

that particular point of view.

Catholics can be detached about Wesley and Wesleyanism, it is not so easy for us to be detached about Luther. He was dealt with in the nineteenth century by the German historian Father Denifle, O.P., from judgments on evidence to be little less than a rogue. That verdict has since been gradually modified and the judgment of the contemporary Catholic historian Dr Joseph Lortz sees him as a great reformer *manqué*.

For Catholics there is always the awkward fact that Luther became technically an apostate who defied the Church's authority and wrecked the unity of Christendom in the West. Is it possible for a good man to be presented, in day to day life, with such a caricature of the Church, from its highest representatives, Pope and Bishops, down to its local manifestations in the parish and presbytery, that he loses sight, with excusable completeness, of its true image and becomes obsessed with a false one? In this process, slowly and painfully, in face of the resistance of entrenched abuse, he comes to exaggerate his true insights till they become error, and is led by sincere conscience to reject the Church's divine authority.

Yet at the same time the authority of Christ and his gospel, as he sees it in the New Testament, becomes paramount in his life and work.

That is what happened to Luther in the analysis here presented of his life and work. Mr Todd sets out the facts with impartiality and gives his judgments with studious fairness. He does not over-magnify the undoubted abuses and corruptions in the Church, but he shows Luther's dynamic personality and character in conflict with static resistance to the need of drastic reform.

And out of it all came the Reformation, with its mixed good and evil. Mr Todd would not claim that his book is perfect but he has read widely, thought deeply and written conscientiously and attractively. Dr Hans Küng has said of it: 'He who would understand the modern Catholic Church must understand the Reformation. He who would understand the Reformation must understand Luther'. This book can certainly be recommended to all educated Catholics, clergy and laity, who are eager to engage seriously in the near future in the dialogue with other Christians.

Henry St John, O.P.

THAW AT THE VATICAN. The Second Session of the Vatican Council by Bernard Wall and Barbara Wall, *Gollancz 28s.*

REPORT FROM ROME II. The Second Session of the Vatican Council by Yves Congar, O.P., translated by Lancelot Sheppard, *Geoffrey Chapman 5s.*

COUNCIL SPEECHES OF VATICAN II. A selection edited by Yves Congar, O.P., Hans Küng and Daniel O'Hanlon, S.J., *Sheed and Ward (Stagbooks) 6s.*

SHEPHERD OF MANKIND. A biography of Pope Paul VI by William E. Barrett, *Heinemann 25s.*

Comment on the Vatican Council in English has so far come from Americans, and their books – lively, alert and full of coffee-bar tales – have scarcely troubled to conceal their hopes and fears. Mr and Mrs Wall, who would presumably agree to stand up and be counted as 'progressives', none

the less provide a remarkably objective summary of the debates of the second session. Mr Wall provides the introductory chapters, which place the Council in the context of the Church's response to Pope John's appeal for a spiritual renewal and a sincere confrontation with the

separated brethren as well as with the world at large. Mrs Wall is responsible for the reporting, and she manages to give a coherent impression of discussions – especially on the ‘collegiality’ of the bishops and on the decree on ecumenism – which were often protracted and repetitive. In addition there is some useful documentation, with lists of observers, lay auditors and an analysis of the distribution of the Council Fathers. The catchy title should not dismay any serious reader, for while Mr and Mrs Wall are aware of the need for renewal in the Church and are eager to chronicle any sign of it in the Council’s deliberations, at the same time they have a sense of history and of the large dimensions of the task of implementing Pope John’s (and, one may be sure, of Pope Paul’s) hopes for the Council.

Père Congar’s report, written for the most part as articles while the Council was in session, bears the marks of his fine theological temper. In almost a unique sense, many of the issues before the Council are those which he has championed over the years in his writings – and in his silence too. That is why his judgments, reserved and solid as they are, matter so much and throw into their proper proportion the trivialities that, in journalists’ accounts of the Council, have often done duty for news. Outlines of events and such documents as Pope Paul’s opening address and his speech at the audience with non-Catholic observers add to the usefulness of an admirably produced and most moderately priced book.

*The Council Speeches*, conveniently collected

in a paper-back, are only those which reflect the programme formulated by Pope Paul VI in his opening address, namely ‘self-awareness of the Church, renewal, reunion of Christians, dialogue with the world’ and the Pope’s own words provide the introduction to each of the four sections. Thus, the editors explain, ‘expressions of doctrinaire narrowness, petty criticism and unproductive defence of the *status quo* were disqualified’. The selection cannot, therefore, be an accurate reflection of the actual day-by-day debates, but it does reveal in a very emphatic way the sense of apostolic purpose that inspired the bishops who had made Pope John’s aims their own. Most notable are Bishop de Smedt’s speech on religious freedom and Cardinal Bea’s explanation of the proposed constitution on Catholics and Jews. The contribution of African, Asian and Middle East bishops is specially notable. There is only one speech by an Italian bishop, and one only from Spain.

Mr Barrett is an American journalist and his chatty, anecdotal portrait of Pope Paul has the usual defects of a biography written in a hurry, while its subject is still alive. But he gives some interesting details of the formative years of the Vatican prelate, whose short pastoral experience as Archbishop of Milan, unexpected as it was in terms of ecclesiastical preferment, undoubtedly prepared him for a pontificate which should continue the work of his great predecessor.

I.E.