

significant essential of Near Eastern society: although this book is concerned only with the beginnings, and ends with the Prophet's death on 8th June, 632 A.D., it is pregnant with details which throw light on Muslim and Near Eastern problems to the present-day. Often in trying to understand a Near Eastern situation it is necessary to go right back to the beginning of a long historical process. Gratitude is due to Dr Montgomery Watt for having done this so successfully in the case of Islam, that way of life which, for better or for worse, has dominated the Near East since the seventh century, so that without some understanding of it the whole area's history since that time cannot ever be adequately explained. He has not omitted, particularly in the later chapters, to indicate those personal relationships in Muhammad's circle which later crystallized into bitter alignments and gave rise to sanguine affrays. His manual is perhaps more suggestive than even he intended, for his is a scrupulosity which achieves its effects almost as if they were incidental to the main purpose, of weighing and stating the facts. Thus he is a good historian.

P. W. AVERY

WHITE TO MOVE? *a portrait of East Africa today*, by Paul Foster; Eyre and Spottiswoode; 25s.

Fr Paul Foster's picture is less a portrait than a composition in the manner of Frith. In the foreground, a class of students at Makerere are reading *The Laws* of Plato and being introduced to the concepts of Perception and Power; around and behind them are the diverse tribes from which they come, clothed and unclothed, the primitive Masai and Karamajong, the progressive Baganda, the tragic Kikuyu; administrators and missionaries thread their way through the crowd, with their failures and successes. On the whole the author is fair both to the African and the European. His assessment of the colonial achievement is just, but in blaming its failure to make the African into a friend on the Anglican public school mentality one feels that an element of caricature has crept in: East Africa seventy years ago needed ruling with some kind of justice and it was ruled with justice—with the result, as the author tells us, that in a town in central Uganda a white woman can shop entirely alone in a crowd of Africans without anyone thinking this strange. That the firmness of the administrators who made this possible made it also impossible for them to unbend in a social context is sad but could hardly have been avoided. This is not to deny that there have been stupid Europeans who made things worse than they might be, but there is still surely a hope that, as in India, the unease of the period when independence is gained or granted will be followed by an increase in friendship.

Perception and Power run through the book as a double theme—the strangeness of the African mind, trying briefly at university level to acquire modes of reasoning developed in Europe, but liable always to relapse into the lunatic logic which is the despair of Europeans; the drive for power spawning political

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parties and religious sects, seizing on education, erupting into Mau-Mau. As a narrative the book is lively and good-humoured, but the reflections of the author are disquieting, and would be more so if it were not for his faith.

BENET WEATHERHEAD, O.P.

IMMORTAL LONGINGS, by Stephen Findlay; Gollancz; 2Is.

Mr Findlay's avowed aims are to discuss the fear of annihilation at death, to examine its foundations and to assess whether it is justifiable; then, assuming that it is, to devise means of alleviating it whether by 'making your interests gradually wider and more impersonal', as Bertrand Russell suggests, or in the love of children, grandchildren, friends or leaders.

Though he writes with vigour, clarity and intelligence, some of his argument is weakened by the assumption that his knowledge of this subject or that is total and final; that what he regards as an Aunt Sally *can* be nothing but an Aunt Sally, a ridiculous painted target for his darts, instead of perhaps a living, ancient and fruitful Sarah. This is especially noticeable in regard to Christian theology. He also proceeds by associating ideas which have no necessary connection with one another; and here the reader feels that an index might have been as useful to the writer in making distinctions as to himself in tracing cross-references.

For instance, Mr Findlay does not, in treating of religion, separate the arguments for the existence of God and for the continued existence of the dead, but treats them as interdependent. This is not so. Thus, ancient Jewry held no very clear ideas about individual survival, but its whole history, from the time when Abraham was impelled to leave Ur onwards, is of contact with Deity in fear, wonder or joy. Again—to swing across the ages to the late nineteenth century—it is plain that in writing an epitaph for her husband dead after forty years of happy marriage Henrietta Huxley distinguished sharply between belief in personal immortality and belief in God:

Be not afraid, ye waiting hearts that weep

For God still giveth His beloved sleep

And if an endless sleep He will, so best.

And, on the other hand, though Buddhism takes for granted the survival of the self, re-incarnated and working out its Karma in life after life after life, its exponents, in the West at any rate, seem to remain agnostic; or, to be more precise, to accept a super-sensible state of Being as a supreme object of experience, into which the separate self may be absorbed, but to ignore, if not to reject, the breath-taking possibility that this 'Beauty most old and most new', this universal consciousness, may also be conscious of Itself and Its purposes, and of Its creatures.

A careful reading of the book, indeed, makes one wonder whether its underlying concern is not so much to discuss the question of personal survival as to