

to him, will be quick to assess the circumstantial and ideological differences between a Buddhist of the Mahayana school and a Christian hermit in the Celtic tradition. What may perhaps escape him is how much more they have in common with each other than the detached twentieth-century observer has with either. There is a fundamental integrity about their pursuit of spiritual things which puts us to shame.

No serious student of oriental religions can afford to ignore Mr Waley's volume which, while written as he modestly says for the general reader, is prepared with that critical care to which a lifetime of scholarly but never dryly academic work has accustomed us. Among the stories in the latter half of the book—which includes a reprint of the brilliant and terrifying *Mrs White*—one may notice the dramatic triumph of *San Sebastian*, a symbolic tale of Japan's 'Christian period' by Akutagawa, as being of special interest to Catholics.

A.S.

HAFIZ OF SHIRAZ: THIRTY POEMS. Translated by Peter Avery and John Heath-Stubbs. (John Murray; 4s. 6d.)

This book appears in the *Wisdom of the East* series, but it is a book for lovers of poetry rather than for those who are looking for spiritual wisdom. The translators in an admirable preface suggest that the poems have three levels of significance, three senses, which one might describe briefly as the courtly, the sensual and the spiritual. The analogy with, for instance, St John of the Cross is here misleading, for in his poetry the sensual is only imagery; in Hafiz one is less certain. But the translations themselves are very attractive; the mind quickly becomes attuned to the conversational style and the colloquialisms, which the translators justify by recent scholarship; and the explanation of their 'circular' construction, worked out by the detailed analysis of one particular poem, is interesting and helpful.

B.W.

IS GOD IN HISTORY? An enquiry into Human and Prehuman History in Terms of the Doctrine of Creation, Fall and Redemption. By Gerald Heard. (Faber and Faber; 15s.)

Mr Gerald Heard, who has already published some thirty religious books since 1924, now gives us a sequel to the essay in *Natural Theology* called *Is God Evident?* which he wrote three years ago. Although by no means always easy to follow, Mr Heard's writings have attracted much attention, perhaps even more in the United States than in this country. It was there that he made what proved to be an unsuccessful experiment in founding the inter-denominational contemplative community described by Mr C. F. Kelley (in *Pax*, Autumn 1949), and where

his attempts to develop a theology without a Church have been received with a sympathy no less real because not uncritical. (See *God of the Foxholes*. By H. H. Watts, in *Christendom*, vol. 10, pp. 200-209.)

Although in the present book Mr Heard writes as scientist and philosopher, it must be admitted that his preoccupations are primarily moral: one might even say, mystical. 'To know what human nature is and what it can do we have to study men and their deeds, not apes and their bones' (p. 42). Yet the study of apes and bones, and eggs and oysters and suchlike things, does in fact fill many pages. A pity; for whereas the author is undoubtedly a man of vast learning, he seems to lack the power of controlling it and presenting it in a clear and co-ordinated manner.

His subject is the Fall: a threefold 'event', viz. the Fall into Wrong Perception, the Fall into Wrong Attention, the Fall into Wrong Suggestions; to which is correlated a threefold Redemption. In his exposition of all this there is such a baffling mixture of traditional terms and novel meanings that the reader is left convinced that he has been assisting at the hunting of a snark.

There are many excellent sayings in this book, but they are the sayings of a moralist, as distinct from a scientist or a philosopher. Whether they can be isolated from the book as a whole is doubtful, since the author has written what he believes to be a closely reasoned essay on a single theme.

DESMOND SCHLEGEL

OMAR KHAYYAM. By A. J. Arberry.

About four years ago Professor Arberry discovered, in the Chester Beatty Collection, a Persian manuscript of Omar's *Quatrains*, which bettered Fitzgerald's venerable Oxford text by no less than two centuries and fourteen poems, eight of these hitherto entirely unknown in any version. He published his findings without delay in 1949, but it was already possible, even then, to hazard certain remarkable conclusions, which are now overwhelmingly confirmed by the present work.

The latest book is a translation based on a still older manuscript (now in the Cambridge University Library), which dates from 1207 A.D., or only seventy-five years after the poet's death. Its great age, and the fact that it contains no fewer than 252 quatrains (as against the Oxford text's 158), are features the impressiveness of which would only be blurred by comment. But what will hearten all who have been concerned to check the arrogant assaults of the Higher Criticism upon Tradition, is the clear emergence, after a century of negative argument, of the following three conclusions: that Omar Khayyam did write the poetry