

cases who look to the Samaritans for help are referred to psychiatric treatment, but obviously the majority of people needing psychiatry seek it without coming first to the Samaritans. The potential suicides they receive appear rather to require the 'befriending' service which they offer: the Samaritans emphasise that you don't have to be on the point of taking the tablets before getting in touch with them.

The idea of this kind of service grew in Chad Varah's mind, but as he was than caring for a large South London parish he was unable to devote sufficient time to it. What he needed was time, a centre from which to operate, and an income on which to live while carrying out this project. The ideal answer was a city church with a small resident population and thus fewer parochial ties, and Chad Varah was lucky enough to be offered the Lord Mayor's Parish of St Stephen Walbrook, the patrons of which agreed to allow a trial of the scheme. As soon as the experiment was publicised it began to be used, and it was only a few months before the original concept of a non-medical but profes-

sional counselling service was abandoned and its place taken by the concept of a *befriending* service run by lay volunteers, selected by and operating under the supervision of someone capable of supplementing their efforts by counselling the clients or referring them for treatment when necessary.

Chad Varah's long introduction to this book gives details of the early days of the Samaritans, and of the development of the present structure of Samaritan branches. The twelve essays in the book are by psychiatrists, psychiatric social workers and clergymen, and all of them were given as papers to various Samaritan conferences. They describe the problems which the volunteers frequently have to face, and the ways of solving them. In fact this is really a handbook for Samaritans rather than a book for the general reader, but it will be of value to social workers and clergymen. Included in the book is a list of all the Samaritan branches in Britain and the rest of the world.

ROSEMARY EAGLETON

RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSIES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. Selected Documents edited by A. O. J. Cockshut; *Methuen*; 35s.

A. O. J. Cockshut's interpretations of the sensibility and legal implications underlying nineteenth century literature and religious controversy are often stimulating, but can also be frustrating because of his failure to validate his suggestions by detailed reference (for example, in his reading of Clough and Mill in *The Unbelievers*). Even in this documentary volume, which sets out to refer us to the texts, five of his passages are undated. In his short General Introduction, he provides thumbnail sketches of some of the significant persons and movements (conceding to the Broad Church, however, only a moral and 'national' achievement, not a theological one). He writes that 'the purpose of this volume is to present texts which are comparatively inaccessible', and it is good to find Clough's little-known, but valuable, *Notes on the Religious Tradition*; the three extracts from the *Tracts for the Times* illustrate the quality of Newman's writing as well as some of the key issues in the Oxford catholic revival. Liberal scholarship and thought is represented by two of the *Essays and Reviews* (C. W. Goodwin and Rowland Williams), two passages each from Dean Stanley and Dr Arnold, Frederick Temple on 'The

Apparent Collision between Religion and the Doctrine of Evolution', and the Preface to Colenso's *Pentateuch*. It would have been useful to have included an example of the fundamentalist opposition; Mr Cockshut only shows us the liberal rebels, and leaves us to infer the original context of debate from internal references.

The selection of five letters and one brief extract from Christmas' *Concise History of the Hampden Controversy* shows something of the intensity of feeling that the Erastian establishment of the Church of England engendered, which is relevant to Keble's Assize Sermon as well as to what happened to Colenso and Rowland Williams. But despite the title of this volume, Mr Cockshut's intention seems to have been less precise than to provide a documentary history of the controversies of the period. The extracts from William Wilberforce, Coleridge, and Dean Mansel are not strictly controversial, though they did contribute to the development of theology and of religious sensibility. The Wilberforce extract exemplifies extremely well the vitality of his religion, and its relation to a firmly dogmatic belief. Coleridge's conception of the National Church, or 'Clerisy', is a

welcome inclusion; the passage from his *Lay Sermons*, and Dean Mansel's lecture on 'The Limits of Religious Thought', both illustrate the important reaction against the deadening and mechanistic system of later eighteenth century rationalism (Mark Pattison considered, in *Essays and Reviews*, that Coleridge had 'restored rationalism to its former vigour of a century before.') But however worthy of reprinting these documents may be, they appear to have been somewhat arbitrarily chosen. Most surprising of all, Mr Cockshut makes no reference to the very important christological debate centering in this country probably on

D. F. Strauss. Although this was a scholars' controversy, it had profound effects not only within theology – and hence on the sacramental and social thought of both Anglo-Catholics and the Broad Church – but also on the whole approach to christian faith amongst a wider public, as the literature of the later mid-century repeatedly testifies (see, for instance, Browning, Matthew Arnold, and George Eliot). Both as a religious controversy, and for its wider significance, it would have deserved Mr Cockshut's attention.

K. J. BATTARBEE

A HOUSE OF KINGS. The History of Westminster Abbey. Edited by Edward Carpenter. Pp. xix + 491, with 100 plates. *John Baker*; 70s.

Westminster Abbey, as all the world knows, has a unique position among the churches of England, and a power over the minds and emotions of Englishmen whether Catholic, Anglican, dissenters or unbelievers. Indeed, in its combination of architectural and other visual beauty with its regal and sepulchral associations and its fame as a symbol of past and present national pride and as a focus of union for all the English-speaking peoples, it has a wealth of attraction surpassed only by the basilica of St Peter in Rome. It is therefore not surprising that it has given rise to a large literature. What is perhaps surprising is the fact that no single book on any aspect of the Abbey, whether academic, literary, popular or merely explanatory, has succeeded in doing full justice to its subject. The only possible exception to this judgment is Dean Stanley's *Historical Monuments of Westminster Abbey*, but the success of that book, now a century old, was due to the personality of the author and a blend of historical imagination, fact and enthusiasm that could not be successfully imitated at the present day. This is not to say that no good books have been written about the Abbey. Quite apart from old histories and learned articles and monographs, W. R. Lethaby's *Westminster Abbey and the King's Craftsmen* (1906), the scholarly works of Dean Armitage Robinson (1909–11) and Dr Pearce (1916–20), and the sumptuous volumes of Canon Westlake (1923) are in their various ways notable and still indispensable, but none of them is a work that by itself suffices.

Whether the present volume achieves this excellence is hard to say. It is a bulky book,

and therefore not easy to read or to carry about. It is a collection of a number of disparate parts of varying length, in this resembling the history of St Paul's published a few years since, and the works have at least two contributors in common. They resemble each other also in the clear distinction between a long section on the medieval period and shorter chapters on later centuries and other topics. In the case of the earlier volume many readers and critics found Professor C. N. L. Brook's contribution the most satisfying piece, and here it may be felt that Dom Hugh Aveling's long and original study is the most interesting and valuable part. Confined by his brief to the results of personal research directed towards the general reader rather than the student, he has succeeded in giving a compressed history of the house that never becomes tangled in detail, and that consistently presents the religious and economic life of the abbey as a picture always changing and sensitive to the world outside it.

Westminster, though always a wealthy house and a royal 'peculiar', situated near the administrative heart of the country and visited ceaselessly by Londoners and foreigners, never displayed a *genius loci* as did Bury St Edmunds and St Albans. It produced only one distinguished abbot (Langham) between Gilbert Crispin and John Islip, few notable monks and few writers. Dom Hugh knows the sources well, and more than once pauses to assess the spiritual and material fortunes of the house, but the image he leaves in the mind is that of a worthy, workaday set of men passing through the daily round without the encouragement of a genius or of a saint, and without giving to us