

method whereby evidence of past human activity is criticised and represented as significant. This implies that history is neither mere data nor an objective somebody, but someone writing history—making use of a method. Once we begin to write history (to use the method) we find ourselves, willy nilly, invoking values which do not at least immediately rise from the evidence under consideration. We find ourselves discussing the order of events in terms of pictures which represent facets of the infinitely subtle complex which is the creation of man. The love of history, then, lies not in the description of the rise of institutions or the play of economic circumstance, but in a doctrine of man. The odd thing about history is that it goes beyond its own method; even the various picture myths used by historians, challenge and response, rise and decay, thesis and antithesis, however helpful they may be, break down before that moral element in human relationships that history assumes rather than discusses. If this is so, then the writing of history involves insights which are not postulated by an abstract description of the historical method, and significant historical judgment invokes presuppositions, critical or otherwise, which colour the selection and interpretation of the historian in so far as they render him sensitive or insensitive to values which the evidence symbolises.

Professor Butterfield, one feels, writes as a Christian without sufficiently examining why it is that he sees patterns or paradoxes in history.

IAN HISLOP, O.P.

THE SONCINO CHUMASH. Edited by the Revd Dr A Cohen. (The Soncino Press, Bournemouth; 21s.)

This *magnum opus* of the Soncino Press will be a delight to all lovers of the Pentateuch, be they Hebrew or Christian. The English text, printed alongside the Hebrew, is the very readable version of the Jewish Publication Society of America. The commentary is unlike others in the series in that it gives selections from the comments of representative Jewish expositors. As the Preface points out, these commentaries may at times savour of the medieval; yet it remains worth while to see how great exegetes of long ago read (or read into) the Sacred Text. The average student will be glad to have at hand the interpretations of an Ibn Ezra, Kimchi, etc., whose works would not usually be accessible.

A further point of great interest for a Christian student is the insertion, all through the text, of the Haphtaroth, or sections from the prophetic and historical books which follow upon a reading of the Pentateuch in the liturgy of the Synagogue. This is of interest not merely to the historian of liturgies but—in these days of renewed

biblical theology—to the theologian properly speaking, who should be aware of how texts are associated in Hebrew liturgical tradition. Thus the Haphtarah Bereshith (Genesis 1–6 with Isaias 42, 5 to 43, 10) gives us the theme of God's creational activity. Theophany is the theme of Exodus 18–20 with Isaias 6–7, 6 and 8, 5, 6; this last culminates in a Messianism clear to the Christian, 'for a child is born unto us'. Such 'themes' serve to bring out the riches of the deposit of faith.

ROLAND POTTER, O.P.

THE WEST EUROPEAN CITY. By Robert E. Dickinson. (Routledge and Kegan Paul; £2 2s.)

If one may hold with Mr Bentley that biography is about chaps, geography today is about much more than maps, and it is the special value of Dr Dickinson's interpretation of the common features of the cities of Western Europe that it is based on the morphological approach. The geographer's great temptation is to treat a city merely in terms of dead patterns and as a mass of materials, but he remembers that it is a living organism in space and time which must be considered in its four chief functions as a place of habitation, work, recreation and transport. This method makes geography much more interesting, and though the author lacks Mr Mumford's captivating style, he has produced a useful work of reference not only for the student of geography, but also for the historian, the economist and modern planner.

The book is divided into two parts. Part I studies a number of towns in Central Sweden and Switzerland, and—in greater detail—the processes and character of urban growth in the historic small towns of France and Germany. Then follows a chapter on the medium-sized city—Basel, and a series of studies of Brussels, Amsterdam, Vienna, Budapest, Paris and Berlin. Part II deals in a comparative manner with the functions and organisation of West European towns in the light of their economic and social history and concludes with some aspects of modern urbanism.

The author traces three historic phases in urban development: the first and formative period around the year A.D. 1000 was marked by the appearance of a compact settlement with its focus in church, castle or market place. The cathedral cities of the Midi are contrasted with the essentially burgesses' cities of Flanders and Picardy, dominated by the trading element. In western Germany bishoprics were founded on the sites of Roman *castra* or Saxon *oppida*. The development of planned forms took place first in Eastern Germany, the main zone of German colonisation in the thirteenth century, with primary concern for secular buildings and defence works for self-governing communities. On the continent all urban settlements were walled towns; in England