

CATHOLIC CHURCHES SINCE 1623, by Bryan Little. *Robert Hale*, London, 1966. 256 pp. illustrated. 42s.

Because no one else has written a comprehensive study of this subject, Mr Little's book will remain for a long time a standard work. It is detailed and exhaustive, even exhausting; for the story of Catholic church building from penal days to the present is fragmentary and tortured.

The limitation of the book is that it deals only with England and Wales and excludes Scotland, thus depriving us of some valuable 18th- and 19th-century contributions, of the greater part of P. P. Pugin, of Macpherson, Fairlie, and Coia, probably the most significant church architect in Britain today; and this seems unfortunate, because they form part of the same story, and help to relate Catholic churches to the development of architecture as a whole.

This is a limitation throughout. By looking only at Catholic churches, with occasional side-glances at other work, Mr Little leaves unanswered the question of how or whether this notable volume of building has contributed to the history of architecture. At times one feels that it hasn't: that here is a self-defensive sect growing in upon itself, and becoming isolated from the mainstream of architectural thought. That happened just before and after the war, and Mr Little indicates the failure of the Church in those years—a failure that would have been even more striking if he had compared it with the church building of post-war Germany and of the Cologne diocese in particular. It was a dismal chapter in the Church's history, and still requires some analysis of the attitudes of the clergy responsible for commissioning the buildings.

Mr Little rightly emphasizes the work of A. W. N. Pugin in promoting the real Gothic revival; but here again he misses a lot of Pugin's significance as a key figure in the development of functionalist theory, which

ultimately relates him to modern architecture. It would have been useful to examine his ideas in the *True Principles*, and to take account of their implications, as did Raymond Williams in *Culture and Society* (a work which he surprisingly ignores). Pugin therefore emerges as a partly successful church architect rather than the major theorist as well as practitioner that he was.

And it is sad to find an author still misunderstanding the Liturgical Movement. He seizes on a parallel with Mr Stephen Joseph's advocacy of 'theatre in the round', and misinterprets both movements. 'Churches with their altars in the centre, and with their laity seated all round the resulting circle, are among those urged, and in some places built, by some of the Liturgical Movement's enthusiasts.' Had he investigated the Liturgical Movement fully, especially on the Continent, and related it to the work of architects like Schwartz, he might have appreciated why knowledgeable followers of the Liturgical Movement, far from urging altars surrounded by the laity, are deeply critical of such parodies of their principles. He would then find himself in agreement with them.

It seems very suitable, at a time of ecumenical dialogue, that the story of Catholic churches in England and Wales should become at last a piece of history. Modern Catholic church architecture can no longer be treated in isolation from both ecclesiastical and secular architecture of all kinds. That is why this book in no way replaces the major studies by Mr Peter Anson, which the author acknowledges. It makes the situation more hopeful than it has been for some years; and Mr Little's achievement may be that he has written up and closed the lid on a story which has come to an end.

PATRICK NUTTGENS

#### LE TIERS-MONDE L'OCCIDENT ET L'EGLISE, *Les Editions du Cerf*, 1967.

This is a collection of papers contributed to a conference organised by *Mission de France*. The writers concern themselves with various questions about economic development and under-development, the relations between the Third World and western nations, and the implications and problems for the Church. The standard of some of the contributions is

very high. There is strong contrast between wide papers surveying the whole field and papers on particular countries, which is itself educational. The tone is committed and urgent, and the reader is given plenty to ponder on.

The papers are arranged in descending order of generality, so that the volume opens with sweeping discussions of the nature of under-

development and moves towards the particular. Henri Bartoli contributes a tightly packed preface, full of statistics, which he describes rather disarmingly at the end as a 'simple preface'. There is an introduction by Pierre Judet. Part One is on Under-development and Conditions for Development. Two papers by Fabio Comparato and Gerard de Bernis illustrate only too well the dangers of writing on the development problem in a sweeping manner without enough of the discipline of confronting general ideas with particular histories. The result is too often either rolling, elegant and empty French ('l'industrialisation est la réussite d'un dialogue social entre l'industrie et la société pre-industrielle qui se lasse entraîner par celle-là, qui y voit le moyen de son progrès.' —Bernis) or sheer un-historical nonsense; thus Comparato's claim, taken up by Bernis, that imperialism was an outcome of industrialization. Gilbert Mathieu, whom readers of *Le Monde* will know, contributes a fine paper on French aid to under-developed countries, laying bare many faults. The first part ends with a question and answer session, with Bernis and Comparato providing the answers, including some discussion of the population explosion. The huge changes of recent years in Catholic thought on this matter is evidenced in the answers, as elsewhere in the volume; but

the attitude towards family planning remains cool. The answers stress, correctly, that population growth is not the only problem, and somehow manage to leave the impression that it is not a very big problem. I wish that were true.

Part Two is concerned with relations between the Third World and the West. Pierre Judet contributes a valuable essay on our responsibilities towards the Third World, including firm denunciations of French government policy and the *comité français contre la faim*. Nguyen Manh-Ha, a member of the first Ho-Chi-Minh government, relates in a stark and simple manner the terrible history of Vietnam; reminding us, among other things, of Pius XII and Cardinal Spellman's involvement in the rise to power of the Diem regime. There follows another '*j'accuse*', this time by Valentin Kiba, who writes powerfully on how it feels to be an alienated African.

The Third Part is concerned with the Church in the West and the Third World. Mgr Laurent S. Nagae writes on religion, or the lack of it, in atheistic Japan, and Bernard Atangana, S.J. on the Christian-African dialogue. The volume closes with two papers by Francois Houtart and Jean Frisque on the Church in the Third World and in the West.

CHRISTOPHER BLISS

THE CHURCH AND MANKIND, by Augustin Cardinal Bea. *Geoffrey Chapman*, 1967. 282 pages. 30s.

In *The Church and Mankind* Cardinal Bea achieves lucidly and often suggestively what he sets out to do, which is, to present in a systematic way the doctrine of Vatican II on the Church in its relationship to mankind. He shows a thorough mastery of the conciliar documents and of their scriptural background, which enables him to juxtapose and align texts in a helpful and stimulating way. And there is no doubt that an account like this has its uses. But yet one cannot but feel dissatisfied at the result, and I think this is because some of the assumptions underlying the Cardinal's method are rather suspect.

In the first place, there is the problem of the hermeneutic of Vatican II. Are the conciliar documents an end or a beginning, an answer or a challenge? Cardinal Bea clearly takes them as providing definitive answers (typically, one of the commonest words in the book is 'explain' —the Council seems to have 'explained' almost everything 'fully'); and accordingly, his book is magisterial in the worst sense: every problem

falls into neatly docketed questions, every question has its tidy answer (catechism-style), and every answer is readily available on application to the competent authority. But surely, what is most significant in the Council is the direction in which it points; it avowedly declined the task of definition and anathematization. On occasion, it may be methodologically correct to give more weight to some new teaching, however vaguely adumbrated, than to apparently more weighty pronouncements, which have come in simply as a hangover from the past. One obvious example is S.L. 36, which begins solemnly: 'linguae latinae usus, salvo particulari iure, in Ritibus latinis servetur'. Yet can we doubt that what is important in this section is its rather hesitant introduction of vernacular languages? Again, the grudging recognition of the occasional competence of laymen (who, in very special circumstances, are either 'permitted' or 'obliged' to express their opinions) is to be taken as pointing to a more complete, less crabbed recognition