

to the conclusion that the word *aionios*, translated 'eternal' or 'everlasting' in the gospels, did not mean endless temporal succession. Catholics today stand almost alone in defence of hell, yet so greatly are we affected by the prevailing climate of opinion that we have to admit that R. W. Dale's words are largely true of ourselves: 'the doctrine has been silently relegated to that province of the intellect which is the house of beliefs which we have not rejected, but which we are willing to forget'.

Just as hell was largely rejected because it was viewed almost exclusively in terms of the actualization of its biblical imagery, so the traditional doctrine of inspiration and inerrancy was set aside because of the severely occidental literalness uniformly read into the variegated oriental idiom of the Scriptures. Jowett's shocking plea that the Bible should be interpreted like any ordinary book did not mean what it was commonly taken to mean. In that particular point he was saying very much what the present Pope has so explicitly urged in *Divino Afflante Spiritu* in regard to the enlistment of all the resources of modern scientific scholarship to extract the literal sense of the sacred text, from its far from literal mode of expression.

Dr Wood's lectures are a skilled summarizing, in a small space, of some of the intellectual movements which have formed the modern religious and non-religious scene, and they will be found invaluable as an introduction to the understanding of its origins and background.

HENRY ST JOHN, O.P.

ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD. By John Bligh, S.J. (Sheed & Ward; 16s.)

It is a common experience of candidates for the priesthood to be unable to find a helpful commentary on the actual rite which is to bring about the fulfilment of their dearest wish. There are, no doubt, books which attempt a 'pious' explanation of the liturgical text; but it cannot be said that their vague and often fanciful pages are likely to appeal to the young cleric of our days. As for the theologians, when they have overcome their curious reluctance to come to the actual words of the ordination liturgy, too often in the past they have used these as a pretext for airing their views as to wherein the essence of the sacrament lies.

Fortunately for us the Constitution *Sacramentum Ordinis* of the 30th November 1947 has put an end to a long controversy. Now that we know for certain in what the matter and form of Order consist, the way is open for a calm and unpolemical theological discussion of the text which at the same time avoids the cloudy 'elevations' of a rather tedious tradition of 'piety'.

Fr Bligh's book is a first and successful attempt to fill this gap for English readers. In his preface he writes that his book 'is not a pious meditation on the priesthood, but a liturgical and theological essay, written in the belief that a careful analysis of the rite will in the end be more conducive to solid piety than a devotional treatment of the subject could be'. His analysis is indeed admirably done with a judicious and happy blending of liturgical scholarship and theological acumen. Naturally there are several points in what remains (even after the Pope's definitive clarification of the main practical problem) so thorny a theological subject, where one could disagree with the author—for example, his views on the relationship between the sacerdotal character and powers, and his tentative suggestion that the bishop's imposition of hands may not *always* have been the matter of the sacrament. But these questions are quite incidental to his excellent commentary on the text of the ordination rite which forms the bulk of this book, and which makes it a signal ordination present—to mark reception of the diaconate, however, rather than the priesthood. For while this book will greatly help those who are already priests to stir up the grace they received at their ordination, it will be of even greater value for deacons as they prepare themselves for the priesthood: at the very least it will help them to understand what the rather difficult words of the form of the sacrament mean.

RONALD TORBET, O.P

JESUS IN HIS TIME. By Daniel-Rops. Translated by R. W. Millar. (Eyre and Spottiswoode in association with Burns, Oates; 30s.)

When Zachaeus climbed into the sycamore he wanted, it may be presumed, to gain an impression of Jesus as a person. A similar pre-occupation must have inspired the request of those Greek strangers who approached Philip towards the end of our Lord's earthly life: 'Sir, we would see Jesus'. They were concerned, it seems, less with our Lord's teaching than with his personality. This book gives the impression of having been written for the modern Zachaeus, the man who wants to 'see' Jesus. In tracing so fully and carefully the course of our Lord's life, M. Daniel-Rops seeks to provide the sort of view of him which might have been had at any given stage from the vantage-point of a wayside tree, the view of a personality, dominant and mysterious amid the swirling Jewish crowds.

It is natural therefore that he should have given special emphasis to the question of environment. He draws extensively and expertly on such relevant subjects as the rabbinical writings and the apocrypha, the geography and archeology of Palestine, and Roman and Jewish social history, in order to reconstruct the settings of our Lord's life as it unfolded. Even this, however, is not sufficient for his purpose. Far from