

not only your Epiphany, Jesus, but your diaphany'. The italics are Teilhard's. I begin to get a faint glimmering of what people mean when they say that he is a poet. There is another passage on page 118 which strikes me as a little odd: '*Disperse, O Jesus, the clouds with your lightning! Show yourself to us as the Mighty, the Radiant, the Risen! Come to us once again as the Pantocrator who filled the solitude of the cupolas in the ancient basilicas.*' Again the italics are the author's. Passages like this can be found on almost every page, mixed up with some scholastic terms. Perhaps the most distressing instance of this sort of writing is to be found in the phrase 'universal Smile'. I mention this element simply because that sort of writing made it very difficult for me to take the book seriously.

In short it would seem to me that the idea Teilhard is trying to put across is a good one—I say 'idea' not 'ideas' advisedly because the entire book depends upon the notion of the divinization of man—but he fails hopelessly because his picture of what man is will not do. Although the book is a failure, it is a very fine failure. The impressions of charity, honesty and enthusiasm that one gets, in spite of the wrongness and the style, are really quite considerable.

NEIL MIDDLETON

WORK: AN INQUIRY INTO CHRISTIAN THOUGHT AND PRACTICE. Edited by John M. Todd. (Darton, Longman and Todd; 30s.; paper-bound, 21s.)

This is the third symposium to be published by the Downside discussion group which has given us *The Springs of Morality* and *The Arts, Artists and Thinkers*. Like the previous volumes in the series, *Work* is not intended either as a manifesto of dogma or as a salvo of apologetic. The aim of the discussions it records was, in the word of the editor, 'to arrive at an expression of the Church's traditional teaching about man's work in harmony both with the experiences of a number of individual Christians and with the results of an enquiry about how work should be organized to permit and encourage Christian lives—these being set against a historical description of work and man's understanding of it in Europe'.

The book is firmly anchored fore and aft with solid and scholarly essays. In Part I, which is devoted to the historical roots of our practice and ideas, Professor A. H. Armstrong and Dr R. A. Markus present for us, with elegant erudition, the attitudes to work which were current in classical and Christian antiquity; while Mr P. McGrath presents a fascinating anthology of opinions on work culled throughout English writing from Piers Plowman to Samuel Smiles. In the final section of

the book two Dominicans and a monk of Downside reflect on the theology of work. Fr Laurence Bright contributes a tranquil and lucid essay on the implications for the Christian of a just philosophy of science, while Dom Sebastian Moore writes zestfully and panoramically on *The Work of the Intellect*, ranging from a meditation on the Passion to an apologia for Cajetan. In the final chapter of this section Fr Herbert McCabe frames the topic of the symposium within a summary account of the history of salvation which is a masterpiece of accurate and vigorous concision.

The section of the book immediately preceding its theological conclusion is devoted to the organization of work. In this field, the sponsors of the symposium were fortunate in securing the co-operation of two writers who can speak with exceptional authority on the topic: Mr George Woodcock, Assistant General Secretary of the T.U.C., and Mr Ronald Brech, of the Economics and Statistics Department of Unilever.

The second main section of the volume is entitled 'Personal Witness of Workers' and consists in contributions from a factory worker, a farmer, a housewife, an advertising agent, a government research worker, a doctor, and a parish priest. This, which is the longest section of the book, appears also the least successful. Many interesting points are made, but on occasion the level of writing drops to a telly-worthy chattiness. ('Now tell me, Mr Buggins, what does it *feel like* to be a sausage-skin stretcher?') Again, some of the theological and ethical views which emerge appear questionable. In a series of what are admittedly only sighting shots, it would be ungracious to complain that the bull is not reached every time; but one contribution at least appears so well off the target as to call for comment. In the paper on government research, we read: 'Ethical standards are not relevant to the activities of large communities'. As it is used by the writer, this proposition appears to imply that governments can do no wrong: Auschwitz and Hiroshima are just things that happen, like floods and earthquakes. One sympathizes with the editor's embarrassment, which is evident in the footnotes.

The sponsors of the Downside symposia deserve our gratitude for their initiative in promoting these candid discussions of live and often difficult issues. It seems unfortunate, however, that a book which is professedly only a report of work in progress should be so expensive to publish. A guinea seems a high price to pay for a volume not very much larger and not notably better bound than a Pelican. Perhaps we may hope that future symposia will attract a sufficient number of readers to enable them to be more economically produced.

ANTHONY KENNY