in history when the domination of prejudice, error, ignorance, and religious coercion was overcome through the victorious advance of reason, independent criticism, "truth" (as they repeated indefatigably), and tolerance; when political, economical and spiritual servitude ceased and freedom began for conscience and state.'

We are able to follow in this volume the many ways in which the authority of Luther was quoted in support of the most secular and naturalist corruptions of Christianity. But the tradition of orthodox Lutheranism, we see in this same volume, was never entirely lost, though often without illustrious supporters. At all times there have been those who saw in Luther the defender and proclaimer of true doctrine, and who saw in Lutheranism true doctrinal Christianity. The opposition between these rival forms of Lutheranism is really greater than that between orthodox Protestantism and Catholicism. In this respect, the situation of continental Protestantism in relation to Catholicism is not unlike that prevailing in England during Newman's time. Newman, whether before or after his conversion, regarded doctrinal Liberalism as the real danger for Christianity. As a Catholic, he did not regard good Protestants as a potential danger in the sense in which the doctrinal liberals who denied revelation were, whether in the Church of England or elsewhere.

Professor Zeeden's book will have value from an ecumenical point of view, if only it helps orthodox Protestants and Catholics to realize that, with all the differences in their view of the Church, they both stand for the eternal values and truth of God's word in a world in which the characteristic religion is this-worldly, individualist or nationalistic. On the other hand, from a Catholic point of view, he seems to confirm historically the impossibility of unity in the preservation of Christian revelation without belief in the guidance of the Holy Spirit through a visible Church.

Professor Zeeden has also published a volume of texts from Lutheran sources, illustrating each phase of the development of thought he describes. This volume has not been translated; so we are left with the professor's own account, together with occasional short quotations; but we have enough here to gain a bird's-eye view of the vital changes in Lutheranism for three centuries after its founder's death.

H. Francis Davis

The Institutions of Primitive Society. (Basil Blackwell; 7s. 6d.)

This series of talks was originally given in the Third Programme under the title of 'The Values of Primitive Society'; two of them, Professor Evans-Pritchard's and Dr Lienhardt's, have already appeared in print in Blackfriars. The talks are intended to serve as an intro-

duction to the problems and conclusions of Social Anthropology today, in the belief that what anthropologists have learned about Religion, Law, Economic Life or Aesthetics in primitive societies, should be made available to a wider audience.

There can be no doubt that at least theologians and philosophers can profit from an acquaintance with the procedures of modern anthropology. In both disciplines, though in different ways, the problem is always to find where to *begin*, to tap the source. The study of primitive society is helpful here, not because 'primitives' are somehow necessarily closer to scratch than we are, but because the effort of inner detachment required of us, when we try to mediate between primitive conceptions and our own, forces us back to a centre itself more immediate to the source. As Dr Lienhardt puts it: 'We mediate between their habits of thought, which we have acquired with them, and those of our own society; in doing so, it is not finally some mysterious "primitive philosophy" that we are exploring, but the further potentialities of our own thought and language.' (pp. 96-97.) The *content* of primitive thought, as he points out, is not open to translation simply with the help of a dictionary; we are confronted with an alternative pattern of *categories*. It is unfortunate that a number of the talks in this series illustrate the consequences of a failure adequately to practise such a detachment; even excluding Dr Layard's theosophical fantasy, Professor Gluckman's lecture betrays a tendency to rely on reference to some abstract linear time-scale against which political development may be measured, in the manner of Engels on the *Origin of the Family* and of the kinetic theory of gases ('It would seem as if groups have an inherent tendency to segment, and then to become bound together by cross-cutting alliances'; p. 77); and Professor Fortes, relying on psychological paradigms, appears to see social customs as explicable in terms of a making 'tangible' (kinship, p. 91; death customs, p. 93) of what would otherwise be uncontrolled fantasy. If the modern anthropological investigator, as Professor Evans-Pritchard tells us, no longer projects into the societies he is studying what he himself feels to be primitive, it would seem that he still tends to project into them inappropriate categorical systems.

But from all these lectures there emerges one truth of the greatest importance for theology; what Professor Firth says of economic values is more widely true—that their fundamental characteristic in primitive societies is 'the importance of *social* factors (including ritual factors) in determining them' (p. 22. My italics). The desiccation of theology which set in after the thirteenth century was surely due to a loss of the sense that theology, as the formal proposition of the teaching, *doctrina*, of the society of the Church, is itself an expression of the common life of that society. *Doctrina* became identified with *doctrine*, the object

merely and not the act too of teaching. Theology, as the renewal in Christ the Word of the apprehension of the given as gift and grace, is an act of living faith, faith informed by charity; it is the expression as communication of the communion of the Church. The emphasis on the 'sociology of knowledge' (not implying by this phrase any adherence to the positions of the late Professor Mannheim) is the most important contribution to theology made by the recent advances in social anthropology.

C.E.

AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION. By E. G. Parrinder. (Hutchinson's University Library; 8s. 6d.)

This short book, one of a series of popular accounts of religions, is intended to permit African tribal religions to take a place in the knowledge of the general reader beside the great religious systems of the world, with which he is presumed to be more familiar. In part, it seems to be aimed at a public which accepts the crude stereotypes of African 'witch-doctors' and mumbo-jumbo of the cinema and of popular literature. It seems doubtful if such people will relinquish their fantasies for the understanding of somewhat unexciting African pieties which Mr Parrinder mildly and judiciously commends.

The reader who is prepared to take African tribal religions seriously, however, may wish that Mr Parrinder had been less ready to place them at the side of religions with literate, theological traditions, as though they were capable of the same sort of study as, say, Buddhism or Islam. The way in which African tribesmen apprehend their world and God is not, indeed, less interesting or deserving of study than are the beliefs and customs of the greater part of the faithful in religions with developed theological science and a known history of expansion. But these religions, *as subjects of specialized study*, are surely not of the same kind as the composite 'African Traditional Religion' which Mr Parrinder has had to create in order to write this book at all. It is unlikely, then, that the book will persuade a student of any of the great religious systems that there is anything in pagan Africa which would repay the careful scholarship they give to their texts and inscriptions. Students of the religious thought of literate people are able to examine the commentaries of believers who have reflected upon and submitted to reason, after their fashion, the faith which they have held; there is no comparable corpus of refined criticism for the student of African tribal religions.

Moreover, the vocabulary familiarly used in England for the discussion of African religious conceptions, and from which Mr Parrinder, in such a popular survey, cannot escape, would scarcely be acceptable