

Book Reviews

Creation and Redemption: A Study in Pauline Theology: by JOHN G. GIBBS. E. J. Brill, Leiden, 1971. Pp. 194. Price 48 guilders.

A surprising number of recent theological trends converge on the cosmic Christ. Teilhard's sweeping vision of the evolving universe becomes a Christian vision only because he can identify its 'omega-point' (the personal centre of convergence which his 'physics and metaphysics of evolution' leads him to postulate) with the cosmic Christ of Paul and John. Raymond Panikkar too finds the cosmic Christ, present as the 'unknown Christ' at the heart of every religious endeavour, as the one centre of genuine religious encounter. And, as a less abstruse level, every theology of development or revolution supposes that unity of creation and redemption on which the cosmic Christology of Paul is based.

But the exegetical spadework for these aspiring new theological skyscrapers, oddly enough, still remains to be done. For if the new theology is enthusiastic about the cosmic Christ, present-day Pauline exegesis is not. This may be due to the overwhelming influence of the existential interpretation of Bultmann (whose pages on Paul are surely the best part of his *Theology of the New Testament*, and indeed, arguably, some of the best pages on Paul ever written), which dismisses the Pauline and post-Pauline texts which speak about the cosmic role of Christ as so many gnostic intrusions that need to be radically demythologized. Whatever be the reason, the fact remains that Gibb's book on creation and redemption in Paul is the first serious exegetical study on Paul's cosmic Christology to appear for a long time.

Gibbs' *Creation and Redemption* is, then, a timely book. It is also a solidly competent one. The book began as a doctoral dissertation, presented at Princeton in 1966, and was then revised for publication four years later, in the light of the literature which had since appeared. In spite of the seven years which have elapsed since it was written, the book is by no means dated; and it has many of the more admirable qualities of its somewhat underrated genre. It is orderly, well-documented, seriously argued and provided with generous bibliographies and useful indices of biblical and extra-canonical texts. But it tends too (as dissertations do) to be a trifle ponderous and over-systematized, and is at times curiously obscure—not with the teutonic obscurity which comes from involved thought or syntax, but with an 'anglo-saxon' opacity, which is the result, one surmises, of an over-terse style. Connectives (particles and sentences) are freely omitted, so that in places almost every second sentence seems a *non sequitur*!

With all this, the book begins with an admirably clear statement of its objectives (ch. I). It sets out to examine the relation between creation and redemption (and so not creation alone, nor redemption

alone; but the relation between them) in the theology of Paul. And the *Forschungsbericht* which follows (ch. II) reports what works on Paul since Ferdinand Christian Bauer (whose 'Tübingen School' is 'the major watershed in New Testament interpretation since the Reformation') have said on just this one point. The survey, though unavoidably sketchy, is adequate and useful. The long list of authors cited, each with his own methodological approach to the study of Paul, are conveniently divided into four groups—according as they follow the *historical method*, which studies Paul's theology as a moment in the history of early Christian thought; the *thematic method* which attempts to define the main theological themes of Paul's letters; the *central-motif* method which tries to deduce the whole of Paul's thought from a single central motif; and the *justification-by-faith* method, which makes this the central motif of Pauline theology.

This rapid run-through of the bewildering variety of ways in which Paul has been approached is both a salutary reminder of the relativity of our own perspective on Paul, and brings several interesting points to light. It shows, for one thing, that the importance we give to creation and redemption in Paul's thought will depend on our approach to him. It seems that 'the closer one's frame of reference for interpreting New Testament theology is related to the sovereign activity of God in Christ, or to the concept of Christ's lordship, the more probable it is that the theme of creation and redemption will be reported as an important element in Paul's theology'; while conversely, 'too great emphasis on problems of sin and individual salvation may lead to eclipse or denial of other prominent motifs such as that of the relation between creation and redemption' (p. 19). What emerges too is that no serious attempt has as yet been made to interpret Paul from the central motif of the lordship of Christ (p. 25); so that, inevitably, 'there has been little or no affirmation of cosmic Christology as a theme of importance in Paul's thought' (p. 31).

It is this lacuna which Gibbs intends to fill. His approach to his subject is intensive rather than exhaustive: for he does not examine all the material available but concentrates on the six texts of the Pauline corpus in which the relation between creation and redemption is treated explicitly. These six texts are taken up in the order of their tradition history. Gibbs starts off with two (Rom. 8:19-23, 38-39; Rom. 5:12-21) which are undoubtedly Pauline (ch. III); goes on to two (1 Cor. 8:6; Phil. 2:6-11) which are probably pre-Pauline traditional formulae taken up by Paul (ch. IV); and concludes with two texts (Col. 1:15-20; Eph. 1:3-14) which represent traditional material in possibly post-Pauline letters (ch. V).

Each of these texts is examined at length, not indeed exhaustively, but only to determine what it has to tell us about the relation between creation and redemption in Paul. The context of Rom. 8:19-23, 38-39 and the key words of the text (*ktisis*, *mataiotés*, *elpis*) show this to be a 'cosmic liturgy' which celebrates the future glory of Christians (now suffering with Christ but destined to be glorified with him) and of creation (subject indeed to 'futility' but not without 'hope' as it waits in eschatological tension for the liberation it will enjoy when the

'sons of God' are fully redeemed). And both, the glory of the cosmos and of the Church, are guaranteed by the unique and universal lordship of Christ, who so effectively dominates the powers of evil, that nothing can separate us from the love of God made visible in him. The Adam-Christ typology of Rom. 5:12-21 too (which, Gibbs believes, derives from the Adam-myth of Genesis as elaborated in the apocrypha of later Judaism, rather than from the gnostic *Urmensch* or the adamic speculations of Philo) implies an inner, 'ontological' connection between Christ and Adam (created in the likeness of Christ), so that the creation of man is, through Christ, intrinsically related to his redemption.

So too a careful study of the two *dia* propositions of 1 Cor. 8:6 and the exegesis of its pregnant *kyrios* and *gnōsis* shows that we have here a pre-Pauline confession, deriving from late Jewish Wisdom literature rather than from gentile Hellenism, which expressly describes creation and redemption as dual functions of the lordship of Christ, who is explicitly designated as *kyrios* and identified as such by the pre-existence implied in the two *dia* clauses. And the cosmic (*epouranios, epigeios, kaichthonios*) and Christological (*morphē theou, harpagmos, morphē doulou, heauton kenoun*) terminology of Phil. 2:6-11 identifies it as a pre-Pauline hymn which proclaims the redemptive lordship of Christ, who, because he integrates himself wholly into the cosmos ('taking the form of a servant') and is exalted as such, is the one through whom creation is taken up into the glory of God.

The possibly pre-Pauline Christ-hymn of Col. 1:15-20 again affirms the lordship of Christ over creation and over the Church, and gives a series of titles (*eikōn, prōtotokos, archē, kephalē, plērōma*) each of which throws new light on his relation to creation and redemption. For, 'Christ's revelatory work is seen in the *eikōn*; his ontological work as the ground of being is evident in *prōtotokos pasēs ktiseōs* . . . ; his sovereign work is seen in the *archē* of 1:18; and his redemptive work stands out . . . specially in the titles *kephalē* and *plērōma*' (p. 108). And the doxology of Eph. 1:3-14, which opens what is in fact a treatise on 'the purpose of God through Christ in his Church' (p. 115), shows how God's redemptive plan for the universe (*mysterion*), which was at work in Christ before creation, will bring all things to fulfilment (*anakephalaioun*) in the same Christ as Lord. So 'there is no opposition between creation and the redemptive purpose, no subordination of creation to a redeemed or 'spiritual' existence, but the interaction between creation and redemption 'in him' who is 'our Lord Jesus Christ' (p. 126).

All six passages thus echo the same theme: it is the lordship of Christ over cosmos and Church which, in Paul, serves to link creation to redemption. Thus, 'one does not find in Pauline epistles a one-way movement of thought from creation to redemption or from redemption to creation, for the link between creation and God's redemptive purpose is provided in Christ's lordship. It is not the case that Pauline thought started with a phenomenological survey of this world in order to relate the creation to God's redemptive purpose, nor did Paul's thought begin with introspective investigation of the subjective experience of one's personal redemption and then attempt to "universalize"

this inner experience, nor did Paul deduce cosmic Christology from the Church's experience of redemption. The link between creation and redemption had been given, rather, in the lordship of Jesus the Messiah, and was already being confessed in the Church before Paul. . .' (p. 134). Paul's theology is thus rooted not in an existentialist anthropology, nor in a gnostic cosmology, but in a Christology based on Paul's own personal encounter with, and the early Christian preaching of, Christ the Lord.

The thesis which emerges from his analysis of these six passages is explicated by Gibbs, with the help of other Pauline texts, in the last chapter (ch. VI) of his book. Here he gives us a 'synthetic sketch' of the relation between creation and redemption in Paul, in four interlocking propositions: (1) that creation is presupposed by redemption, in the sense that by creating the world God prepared the place where redemption was to occur; (2) that redemption includes creation, because God 'will not let creation go'; (3) that creation is beset with evil, which, since it is not just anthropocentric but cosmic, cannot be resisted by man alone but needs the redemptive work of Christ; and (4) that creation is linked to redemption by the fact that Christ is lord over both—a truth which Paul learnt from both tradition (the early Christian kerygma) and experience (his Damascus encounter), and which he developed through Christological reflection as well as through pragmatic (paranetic) use.

These few pages of synthesis, among the most interesting in the book, are followed by an all too brief indication of the possible relevance of Paul's cosmic Christology for modern (North American) man, plagued as he is with an ecological crisis, with hardened secularism and with counter-cultures that react violently against the violence of the *status quo*. It is Paul's cosmic Christ, Gibbs believes, which alone can provide modern man, recklessly despoiling nature, with the awareness that he is related to the cosmos at the very depth of his being, and so ineluctably responsible for it. It is Paul's way of linking creation to redemption through the lordship of Christ that shows man today how he can reach God even in the waste-land of his secular world—not indeed through a *theologia naturalis* that tries to jump 'from secular questions to sacred answers', but through a theology which, like Paul's, would 'explicitate Christ's lordship not from but *to* nature and *to* us within creation' (p. 158). And it is only the conviction of the universal lordship of Christ that will allow us to react against the organized violence of the *status quo* effectively and redemptively, without our succumbing to the very evils we are trying to cure: for 'without the lordship of Christ in the creation as well as in the confines of the pietistic soul, there will be nothing to prevent us from becoming as violent, hopeless and unhuman as the *status quo* against which we certainly must contend, and nothing to enable our most energetic challenge to be anything more than a minor 'counter-culture' of some kind that is inevitably formed too much in the image of that against which it reacts' (p. 160).

The heart of Gibb's book is obviously its central exegetical section (chs. III-V), and this is both the book's strength and its weakness.

The six passages studied here are among the thorniest in Paul, but Gibbs moves among them confidently, in good control of his material. His command of the relevant literature is impressive; his vocabulary studies (particularly for Colossians and Ephesians) admirable; the options he makes (a Jewish origin for the Adam-Christ typology, a late Jewish wisdom background for 1 Cor. 8:6, wisdom literature rather than gnostic mythology as the conceptual world of the Christ hymn of Colossians) are, on the whole, sound. Yet his exegesis leaves us unsatisfied—perhaps because it is too meagre and too involved. Gibbs' exegetical arguments can be tortuous to the point of total obscurity. In discussing the 'cosmic liturgy' of Rom. 8:19-23, for instance, he tells us: 'If Christ is in you (8:10) this means that "the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead" and thereby made him "Lord" (1:4), "dwells in you" (8:11). Indebtedness to the Spirit, accordingly, implies indebtedness to the Lord. The sovereignty of the Spirit among those "who have the first fruits of the Spirit" (8:23) points to "the revealing of the sons of God", for which all creation waits (8:19) and against which nothing in all creation can prevail (8:38-38), for if God is for us in Christ Jesus our Lord, who is against us (8:31, 39)? The rule of the Spirit, which is confined to the sphere of humanity, is unthinkable apart from the rule of the Lord in all creation' (p. 36). This is surely not the most clear and cogent way of arguing a point! And while not everything in it is quite as bad as this, Gibbs' book is never easy reading, and sometimes quite impossible.

And then too, there is too little first hand analysis of texts, and what there is pays insufficient attention to the context, the structure, and the exegetical implications of the form of the texts studied. We miss a rigorous and consistent methodology which would tackle each passage systematically, moving from the context to the structure, form, syntax, vocabulary and religious-historical background of the text. Instead we have extended discussions on each of the six passages studied, centred round selected questions deemed relevant, in which Gibbs' own voice is almost drowned out in the mass of opinions and counter-opinions cited. The over-all impression the book leaves—and the arrangement of its material contributes to this, for in every section the conclusion prefaces the exegesis on which it is supposedly based—is that Gibbs is straining to prove a thesis, rather than drawing out the conclusions of a critical study of his texts.

With all this, Gibbs' book is an impressive and challenging one. It breaks new ground in restoring a cosmic dimension to Paul's authentic thought, and does this with solid competence, just when it is most needed. Even if its thesis is somewhat one-sidedly argued and does not wholly convince, the book is well worth the effort its reading requires. It is a well-documented study of a much neglected aspect of Paul's thought, and, as such, may compel us to take a new look at some of our cherished assumptions about Pauline theology, and will certainly give us new insights into the great cosmic texts of Paul's letters.

De Nobili College
Poona

GEORGE M. SOARES-PRABHU, S. J.

Morality, Law and Grace: by J. N. D. ANDERSON. London, Tyndale Press, 1972. Pp. 128. Price 50 p.

Progress: A Christian Doctrine? by A. G. B. WOOLLARD. London, S.P.C.K., 1972. Pp. 93. Price £1.

The first book is by a leading academic lawyer who is also a leading evangelical churchman in England. As might be expected the best chapters are the two central ones on morality and law. The first of these begins with an interesting brief discussion of natural law. It then goes on to consider the enforcement of morals in society. Is it the business of law to try to control what responsible adults do in private? The matter came to the fore in England some years back with an official report on homosexuality and prostitution. The report took the view that it was not the function of the law to intervene in the private lives of citizens. This was challenged by a prominent judge. Part of what holds a society together is a shared morality; the state has the right to safeguard its ideological integrity. These are issues which require discussion in any society.

The second chapter on *Morality and Law* raises the question of an unjust society. May violence be used to overthrow an unjust or tyrannical government? Anderson comes to the conclusion, reluctantly but quite clearly, that it may. This cautious approach, taking account of the evil inherent in violence, is a good deal more impressive than the rather facile advocacy of violence one sometimes reads. And it is the only one that is likely to carry the support of the main body of Christians. For, apart from any other consideration, there is a tradition of non-violence going back to at least the end of the second century and which finds strong support in the Gospels. In 1965 the British Council of Churches advocated military intervention against the white racist regime in Rhodesia and the Archbishop of Canterbury gave vigorous personal support. The Government refused. I have been wondering which side Anderson took. I think he must have supported military action for it had precisely the characteristics that he advocates: a combination of boldness, restraint and modest expectations.

The chapter on the Permissive Society is disappointing; the author does not face the kind of question that those for whom the book is intended really want to ask. Does the introduction of safe methods of contraception mean that we are in a totally different situation as regards sexual conduct from any previous generation? Does the rule 'chastity before marriage and fidelity within it' still hold? What are the precise reasons for maintaining it? Anderson is authoritarian, although in an attractive way. But the answers we want are specific and rational. They need to be set out with more clarity and force than are found here—or in most other books for that matter—if the traditional position is to be maintained. Most people in the world feel that it should be but find it hard to say just why.

The book is prefaced by a chapter on Moral Responsibility. It might seem rash for a lawyer to embark on this difficult topic. But Anderson is well aware that particular problems cannot be treated in isolation from larger issues. There are loose patches, for instance the

reference to Heidegger and to contemporary secular humanists. But the chapter is well done and well worth reading.

My main criticism of the book is that there is another large issue which the author does not squarely face: in what way is the Bible to be used as a source of Christian ethics? To some extent he does handle it in the chapter on Morality and Grace. What he displays is too simplistic a view of the relation between the will of God and the text of the Bible. And this carries with it a particular view of Christian ethics. The extensive discussion that would be needed to establish this view—if it could be established—is not given. Nevertheless the book provides a useful discussion of some important current topics. And it is written with clarity and grace.

The second book is a much more serious work of theology. It is a study of the social thought of American Protestantism during the present century. This, I think, is the value of the book rather than as a discussion of the idea of progress round which it is woven. There are, after all, more erudite treatments of this theme available, for instance that by John Baillie.

He begins with a brief account of the Social Gospel and goes on to some criticisms of it. Perhaps the account is too brief. For it needs to be remembered that with all its limitations the Social Gospel turned American Protestantism permanently to a serious concern with social issues.

There follows a chapter on Reinhold Niebuhr. The author brings out his immense impact. This is well done, although it could, perhaps, have been made more lucid. Three important criticisms follow. These are essentially different. But because of the standpoint from which the book is written the first two are not shortly distinguished. The first is that Niebuhr, despite his concern for Christian social action, and despite his own active involvement in politics, is in the main pessimistic about the future. His realism does not allow him sufficient room to affirm God's redemptive action working beyond individual lives. The second criticism is that Niebuhr does not take nature sufficiently seriously. Nature has no independent value but simply provides the stage on which the drama of man's history is played out. The third criticism is that Niebuhr is too much wedded to specifically American political ideas, for instance the emphasis on freedom rather than on equality. If there must be a tension between the two, as Niebuhr affirms, do not most of us now feel that it is equality that is the more significant? But I am not sure that the criticism is just. I remember Niebuhr laughing at the naïvete of Chester Bowles on his appointment as Ambassador to India. He had supposed that the American message of liberty and democracy was bound to awaken a response in India.

He devotes a chapter to Secular Theology, after which comes a long critique. This is proper in a recent book. Yet Secular Theology must surely have had the shortest run of all prominent theological presentations.

The critique of Secular Theology includes a chapter on Process Theology which represents the author's own standpoint. Throughout the book he makes a number of observations on the need of theology

for metaphysics. While this is partly true I think the relationship is more complex than the author imagines. Critical metaphysics must precede theology. We use concepts such as cause or time or history or spirit and a host of others which have been given centuries of philosophical discussion and still, in many cases, require further clarification. But Woollard by metaphysics is not thinking primarily of this. He is thinking of a synoptic view of the world in which Christianity can find a place. But surely to this kind of metaphysics theology is itself an important contributor—indeed the most important if admitted at all. We do need a synoptic view of the world. But what this means is that we need a further development of Christian theism. In such an enterprise there may will be important insights to be drawn from Process Philosophy. This, however, is something different from making it the basis of our theology. Besides what I take to be a fundamental misunderstanding of the relation between philosophy and theology there is a further point which should at least counsel caution: outside the United State the number of professional philosophers who believe in process philosophy is minute.

As mentioned above, the value of the book lies in its survey of Christian social thought in our century. I myself would have done it simply in three places: Social Gospel, Christian Realism and Christian Humanism. If the latter is our present position we must not forget Niebuhr's devastating criticism of the Social Gospel. Nor must we lose his sober realism or his pragmatism. But I agree with Woollard that the note of Christian hope is muted. We may yet hope in this world to build a society of brotherhood and justice. But we need to mobilize all our spiritual resources just because, Niebuhr so well knew, there are powers and structures of evil in society.

W. S. RHODES

Serampore College

The Troubled Days of Francis Garcia S. J., Archbishop of Cranganore, 1641-59: by Joseph Thekedathu, S.D.B. Rome, Gregorian University 1972 (Analecta Gregoriana, Vol. 187). Pp. 167. Price 4,500 Lira.

The Archdeacon of All-India: by Jacob Kollaparambil. Kottayam 1972 (Syrian Church Series, ed. Jacob Vellian, Vol. V). Pp. 297. Price Rs. 20.

Christianity in India: A History in Ecumenical Perspective: edited by H. C. Perumalil, C.M.I. and E. R. Hambye, S. J. Prakasam Publications, Alleppey 1972. Pp. 355. Price Rs. 15.

What happens when an austere upright but unimaginatively bureaucratic missionary tries to apply the norms of the Western Church amongst Christians of a totally alien culture, tradition and language, resolutely led by an unscrupulous but popular local firebrand with all the weight of outraged susceptibilities and a fiercely-guarded minority identity on his side? The pattern is not unfamiliar in the history of mission. When the context was a headlong collision between the Tridentine Catholic Church of the Counter-reformation, and the

St Thomas community of Kerala with its rich and treasured centuries-old Oriental Orthodox tradition, it is not surprising that the explosion was dramatic and the fall-out long-lasting. The brief marriage of convenience between the Latin Catholic hierarchy and the St Thomas Christians moved towards its eventual divorce with a tragic inevitability during the episcopate of Francis Garcia; and the 'Coonen Cross' episode, when it came in 1653, left a legacy of bitterness on both sides. Admittedly, as Fr Thekedathu makes clear, the Coonen Cross oath was a personal rejection of Garcia and the Jesuits, not a repudiation of Papal authority or the allegiance of the St Thomas Christians to Rome; indeed, the rebels claimed to be defending the Pope against his own (Jesuit) enemies! In practice no such distinction was possible, and the whole unhappy episode is rightly seen as a point of no return. There had been previous confrontations between the Latin and the Orthodox traditions—the penalty the Church still pays for Constantine's decision to shift the Imperial capital of the Roman Empire to Byzantium in 330 and the emergence of the two great 'families' of Eastern and Western Christendom—but this was the first time the battle had been fought out on Indian soil.

Who was to blame? The question is meaningless, as Fr Thekedathu makes apparent. Hitherto the story has been told largely from one side or the other; fierce polemics have been waged with skilfully selected ammunition by the successors of the various parties involved. Tendentious reports and forced testimonies, loaded statements and twisted interpretations—and a good many downright untruths—are readily available in the Jesuit, Carmelite, Portuguese and Propaganda archives; and although there is less documentary evidence from the St Thomas community there is enough to make it apparent that few contemporary statements can be taken quite at face value. Fr Thekedathu's book is an admirably objective examination of the period, with all the painstaking research and documentation that one would expect of a thesis presented to the Gregorian University. His conclusion is that while Garcia was not guilty of most of the charges levelled at him by his enemies (ignorance, neglect, harshness, meanness), he was indeed guilty of the far more disastrous failings of inflexibility and legalism. He saw the issue between himself and Archdeacon Thomas Parampil as a cut-and-dried question of 'rights' and 'duties' which could be resolved in terms of existing Western Canon Law. He entirely lacked the capacity to see in the apparent intransigence of the Archdeacon a deeply-felt commitment, not just to the defence of his own personal 'rights' and position, but to the whole socio-ecclesiastical culture and tradition of which he was the more or less hereditary guardian. That Thomas frequently acted dishonestly and unscrupulously cannot be denied—if we look at the situation through Garcia's eyes; but equally, Garcia's own loyalty to the Society of Jesus laid him open to the charge of partisanship, and his conviction that he was bound to defend his jurisdiction, entrusted to him by the Holy See, 'even at the cost of his life', suggests the triumph of law over Gospel.

One of the great merits of Fr Thekedathu's very readable book is the way in which the author weaves his account of the incredibly varied and complex tapestry of politics, ecclesiastical and secular, on the

West Coast in the 17th Century. Quite apart from the epic struggle between the Archdeacon, upholding the 'national honour' (sic) and customs of his Church, and Garcia and his supporters, the Catholic cause was itself weakened by tensions between Rome and the Portuguese authorities in Lisbon, the need of the Viceroy in Goa to enlist the help of the St Thomas Christians against the rising Dutch menace, the intricate squabbles between the kings of Cochin, Kaduthuruthy and Calicut and their relationship with the Portuguese, the jealousy of Dominicans and Carmelites against the Jesuits for their privileged position in the Serras, the tortuous negotiations between Rome and the Eastern Church leaders in Alexandria, Antioch and Babylon, and the difficulty of determining (in an age of slow communications) who was actually in communion with whom. Reports and Commissions of Enquiry took months to make the slow journey backwards and forwards to Europe. In the background lurks the tragi-comic and egregious figure of Mar Atallah, the Jacobite Archbishop indefatigably looking for a church to govern. It is this rich interaction of forces, interests and influences which is the real groundwork of 'Church History', rather than the facile over-simplifications of so many textbooks on the period. If Fr Thekedathu has managed to convey to his readers the infinite complexity beneath the surface of an apparently straightforward historical episode, then he has done something significant for the historiography of the Indian Church.

Much of the tension between the Catholics and the St Thomas Christians in the 16th and 17th centuries was due to ignorance among the former about the history and status of the latter. Dr Kollaparambil's detailed study of the ancient office of the Archdiaconate of All-India helps to fill in many of the gaps, and goes far to explain what precisely were the 'rights and privileges' claimed by such men as George of the Cross and Thomas Parampil. Dr Kollaparambil gives an exhaustive survey of the development of the office of Archdeacon both in the Western and Eastern churches, and goes on to deduce the significance of this office in the Chaldean rite. Whether or not one is prepared to follow the author in all his assumptions, it is certainly true that by the time the Portuguese arrived in India, the Archdeacon was the semi-hereditary leader and defender of the St Thomas Community. In the absence of a Patriarch he acted virtually as supreme head of the Church, with sweeping powers of jurisdiction, government and executive action. Nor was his office purely ecclesiastical; he was in effect the recognised leader of a vigorous socio-cultural unit within Indian society, with its own traditions, customs, art, music and way of life. As such, he had the privilege of investing the King of Cochin with a gold Cross (as 'Protector of the Christians') and received a gold ring from the King at his own investiture. He had a body-guard of priests and Christian soldiers, took his meals apart from the common people, wore the episcopal *ma'pra* (but on his shoulders instead of over the head), and was permitted to consecrate altars. At his funeral he had the posthumous satisfaction of seeing the bishop walk before his coffin (at the death of a bishop, the roles were reversed). It is really not surprising that the Latin prelates found all this a trifle hard to swallow; but it is equally to be expected that in the Portuguese

period successive Archdeacons were not prepared to give up their position without a struggle. Dr Kollaparambil's book is a mine of fascinating information, and brings together a large number of inaccessible sources. Readers should perhaps be warned that if they are to follow the author into the further recesses of his argument, they will need a working knowledge of Latin, Syriac, German and Portuguese.

Both the books mentioned above are models of scholarly accuracy. When we turn to *Christianity in India* we are in for a disappointment. It is admittedly addressed to a very different and more popular audience; but this in itself makes it absolutely inexcusable that such a book should have been allowed to appear in public with misprints, errors, typographical muddles, spelling mistakes and sentences of apparent gibberish scattered with profusion on almost every page. One wonders whether anyone ever read the proofs at all? Confusion is confounded by the fact that obviously several of the contributors are very far from being at ease in the English language: surely in such circumstances some discreet editing would have been in order?

The aim of the book, at least according to Fr Hambye's 'Introduction', is commendable. It is subtitled *A History in Ecumenical Perspective*, and its claim to be ecumenical is justified in so far as it brings together Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant scholars in a joint venture. How far it can be said to have any 'perspective' readers must judge for themselves. The editors aimed to provide a conspectus of the history of the Christian presence in India which would bring together the fruits of much detailed local and denominational research, and relate it to the social and cultural background of the sub-continent in the past 2,000 years. Fr Hambye rightly urges that Christian historiography in India must move out from its denominational moorings (often an excuse for *apologia* or a shrill assertion of inflated claims—a sort of whistling in the dark to keep one's courage up) and begin to present a more objective and mature assessment of the dynamics of the Indian Christian community in all its complexity, against the equally variegated pattern of the Indian past and present. The urge to produce such an assessment is, as at least two of the contributors point out, itself a historical symptom of the Christian community's growing self-awareness as *one* community, and an aspect of the continuing Christian quest for identity within the context of Indian life and culture. It is an altogether healthy sign that a distinguished group of scholars should have come together from their respective backgrounds to seek a common tradition and a common history, related indeed to the on-going life of the Universal Church, profoundly affected by movements and attitudes in other parts of the world, yet also autonomous and possessing an inner dynamic and creativity of its own. In the words of Dr T. V. Philip:

The Indian church has a history and a tradition of its own. This understanding of the unity of history is essential to maintain the integrity and wholeness of the Indian Church. Church History is not simply a study of the church as a religious institution isolated from its world around. It is the history of a people's corporate response to the challenges of the Gospel

and their living and growing in constant dialogue with the religious and cultural situations in India (p. 300).

Unfortunately, maybe due to haste and geographical separation, the book falls far short of the goal. Perhaps a book like this must first 'happen' in the minds of a group of scholars living and working in close dialogue, questioning, arguing and testing hypotheses together. Undoubtedly the bibliographies and references reflect an impressive substratum of scholarship, and the book does provide a useful one-volume survey of events, persons and trends. Rightly, differences of interpretation are allowed to stand (cf. for example the very different estimates of Gregory XVI's Brief *Multa Praeclara* of 1838; for Fr Dominic a matter of 'zeal and vision', for Dr Moraes an 'ill-advised' step by a Pontiff acting with 'high dudgeon and . . . indiscretion'). There are enormous gaps, especially in the modern period where one feels that the contributors were overtaken by the sheer weight of names and events. The most disappointing sections are those which deal with the St Thomas Christians (the origin and development of the Mar Thoma Church receives very scant treatment). At the other end of the spectrum, little is said about Protestant activity in the North-east, despite the enormous cultural and political issues which this work has raised. V. Solomon's work in the Nicobar Islands is ignored, which is curious in view of Dr T. V. Philip's emphasis on indigenous mission: but then he is reticent about Bishop Azariah also. Surely Dornakal Cathedral might have received a passing mention, to set against the excessive Westernisation (or Gothicisation?) which he deplures. Professional historians will relish the splendidly pugnacious contribution of Dr Moraes, with his skilfully conducted rearguard action in defence of the *Padroado* against the *Propaganda Fide*. It is one of the liveliest chapters in the book; the author grinds his axe with gusto and perversity, pursuing his quarry into the footnotes, in contrast to some of the rather colourless narrative of his colleagues. But undoubtedly the most distinguished and resonant chapter is that by Dr Philip. It is he who asks the questions and raises the issues which give depth to what has gone before, and indicates the lines along which further study must proceed. History, he reminds us, is 'participation'; and in India as in every land, the history of the Church must in the last analysis be seen as a divine movement within the *saeculum*, 'creating conditions for a better human life'. This is precisely the 'perspective' which the other contributors have fumbled at or missed.

Bishop's College,
Calcutta

I. D. L. CLARK

The Christian Priest Today: by MICHAEL RAMSEY. S.P.C.K., 1972. Pp. 100. Price 80 p.

Your reviewer must begin with an apology for not having written his notice of the Archbishop of Canterbury's book a year ago. His tardiness is due simply to negligence and not to any lack of appreciation of this outstanding paperback, which indeed is pure gold. Let the Archbishop speak for himself regarding the purpose and scope of his book.

It is written for those who are in the ordained ministry, those who are preparing for it and those who are ready to think about its inner meaning. It is written with awareness of the widespread questionings about the priesthood which are prominent today. . . . Most of the chapters are charges given before the ordinations at Canterbury in recent years, while some are addresses given at other times to ordinands or to clergy'. One other thing: while many books are written these days about the work of a priest, this is in the main concerned not with what he *does* but what he *is*.

This being so, we must not expect to find in these pages practical or technical instructions about how the clergy are to discharge their duties in the contemporary situation, but as the Archbishop speaks he does explicitly take into account the changing role of the Christian minister in the affluent and technologically advanced society of the Western world today. If evidence were needed of his awareness of modern developments in the recruitment and deployment of the ministry, these words from the Introductory chapter should be sufficient: 'Most of my hearers were concerned with the parochial ministry and its tasks, but if there is an inward essence of priesthood it belongs no less to chaplaincies in industry and the universities and to those "auxiliary" ministries whose role is increasing. I regard the contemporary development of a priesthood which combines a ministry of word and sacrament in a secular profession not as a modern fad but as a recovery of something indubitably apostolic and primitive'.

This is certainly a book to be bought, read and read again. It should also be made available by translation to the wider circle of Indian pastors.

*Bishop's College,
Calcutta*

R. W. BRYAN

Growing into Union: by C. O. BUCHANAN, E. L. MASOALL, J. I. PACKER AND THE BISHOP OF WILLESDEN. S.P.C.K., 1970. Pp. 221. Price 90 p.

The Renewal and Unity of the Church in England: by JOHN WENHAM. S.P.C.K., 1972. Pp. 69. Price 80 p.

Unity: The Next Step: edited by PETER MORGAN. S.P.C.K., 1972. Pp. 91. Price 60 p.

The British Churches Turn to the Future: by DAVID L. EDWARDS. S.C.M., 1973. Pp. 90. Price 50 p.

Christian Unity in India. A Report. C.L.S., 1972. Pp. 50. Price Rs 3.

The last of this batch of volumes on Christian unity may conveniently be dealt with first, as all the others refer to the situation in England or in the United Kingdom as a whole. It is the report of the National Faith and Order Conference held at Nasrapur, near Poona, August 9th to 16th, 1972. There were 9 delegates appointed by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India, 7 by the Syrian Orthodox Church and 11 by the N.C.C. of India. In addition there was one observer each from the W.C.C. and the appropriate Secretariat of the Vatican. This was the first such meeting held at the national level by the three bodies

concerned, though they had behind them the results of two years study in regional conferences. Obviously the work is only in its early stages and so it is not surprising that the report itself, consisting mainly of agreed statements on four main subjects, occupies only 16 pages. The rest of the booklet is given to three of the addresses given and to a meditation. It is not a book for the general reader, even among church members, but is important as a work of reference and for those who take a lively interest or active part in the movement towards unity.

Growing into Union, good value for money by sheer weight, deserves a place on the library shelves or in the archives, but is no longer of living interest. In 1969, at the height of the debate about the Anglican-Methodist negotiations in England, the Archbishop of Canterbury said, 'Let the dissentients tell us what their scheme is'. This is the answer given by four of the leading (Anglican) dissidents. It was roundly condemned by the Methodist leaders, who it seems were not consulted, and it received little favourable comment, and still less support, among Anglicans.

John Wenham's slim volume at the same price, but less than a quarter the length, breathes so little real enthusiasm for union that it is not likely to have much beneficent influence of the unity movement in England. It is significant that he has warm praise for *Growing into Union*.

The other two booklets are timely and excellent.

The eight contributors to *Unity: The Next Step* include two bishops who formerly served in India—Leslie Brown, who worked with the CSI before he became Archbishop of Uganda and is now Bishop of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich, and W. Q. Lash formerly Bishop of Bombay. They represent a group of 19 men who began meeting when it became increasingly likely that the Church of England was not going to pass the Anglican-Methodist reunion scheme, and the common statement with which the book is prefaced is signed by them all. It is a clear and impartial assessment of the situation following the rejection of the scheme on May 3rd, 1972, followed by useful suggestions about what should be done now to make a fresh start towards reunion. The writers are rightly convinced that reunion, and not either federation or intercommunion, should be the goal of the churches. The first move has already been made when the United Reformed Church (formed by a coming together of the Congregationalists and Presbyterians on October 10th, 1972) recently issued invitations to the other churches in England to participate in talks about union. The book's insistence that the next approach should be multilateral instead of bilateral is therefore already accepted. Of their other suggestions the only one there is space to mention here is that 'the work of unity must go forward both at the local and the national level. A centrally planned multilateral scheme must be supported and stimulated by local initiatives and should itself encourage and enable them'. Everyone who either has direct knowledge of the English scene or reads English church papers regularly will know that ecumenical co-operation is increasing rapidly in England. Nor is it confined to joint efforts in social service; it extends to joint common worship also.

The British Churches Turn to the Future is the pick of the bunch. It is written by one man, David Edwards, and it is extremely well written. Though it is a report of a conference held in England and attended only by delegates from the United Kingdom it is wider in its themes and less local in its application than the other books reviewed here. It is an account of the Church Leaders' Conference held at Selly Oak, Birmingham, in September 1972 when 500 leading members of the churches in Britain and Ireland assembled 'not to legislate, pass resolutions and agree messages, but to join together in considering in depth, with a minimum of formality, the crises which Christianity faces today'.

Things did not go smoothly. At the outset there was a row about procedure, as a result of which the programme was radically revised. Deep divisions became apparent and were emphasized. Yet at the end Dr Kenneth Greet, Secretary of the Methodist Conference, declared 'I came here believing church union to be right; I go away believing it to be inevitable', and the Archbishop of Canterbury said it was the only large conference he had ever really enjoyed. In his assessment of the meeting Dr Ramsey made it plain that he had found it enjoyable in a particular—one might almost say, peculiar way: 'This has been a conference that has known and acknowledged deep frustration and despair, and yet has found glimmers of faith in the midst of that frustration and despair. . . . I believe that this is an experience very near to the heart of Christian faith itself. Christian faith is that something happens in the midst of despair, and shows up'.

It was clearly a conference characterized by unusual openness and vigour in the meeting and sharing of minds and spirits 'about the meaning of Christian faith in theological terms and about the corollaries of Christian faith for the urgent action of Christians'. Therefore this informal and racy, but yet masterly account of it, written by the man who first suggested it, is of value and interest to all who are concerned with the need for Christian unity and that the Church should be the effective instrument of God's will in the world today. And what an exciting world it is, full of opportunity, with the Breath of God blowing strongly. The common worship was one of the deepest, most moving experiences of the members of the conference. David Edwards quotes a poem by Miroslav Holub which was read as the final words of the closing service:

Go and open the door.
Maybe outside there's
a tree, or a wood,
a garden,
or a magic city . . .
If there's a fog
it will clear . . .
At least
there'll be
a draught.