

GEORGE FOX'S BOOK OF MIRACLES. By Henry J. Cadbury. (Cambridge University Press; 21s.)

This is a fine example of the scholarship of a birth-right Quaker, who, having the advantage of the Quaker understanding of the Quaker style and tradition, has laboured arduously over several years to describe a Quaker book which has long disappeared from the Quaker records. The disappearance is somewhat disconcerting, for the Society of Friends has been punctiliously careful to preserve its records; but after reading Henry Cadbury's thesis—for it is that—the reasons for its disappearance appear.

Dr Rufus Jones, in his Foreword, hints at one of the reasons when he asserts that the miracles (let them be supposed) of the early Friends and those of Lourdes can be explained by the endocrine glands. He goes on to say it is a matter of 'suggestive faith'. The early Friends would not, I suppose, have agreed even if they had heard of the endocrine glands, but they tended to treat the accounts with increasing caution as they began to settle down. Robert Barclay seems to have won his point, against those Friends and their opponents who believed that immediate revelation ought to go hand in hand with thaumaturgy, that those Christians who looked to a new outpouring of Pentecostal Power and the advent of a second John the Baptist should understand that John the Baptist worked no miracles. Barclay urged that 'we need not miracles because we preach no new gospel', which is rather of the same sort as Richard Baxter's 'there is now no need of miracles, the word having sounded forth unto the whole earth'.

Certain of the opponents of Quakerism thought much the same. They accused Friends, because of their claims, that they were preaching a new gospel and Friends were likened unto the Papists, another brood which preached a new gospel. Quakers themselves regarded Papists as their only serious competitors and Fox himself challenged them to duels of fasting and vigils.

But men such as Ellwood, who edited the Quaker journals, toned down the accounts. Quakerism is about to pass through the 'middle period' of quietism and one does not meet with the miraculous till Grellet's time.

Did Friends work miracles? It seems probable, for miracles have been given to men through many a free lance, witness St Luke ix, 49. But there was a welter of self-deception, imposture, and sheer foolishness among the early Quaker acts, and such miracles as those of Greatrakes, the Quaker touch doctor, are probably well understood by the modern bonesetter. The Quakers, including Fox, have always, by the way, been on good terms with the medical profession, and have given great names to it.

To write about a book you have never seen, even with such helps as an index, is an unsatisfactory task at the best; and one of the signs of it is found here in the awkwardness of the text. Hardly ever have I been so bemused by asterisks, numbers and letters

with footnotes and I am bound to conclude it is a pity the Book of Miracles is not at Euston Road.

H. W. J. EDWARDS

*THE ENGLISHMAN'S RELIGION.* An Anthology. Edited with Introduction by Ashley Sampson. (Allen and Unwin; 7s. 6d.)

The Englishman's religion certainly has characteristics which differentiate it from that of, say, France or Germany. But when it comes to defining its special character or compiling an anthology of English writings which will reveal it, a great conflict of interpretation arises according to the different angle whence it is judged. This anthology sees Protestant 'freedom' as one of the chief attributes of religion in England and finds such in the writings not only of Newman but also of St Thomas More, Chaucer and Langland. Perhaps that is why, out of the glorious body of writings of the English Mystics, Ashley Sampson chooses only one short passage from Mother Julian and gathers armfuls of pious platonisms and pantheisms from nineteenth century literary gentlemen. But the book ends tragically, and perhaps realistically, with a farewell letter from an airman to his mother revealing the terribly attenuated religion which left so many great English heroes of the last war in a questioning vacuum. If the Englishman fights today he mostly fights without a firm faith in the Incarnation but with a waning adherence to the Creator and the Empire.

JOHN HUNSTER

*GOD AND THE UNIVERSE.* By Stuart H. Clark, M.A. (S.P.C.K.; 7s. 6d.)

'There is no touch of arrogance in the claim that Christians have the faith that others need. Real arrogance lies in imagining that we are the possessors, and not trustees, of truth we have received, which belongs to all mankind' (p. 132). If summary were needed, this quotation would surely convey the purpose that author had in mind when he came to write this book, the outcome of reflection and experience in India and at home in the Church of England ministry.

The late Canon Stuart Clark approaches the problems raised by a purely naturalistic outlook on life with sympathy and understanding. Yet that approach in no way obliges him to forsake his own belief in God, whose wise providence guides the destiny of all mankind. Even though man might attempt to reject God, might even scorn and ridicule his loving care of the world, yet God is never unmindful of the creature of his hands. But are not the dealings of God with man too sublime and abounding to compress into a slight volume of 171 pages? That is the shortcoming of the book, profitable and interesting though it be in many other ways. None would doubt the author's sincerity in his own belief, or of the urgent need he felt to bring all men to a knowledge of God.

TERENCE NETHERWAY, O.P.