

Introductions and Appendices which gave scope for so much interesting subsidiary material in the earlier ones. But no doubt economic stress is largely to blame for this, and the publishers are to be congratulated on their quite heroic price-restraint.

On p. 9, l. 8, the omission of 'immediately after death' after 'If Christ had risen' saddles the Angelic

Doctor with a very odd heresy. Something has gone wrong with l. 28 ('to all published') on p. 39. P. 83, l. 21, for 'not as man but as God' read 'not as God but as man'. The disputed fifth objection to article 6 of question 55 is neither included nor mentioned though the reply to it is given.

E. L. MASCALL

PURITAN'S PROGRESS: A Study of John Bunyan, by Monica Furlong. Hodder and Stoughton, London. 1975. 223 pp. £5.50.

It is not easy to get a fix on Bunyan. The enormous popularity of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, its simplicity, panache, and profundity, put him in the major writers' division; there is a wealth of material on the Puritan movement and Bunyan's relation to it; and yet literary histories constantly fail to find him a satisfactory home in their schemes of the seventeenth century, whether they ignore him, as the *Sphere* history does, or whether he is reckoned to be one of the greatest imaginative writers of the century, as he is by James Sutherland in his *Oxford History*. On the other hand, there is an extensive and confident tradition, mostly Victorian, of 'devotional' commentary on Bunyan. Monica Furlong's book makes extensive use of the scholarship of the academic tradition, and she has done her own research diligently, but really this is a book which attempts to assess Bunyan's importance as a religious writer for a contemporary audience.

Not that Miss Furlong deals in the 'blessed thoughts' in the manner of C. H. Spurgeon and Alexander Whyte. She brings a full psychological armoury to bear on Bunyan's religious pilgrimage. There is no doubt of the legitimacy of such an investigation in view of Bunyan's deep pained obsessions as described in *Grace Abounding*; but there is a great danger of reductionism, of administering the pills of modern thinking so that Bunyan goes away. Perhaps the most important achievement of this study is to realise the perilous nature of this assignment, and yet to carry it through with the greatest sensitivity to the man and his work that has yet been attained. Her equipment is eclectic—Erikson's *Young Man Luther* gives her the most important clues—but occasionally one wishes she had subjected the psychology of religion to the same sceptical scrutiny she gives

to Puritanism. The following passage can only be described as question-begging:

It is not perhaps fanciful, therefore, to form a hypothesis that his childhood experiences followed a similar pattern to those of Luther, that his basic conflict as his ambivalent attitude to his father, and that, as with Luther 'a transference had taken place from a parent figure to universal personages', i.e. God, the Devil, the Pope, etc.

It is alarming to see Freudian psychology thus stealing a march on both Christianity and history.

However, this approach does lead her to make one of the most interesting accounts of Bunyan's development in later life. Despite the sympathetic treatment, the earlier autobiography, *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, responds less well. What she does glean from *Grace Abounding*—a much more prevalent sense of joy, however fragile, than had previously been noted—leads her through the later works, where she identifies Bunyan as going through a process of individuation (in the Jungian sense) as he faces up to his 'shadows'. Perhaps she overemphasises the uneasiness of tone in *Mr Badman*, and, for all its supposed importance in the early history of the novel, it is not a likeable book. But she has some important things to say about the status of Part Two of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. It is an awkward book to deal with, a sequel with much less suspense than Part One, and with fewer memorable opponents for the pilgrims, yet with some spectacularly good moments, notably the fine passage where the pilgrims triumphantly cross the river of death. The faults of the book had previously been dealt with satirically

—Ronald Knox being one of the most effective — but Miss Furlong cuts through this to a sense of expansiveness and geniality, almost a peace with 'the wilderness of this world', at the end of Bunyan's life. It is an attractive picture, more so than the attenuated Arnoldian 'spirituality' in Leavis's account, but however much one isolates Bunyan's 'poetry' from the rest of his considerable output, the trumpets sound on the other side to the note of *The Acceptable Sacrifice*, a tract published the year after Bunyan's death after an errand of reconciliation.

Miss Furlong is concerned to draw our attention to the poetry of Bunyan, by which she means the major prose works rather than his occasional attempts at versifying. Her purpose is not traditional literary criticism, and perhaps there is too much in the way of summary of what happens, but to draw our attention to the pressures which produce this art, and those which Bunyan had to overcome. Here again, psychology seems to take precedence over other forms of explanation, but she does have some interesting things to say about Puritanism in the historical and theological context.

Reading Miss Furlong's book soon after the study published by William Hale White ('Mark Rutherford') in

1905, one is struck by a number of similarities. Both include a full treatment of the illuminating Luther comparison, and both demonstrate a great sympathy with their subject across important theological divides. Both writers are at pains to follow and explain Bunyan's continuing influence; and, most importantly, both end up being more illuminating about their own concerns than about their subject. I don't regard this as a damning criticism. Readers of Miss Furlong's *Travelling In* will find similar concerns dealt with more convincingly because a more tangible subject is to hand. There are some useful reflections on the metaphor of the spiritual journey which are far less diffuse than in the earlier book, though her allegiance to the mystical tradition occasionally gives an alien flavour to Bunyan's Protestantism.

The general reader will find this book an introduction to Bunyan which provides a very personal, but possible alternative to the standard works of Roger Sharrock and Henri Talon. Christians whose theology may be closer to Bunyan's than Miss Furlong's will also find a good deal to annoy them—I hope they find, as I did, that the annoyance proves largely constructive.

ROGER POOLEY

CHRISTIAN TRUTH, by John Coventry. *Darton, Longman & Todd*, London, 1975. 104 pp. £1.60.

There is a great need in the Church at present for good and readable books on the theology of revelation for the use of intelligent laity and for theological students, in order to replace the old manuals of fundamental theology, which are now accumulating dust on the bookshelves of seminary libraries. Such works, naturally enough, need to incorporate the insights of the Vatican II Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Verbum*, which document was perhaps one of the crowning achievements of the Council, and which will long provide stimulus and foundations for theological reflection on this vital subject.

However, whether this need will be met by Fr Coventry's new book is, to my mind, more than questionable. While written in a stimulating and refreshing style, and trying to move away from old-style apologetics in the

more 'personalistic' direction set by Latourelle and Moran, *Christian Truth* leaves one most unsatisfied. No doubt one of the functions of theology is to stimulate questions, and to this extent certainly Fr Coventry has succeeded. But are the questions well posed, and, even more important, in default of answers, are there adequate direction-finders offered to the student to help discover his own solutions? The following are only two examples of many which caused this reviewer to have his doubts.

First of all, one would have liked much greater clarification on the question of the role of the *apostles* in the transmission of revelation. Having begun with the most important notion of 'faith' and 'revelation' as being correlative, and of the apostles therefore as primary faith-recipients of the revelation of Christ, the book then