

Book Notes

Catholic theologians have lost a lot of their innocence lately. In 1959 J. B. Bauer could cajole German Catholics into buying the *Encyclopedia of Biblical Theology* he had just edited by in effect assuring them that 'biblical theology' was a handmaid to dogmatics, not a challenge. Inevitably, a number of the *Encyclopedia's* articles strike us now as employing bible texts in a staggeringly uncritical way or else as blandly disposing of issues which seem to us only too far from settled. Even so, the amply indexed English edition, kindly reviewed by G. N. Stanton in *NB*, February 1971 and now reissued by Sheed & Ward in limp cloth (£9.50), is still an admirable aid for preachers and catechists. Talking of Sheed & Ward reissues, note that Mircea Eliade's *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (£3.50), Piet Schoonenberg's *Covenant and Creation* (£1.95), and Charles E. Curran's *Christian Morality* (£2.25), which is useful for those who would reflect intelligently on the Vatican's recent document on sex, are once more available in Stagbooks.

The first two titles in *Issues in Religious Studies*, a new Sheldon series for students taking 'A' levels or in colleges of education, are Elizabeth Maclaren's *The Nature of Belief* (£1.60), a stimulating little book suitable for use in groups—it would not be so good for the initiate working alone—and Peter Donovan's *Religious Language* (£1.60), which tries primarily to expound simply the philosophical problems associated with religious claims (drawing almost entirely on writings of the English school). Popularising philosophy is a risky venture any time, but Donovan acquits himself quite well compared with Johannes Hirschberger, whose *Short History of Western Philosophy* (Lutterworth £3.50; £2.30 paper), now in English, is much too short to be safe. Hirschberger's one-page treatment of the modern English school is just travesty.

Four welcome reprints of books of the 50s are P. W. Martin's *Experiment in Depth*, a study of how Jung, Eliot and Toynebee explored the creative possibilities for humanity of the so-called

'mythical method' (Routledge £1.95); R. E. C. Browne's wonderful little book on preaching *The Ministry of the Word* (SCM, £1.95); Karl Rahner's meditations on man's relationship with God *Encounter with Silence* (Burns & Oates £1.50); and Jean Daniélou's *The Angels and their Mission* (Christian Classics Inc., Westminster, Md 21157, USA \$5.95). Simon Tugwell, comparing this with Billy Graham's brash journalistic *Angels: God's Secret Agents* (Hodder £1.95), says 'the traditional patristic angelology Daniélou mediates is, for those whose intellectual palate is not entirely deadened by the thrills of modern living, actually even more interesting and exciting than Graham's mish-mash of superficial and superliteralistic exegesis and unattractive modern "miracle" stories'. But it's the mish-mash Christians go for—Graham's book has already made a million!

The trouble with symposia and Festschriften is that lately there have been too many of them and they are too much like bran-tubs. The most interesting contribution to the Festschrift for the NT scholar David Michael Stanley, *Word and Spirit* (Regis College Press, Willowdale, Ont., Canada \$7.50) is Joseph Plevnik's 'The Parousia as Implication of Christ's Resurrection'. Yet more even, though, is the McDonnell-edited volume on aspects of the Catholic charismatic renewal, *The Holy Spirit and Power* (Doubleday, N.Y.; U.K. agents Redemptorist Pubs. £1.50): best in it, says Peter Hocken, are the articles by Mühlen on the Spirit and experience, and Ranaghan's study distinguishing the Catholic and Protestant elements in the typical Catholic prayer group; worst is Gelpi's fearful and negative piece on ecumenical problems.

For something different turn to two Faber selections of Sylvia Plath now in paper (both 75p). The poems in *Crossing the Water* were written at the start of the '60s, after *The Colossus*; in the last months before her death in 1963 she wrote those in *Winter Trees*.

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