everybody in this particular field and we look forward eagerly to Fr Serrand's next volume.

FERGUS KERR, O.P.

VISIBLE UNITY AND TRADITION by Max Thurian, Frère de Taizé. Darton, Longman & Todd. 22s 6d.

The Taizé community, as all who have contact with it know, is a remarkable realization of the ecumenical spirit within continental Protestantism, Lutheran and Calvinist. *Visible Unity and Tradition* by Max Thurian, Taizé's best known and most able theologian, deals with ecclesiology as the community view it. The book is set against the background of the World Council of Churches, but takes ample account of Roman Catholicism, Orthodoxy and the Old Catholic position. Max Thurian bases his vision of the existent Church of Christ upon the whole company of the baptized, throughout the world, holding, as its essential core of belief, a Trinitarian faith in Jesus Christ as God and Saviour. For him this is the Body of Christ, sacramentally visible through baptism, and visible too by its common possession of the Scriptures, the sufficient source of God's revelation to men in Christ. Though it possesses this much of visible unity, it is yet a divided Church, no part of which possesses the wholeness of faith as given.

Over and above this primary and basic conception of the Church, we see in Taizé a strangely marked looking back, with complete fidelity, to the tradition of undivided Christendom, with its teaching authority rooted in the first four General Councils and so in apostolicity and in the extension of apostolicity which is episcopal succession (understood broadly as ministry commissioned by apostles); a rather less decisive adhesion is extended to the rest of

the General Councils, up to the seventh. Tradition is thus the on-going interpretation and proclamation of the deposit of faith, contained in the Scriptures. The creeds are authoritative, as summaries of Christ's gospel, understood within the worshipping community, a mainly doxological understanding, growing under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, safeguarded by the Church's apostolic insight, under the pastoral guidance of the episcopate.

All this is outlined by Brother Max Thurian with a clarity and devotion to the person of Christ reminiscent of the writings of Cardinal Newman in the days before 1845. There is, too, a perceptive fairness in assessing the divergent positions of divided Christians, which is wholly ecumenical in its spirit. The sacrament of baptism and the Scriptures, as primary visible elements of the Church, existing in the separated Churches and constituting a real but imperfect communion, on their part, with the Catholic Church is the starting point, from which we Catholics are now directed, in the new Ecumenical Constitution, to approach our separated Christian brethren. This approach, with all its many implications, greatly lessens the sense of separation between us.

Max Thurian regards the Vatican Council, the Pan-Orthodox Conference at Rhodes and the World Council of Churches, as three partial, as opposed to General Councils of the Church. He looks forward to the unity of the One church as a condition to be achieved and