

## Reviews

**CREATOR, CREATION AND FAITH.** by Norman Young. *Collins, London, 1976.* 220 pp. £3.50.

This is a penetrating and stimulating book, by an Australian Methodist minister who has taught in the United States, Britain and New Zealand as well as in his own country. He is deeply convinced of the need of a theological concern with the created order if the Church is to speak prophetically to the contemporary world and if the unbridled exploitation of human creativity in a technological age is not to lead, first to man's enslavement by his own artefacts and then to their own self-destruction: "these creations of man that now threaten to enslave him also threaten the very existence of the world in which he is enslaved" (p 152).

The book falls into two main sections. In the first there is an exposition of the inter-related Biblical themes of Creation, Fall and New Creation. In the second the theological perspectives of four highly contrasted but equally influential modern writers are expounded and criticised: the transcendentalist Karl Barth, the ontological Paul Tillich, the existentialist Rudolf Bultmann and the eschatological Jurgen Moltmann. In this, the hard core of the book, the writer is working towards a position which will avoid both an extreme transcendentalist theology having no interest in human culture and society and an extreme immanentist theology which identifies God with Man's own aspirations and activities. In a brief concluding section, entitled "Living in the Created World", he lists the four options "as aliens", "in coalition", "as innovators", "as revolutionaries", but, in spite of his generally telling criticisms of them all, his own

position never clearly emerges. And I think that the chief reason for this is that, while he is acutely conscious of the differences in their attitudes towards creation of the writers whom he discusses, he appears to locate these differences simply in their beliefs about the Fall and redemption and not in their beliefs about creation itself. I am, however, convinced that the theological differences that have divided Christians (Greeks and Latins, Catholics and Protestants, Lutherans and Calvinists, and the various schools within each) lie far behind or beneath those that have been explicitly recognised and are rooted in the usually unformulated assumptions made about the character of the relation between finite being, including man in particular, and the God upon whose creative act it is entirely dependent. In other words, the basic problem is precisely that of creation, and not that of fall and redemption, essential as of course these latter are.

This, then, is, as I see it, the weakness in what is in other respects an outstanding book. It is perhaps revealing that, in spite of his wide human concern, the writer should have confined his discussion to four thinkers who, for all their differences, come out of the same Teutonic Protestant background. It is particularly regrettable that there is no reference to the highly relevant work of such modern Eastern Orthodox theologians as Vladimir Lossky and John Meyendorff, who, whether we go all the way with them or not, have so much fresh air to let into the supercharged atmosphere of our Western controversies, and not least on this question of creation.

E. L. MASCALL

**SPIRITUAL FRIENDSHIP,** by Aelred of Rievaulx. Trans. Mary Eugenia Laker SSND. *Cistercian Publications (CF 5).* 1974. 144 pp. £5.00.

After an unhappy hiatus, the Cistercian Fathers have at last been resurrected, and volumes long overdue are now actually appearing, and are available in Eng-

land through Mowbrays.

One of the most eagerly awaited at the time of the collapse was Aelred's *Spiritual Friendship*. Now that it is here,