

WHO IS JESUS CHRIST? by A. O. Dyson. *S.C.M. Centrebooks*, London, 1969. 8s. 6d.

WHAT IS THE CHURCH? by Victor de Waal. *S.C.M. Centrebooks*, London, 1969. 8s. 6d.

Both these books serve a very useful purpose in 'opening up' the questions with which they are concerned and trying to find a fresh approach so that the reader is forced to deepen his own understanding of both the questions and the answers. I think in fact that these are the two most provocative books to appear so far in this series and this is especially true of Anthony Dyson's contribution. In it he stresses that there can be no short and definitive answer to the problem of who Jesus is. On the contrary he says that this is a deeply serious question which must vex every generation of Christians. Both writers treat conciliar and other official statements as points of departure, as valuable contributions to the debate rather than the end of the affair as has been the tendency in theology in the past, and both of them quite consciously raise questions and issues which they do not attempt to 'answer' but which are thought round and explored; and this is why I think that they will be very useful in sixth forms and amongst students generally who are genuinely interested in and captivated by an 'open-ended' theology.

Anthony Dyson's book will be useful from many other points of view also. His is a treatment which attempts to give full weight to the contributions of modern philosophers, theologians and thinkers, including Troeltsch's treatment of the problem of history and the bearing this has for historical statements about Christ, Bultmann and the criticisms advanced against him by Jaspers, and lastly Teilhard de Chardin himself. The use that the author has made of these writers, which includes a clear exposition of their views, enables him to present us with a very good analysis of the problems which a contemporary Christian

faces in considering the person of Christ. It is a stimulating book but I have two criticisms: the reader will not find much discussion of the actual text of the New Testament; this seems to me to be an opportunity missed in a book like this which should be directing the reader always back to the evidence. Secondly, the stress on contemporary difficulties leaves little or no discussion of the more traditional ones which I suspect are more with us under other guises than one might expect. But these are small reservations about a very good book.

Victor de Waal's book is interesting both as a contribution to ecclesiology from an Anglican and for what it has to say in its own right. He shows a good knowledge of the history of the Church and has many illuminating things to say about the primitive structure of the Church and the transition this gradually underwent, the liturgy and the sacraments and the purpose of the Church. This last point could have been given more edge, I feel, if the author had made more explicit use of the themes of discipleship and personal commitment to Christ with a more extended analysis of the Church as 'revolutionary' in character. The thought that tends to be in the back of a Catholic reading this kind of book is, 'What is he going to say about authority?'. He has many good things to say about this, echoing and developing some of the thought of the Vatican II Decree *De Ecclesia*. I mention this because what emerges from this book is that it seems clear that there is a growing common feeling about what the Church might be and a willingness to explore on all sides what shape the authority of the Church should have. This is a useful contribution to the debate.

MERVYN DAVIES

CATHOLIC ANGLICANS TODAY, edited by John Wilkinson. *Darton, Longman and Todd*, 1968, 254 pp. 25s.

This book is perhaps more significant than would at first appear. At a first glance a collection of essays on the present position of Catholic-minded Anglicans might seem of rather limited appeal. This is particularly so, when one notices that surprisingly there are no laymen amongst the contributors, and that social questions receive little place in their

work. It seems as though Christian socialism, which for one hundred years had an honourable history in the Church of England, and especially among Anglo-Catholics, has in the last decade gone underground and come up on the other side of the fence. The interests of these writers are predominantly theological and ecclesiological: They take up again subjects

which have always concerned Catholic Anglicans, the nature of the Church, the sacraments and the ministry, questions of worship and spirituality.

And yet if the themes are traditional, their treatment of them is not. In the first place there is no sign here of the second-hand Baroque triumphalism which characterized a good deal of Anglo-Catholicism in the years between the two world wars. John Gunstone, in a lively and entertaining essay, writes of that period with sympathy and insight. His pages will awaken memories in Anglican readers and may provide illumination to others. All the writers in this book, however—and most of them are young or in early middle age—are conscious that we are living in a new period of Christian history, when old positions have to be radically re-thought. And consciously or not, they represent an older and less clearly defined tradition of Catholic Anglicanism, which can trace its origins at least to the seventeenth century. They stand in a school of faith and theology, which while it has never wholly repudiated the Reformation, knows by experience the painful weaknesses and inadequacies of the Protestant position.

This is particularly evident in the essay of Ieuan Ellis, the youngest of the writers, on 'The Gospel of the Living God' with his interesting analysis of the shared assumptions of Karl Barth and the 'Death of God' theologians and his insistence on the importance of the historical and corporate dimensions of human existence for the full growth of the human person. The typical Anglican stress on the importance of 'continuity' comes back here in a new and unfamiliar context. The same concern to express the fullness of the human person can be seen in Alan Wilkinson's essay on 'The Authority of the Church'. 'It is one of the major defects of Western religion that it is so often pre-occupied with the working of the conscious mind of the educated adult. But

unless Christ redeems the sub-conscious as well, the whole man cannot be redeemed, and the sub-conscious is largely reached through primordial images. We who wish for a more naturalistic and more rational style of worship should take heed.' Indeed this essay of Alan Wilkinson's is one of the richest in the book, if at times tantalizingly incomplete. With his exploration of how freedom and authority, tradition and creativity, the corporate and the personal belong together in human life and in the Church, it bears witness to persistent and powerful themes in Anglican reflection.

One of the most striking qualities which marks the book as a whole is the determination which its writers show to treat their subjects theologically, and not, as Anglicans have sometimes done in the past, to take refuge behind a purely historical approach. One can see this in Theodore Simpson's discussion of a personalist view of the sacraments, or Colin Hickling's brief but valuable remarks about the relations between Christians and men of other faiths. But perhaps the death-blow to the older type of Anglican historicism is given in the very first essay in the book, on 'The Bible and the Faith' by Leslie Houlden. Here in a quiet but radical way we are introduced to a view of the development of doctrine and of the nature of the biblical documents which opens up many perspectives for the future.

The writers of this volume would not wish to claim finality for their work. Rather it witnesses to a mood of openness and of modest hopefulness for the future. Some of the tendencies which it reveals show signs of convergence, some of complementarity with contemporary Roman Catholic writing in England. The indications are that the development of a genuinely and fully English Catholicism will need the collaborative efforts of all Christians who are seeking to live by the wholeness of the Christian revelation. The time for that collaboration is certainly upon us. A. M. ALLCHIN

THE RECOGNITION OF GUILT, A study in pastoral psychology, by Arnold Uleyn. Translated by Mary Iford. Gill & MacMillan, Dublin, 1969. 240 pp. 36s.

Whatever happened to our sense of sin? Has it gone with the permissive wind, summoned from the four quarters of heaven by past Home Secretaries and Attorneys General? Is it over-kill of guilt through pulpit pre-occupation with vice?

In part, yes, says the author, Fr Uleyn. Over-kill by mindless multiplication of positive

law; by brimstone pre-occupation with damnation—but he also quotes Marcel on the point that our Promethean world, intoxicated with its technological achievements, requires a denial of sin for its glorification. How else could we live in peace with the Bomb?

Sin may have gone to Siberia with Lady Chatterley, but guilt is with us still. 'Specialists