

in his report of a conversation about corporal punishment: Petre 'somewhat severe of nature, said plainly that the rod only was the sword that must keep the school in obedience and the scholar in good order'. These virtues were evidently placed high in Petre's scale of values; practised throughout his long life, they impressed their stamp upon this singularly consistent career. Why then, does the reader remain indifferent, the portrait fail to convince; is it a failure in biographical technique, author and reader alike stunned by the weight of evidence so painstakingly amassed? Up to a point this must be conceded, but there seems to be a certain deliberate elusiveness in the personality of Petre. This dimness of outline bothered his contemporaries as much as the modern observer; 'the man who said nothing' going about his work 'in entire compliance to the King's will'. Perhaps this facelessness was the deliberate choice of a shrewd intelligence; a protective dullness of coloration provided an efficient safeguard in the flamboyantly uneasy years of Tudor politics. Petre's remarkable tenacity of office may well be due to his silent discretion. All Mr Emmison's painstaking examination of a vast collection of documents fails to conjure up the sound of his voice. Petre said nothing, left no evidence of controversial activity which might be used against him, yet wherever one looks in the Tudor scene he is there, tireless and industrious. This study for a full-length portrait leaves the reader unsatisfied, not asking for more material but for a clarification of the facts already presented. What did Petre think about the events in which he took part; how far did his loyalty to the successive sovereigns rest on a genuine devotion to the legitimate ruler and how far was it dictated by a greater devotion to his own skin? We know from his personal account books that Petre's public reputation for honest dealing was not covering over private and concealed speculation and his benefactions increased with his prosperity. What restrained him from profiting from office to the same tune as his fellows and prompted him to so wide a benevolence? When all has been said Sir William Petre remains as shadowy a figure as when Mr Emmison began his work; he makes no attempt to pluck out the heart of his mystery. It is characteristic of Mr Emmison's generous profession that he has displayed the materials on which other scholars may work in the future. Some of the intricate detail of a Tudor household is extracted from the private account books and printed as an Appendix; for this, and for the excellent account of the building of Ingatestone Hall in the body of the text, all students of Tudor social life will be grateful.

J. ROWE

THE CRISIS OF WESTERN EDUCATION, by Christopher Dawson; Sheed and Ward; 18s.

Mr Christopher Dawson's new book is a work of cardinal importance not only for those who plan courses for undergraduates, but for all who concern them-

selves with any kind of further education. Since he became, in 1958, the first Charles Chauncey Stillman Professor of Roman Catholic Studies at Harvard, he has been presenting a general view of Catholicism to students in the Harvard Divinity School; given the present position of the United States in world affairs, the fact that his book is written for American readers makes it not less but more relevant to British and indeed to European readers.

It has become obvious that for an increasing proportion of the world's population Marxism is seen as a forward-looking dynamic philosophy, embodied in a messianic class and having an eschatology which is expressed in concrete and comprehensible terms, whereas Christianity, if noticed at all, appears chiefly as a kind of nostalgia. The effects of a secularized education cut off from its spiritual roots have been analysed by many writers for several decades, notably by Ortega y Gasset in his *La Rebelión de las Masas*; in Great Britain a group of Christian University Teachers met in 1949 to discuss the proof of Sir Walter Moberly's *The Crisis in the University*. As a result of this initial meeting, the University Teachers' Group was formed and is still actively engaged in considering these issues. Sir Walter's book, for all its indictment of the cult of detachment and neutrality in Universities, and for all its dismay at a disintegrating society, was essentially the work of an optimist; in Mr Dawson's work the note of optimism is entirely absent. Rather is it a work whose critique of the secularized society, more radical than that of Ortega y Gasset, urges the author to suggest a campaign at once more local and more world-wide than that outlined by Moberly. The note of hope in his book has nothing to do with optimism, but is akin to the desert-hope of Israel in the Old Testament, hope beginning in aridity and persevering in aridity.

The first half of the book is historical; in order to establish his thesis, it was necessary for the author to show the relationship of many movements. He shows how American education, which had originally been based on a close bond between church and school, following the older English pattern, was re-organized in the twentieth century on German lines; the men who refounded American education were hostile to the denominational principle and in favour of state control and support. Hence the Christian teacher finds himself in a difficult position: in a confessional school he may live in a small enclosed world, hardly aware of the gap dividing his traditional belief from the forces which dominate the modern world, while in a state school he is forced by the conditions of his work to treat fundamental spiritual issues as though they were details outside his sphere of competence. So long as religion is regarded as a private matter, the State (and this would apply also to a totalitarian state) raises no objection to it, but when any religion attempts to create its own community of thought and culture, the State sees religion as an anti-social force which every good democrat must reject. Once the State has accepted full responsibility for education, it is obliged to extend its control further, to physical welfare, feeding, amusements, and finally to moral welfare and psychological guidance. A movement towards universal education therefore inevitably tends to become a rival

or an alternative to the Church.

Mr Dawson emphasizes the fact that the progress of universal education has been very largely responsible for the secularization of culture. For this very reason, he maintains with even greater emphasis that it is not enough to educate a Catholic minority: 'if we want to preserve Catholic education in a secularized society we must do something about non-Catholic education also'. There is an underlying schism in education: the modern Christians have themselves all been more or less influenced by the dominant secular conception of culture. The very attempt to use religious education to enforce a rigid standard of religious practice in the midst of a secular culture produces a situation where the majority of the population are 'neither fully Christian nor consciously atheist, but non-practising Catholics, half-Christian, and well-meaning people with no positive religious knowledge at all'. The real menace is not rational hostility, but a great mass of opinion which is sub-religious rather than anti-religious. Unless, therefore, students can learn something of Christian culture as a whole, they are placed in a position of cultural estrangement—'the social inferiority of the ghetto without its old self-containedness and self-sufficiency'.

While insisting that anyone who wishes to understand our culture to-day cannot dispense with a study of Christian culture, whether he is a Christian or not, Mr Dawson is at pains to emphasize that he is not suggesting one more scheme for a bird's-eye view of the past. He wishes students to look on Christian culture as a social reality, and would devote more time to the social institutions and moral values of Christian culture than to its literary and artistic achievements. Certain practical obstacles are clearly perceived; the secularist might fear that such a scheme of study could be used as an instrument of religious propaganda, and the Christian might fear that a historical study would lead to the identification of Christianity with the social system of a dead past. No attentive reader of this book would fear the danger of turning this study into a mere branch of archaeology or anthropology, for the whole book is shot through and through with the implications of the Incarnation in a society which transcends time; for the Christian the past is never dead. Detailed schemes of study, drawn up by Mr Mulloy, are provided in an appendix. One question arises here. It was the fallacy of the Enlightenment to suppose that ideas would penetrate society purely by literary dissemination, for in fact ideas come alive in society when embodied in drama, social customs and even children's games. Will the courses suggested here be accompanied by *participation* in any form, of the culture studied? The implication of all Mr Dawson's own suggestions is that to sing in the B Minor Mass, as well as to study it, is to know something of the Christian society.

The sense of depth in time is increasingly hard to convey to a generation under the tyranny of the ephemeral. For the journalist of the popular press, yesterday is already unimportant. The child returning from a mass expedition to the Louvre with the comment, 'We saw a lot of old photos', could well be speaking on behalf of many students confronted with scattered remains of

Christian culture. To most of the world, Moscow and New York are the two cities of destiny or doomsday; Christians appear to be looking at Jerusalem and Rome, a lot of old photos. To Christians, Jerusalem is both a familiar dwelling-place and the longed-for goal of a pilgrimage. Mr Dawson is as much aware of Moscow and New York as he is of Jerusalem and Rome; the second half of his book contained both concrete suggestions for a radically new kind of course for students and an interpretation which is a sustained meditation on the Second Advent.

MARGARET WILEMAN

THE EARLY H. G. WELLS: a study of the scientific romances, by Bernard Bergonzi; Manchester University Press; 21s.

The popular image of H. G. Wells is that of a prophet and propagandist of scientific utopias, utopias brought into being and maintained by the use of science and governed by an élite of scientists and engineers. This is largely true of his later writings, but, although Wells himself towards the end of his life was inclined to impose it also on his earlier works, to make them out to have been more didactic than they actually were, Mr Bergonzi in this study of them shows that this is not an accurate assessment. To begin with, his use of science is imaginative rather than logical, a distinction which is made clear by comparing Wells with Jules Verne. They were often taken to make a similar use of scientific ideas, but each was in fact aware of their difference. Mr Bergonzi quotes from an amusing interview in which Verne pointed this out, 'It occurs to me that his stories do not repose on very scientific bases . . . I make use of physics. He invents', (p. 157), a verdict endorsed by Wells in 1933 in a preface to a collected edition of the romances. Although it was not a veneer disguising magic or making it possible for an age captured by scientific method to accept a fairy-tale, it was a poetic rather than a scientific use. But secondly, in these early works there is an ambiguity towards the scientist and his results; on the one hand, the Time-Traveller is a 'normal' scientist, though the utopia which he thinks he has reached turns out to be decadent and horrific; on the other, the central figure is more often an 'abnormal' scientist, an almost demonic figure, recalling, as Mr Bergonzi points out, the alchemists and Dr Faustus rather than Huxley and Wells' teachers at the Royal College of Science. It was not until the early 1900's that Wells, having exorcized this figure from his imagination and given his allegiance to Fabian Socialism, turned into the propagandist figure whom we now recognize.

Mr Bergonzi succeeds admirably in showing how certain *fin-de-siècle* themes were transposed in Wells' early writings, and how these writings were genuinely of the creative imagination, offering, in addition to a gripping story, a level of symbolic writing capable of interpretation in more than one way. The