

realistic appraisal that the various modern theologies give us.

In fact, like the best dogmatic pronouncements of the Church, what we get is not so much positive pronouncements as a steady refusal to accept as final any answer that anybody cares to propose: the gospel is always *more*. God is not bound. Taylor quotes approvingly from Dan Berrigan: the genius of the gospel is in the name of man to refuse an answer.

I have only one serious criticism to make; a criticism which would perhaps demolish a lesser book, but is only a blot on this one. The author's ecclesiology seems strangely inadequate; almost naïvely Protestant, in fact. The author expresses beautifully the wild and even exotic reaches of man's experience of the Spirit, and certainly knows about the importance of ritual, and positively stresses the importance of giving people something definite to do in response to their sudden coming face to face with Christ. Yet he curiously overlooks the rôle of the institutional church in providing just such a ritual of *transitus*. Taylor laments the vagueness of so much modern preaching; yet surely the 'little congregations', the local groups, that he looks to as the normal church structure of the future, cannot help being vague, and I wonder whether the kitchen table eucharist really has much staying power, or capacity to reach the depths of the human soul. Surely the givenness of the Church is one of the great guarantees of openness, constantly preventing us, in spite of our worst endeavours, to turn our religion into a merely sectarian

enterprise. And this is related to a tendency perhaps to stress the ordinariness of the Christian life just a little bit too much. Of course the Holy Spirit opens our eyes to boiled potatoes as much as to Jesus Christ, because his Lordship is all-embracing; but the Christian life is not simply boiled potatoes, but also miracles, of which Taylor seems just a little chary (not nearly as chary as many others, though). And perhaps it is going a little too far to say that once the Cross of Christ has opened our eyes to it, we can see how the pattern of self-sacrificial love repeats itself throughout the universe, and especially in evolution. Taylor certainly does not try to eliminate the novelty from the Christian faith, but perhaps he has not quite managed to do it justice. There is a sense in which the Christian is one who has gone somewhere else, who has *passed over* from death to life, from darkness to light, from Hell to Paradise and even to Heaven. And all this is celebrated, however peculiarly, the institution of the Church, which, for all its faults, and for all its attempts to tie down God and man, nevertheless always testifies also to his sovereign freedom, in which we too are free.

But in spite of this, the book is a wonderful inspiration and invitation to a very authentic Christian freedom, and I am sure that the author himself would recommend us to launch out without timidity, trusting that God himself, by his Spirit, will lead us into all that is really true, and deliver us from falsehood.

SIMON TUGWELL, O.P.

CHRISTENDOM DIVIDED, by Hans J. Hillerbrand. *Hutchinson*, London, 1971. xxiii + 344 pp. £4.00.

This is a valuable addition to Hutchinson's series 'Theological Resources'. This series is designed to present basic works on areas central to any theological renewal, and this volume is a reconsideration of the religious and theological impulses behind the Reformation. Dr Hillerbrand is a Lutheran layman who has specialized in Reformation studies and now teaches in the United States. The author's approach is to take Kohl's distinction between the 'evangelical movement' and the 'political Reformation', and to view the evangelical movement in terms of both the theological controversy and the general spiritual desire for a renewal of Christianity throughout Europe in the early part of the sixteenth century. Dr Hillerbrand makes the fairly obvious but still indispensable

remark that the Reformation must not be seen simply as a religious movement, nor simply as a theological crusade, nor simply as a set of political events, but that it must be seen as the interconnection of all three. Actually Dr Hillerbrand thinks that these three strands must be distinguished and separated, whereas in fact they were inextricably bound together; Luther's theological opinions, for example, around 1520 were political opinions whether he liked it or not. This is confirmed by the various reactions to Luther after the Peasants' Rebellion had been put down—of the Catholics who held Luther responsible for the revolt and of the peasants who insisted that Luther had betrayed them.

Hillerbrand deals with the Reformation in

two parts: the first is the 'Theological Reformation' in which he attempts to cover spiritual and theological matters, and the second part, the 'Political Reformation', deals with the consolidation of the Reformation in terms of what happened on the political stage in various parts of Europe. The great virtue of this approach is that the author can show that there was at first a strange lack of demarcation in the theological issues between what constituted a genuine challenge to traditional orthodoxy and what were new interpretations of peripheral issues, and that it was some years before it became clear what were the crucial issues at stake. Dr Hillerbrand also shows that the Reformation in Germany and elsewhere only succeeded because the Reformers got the right kind of support from their rulers at the right time and, *per contra*, were met by Catholic vacillation when they might have been crushed, or by intransigence when compromise and reform could have been agreed. Further, the Reformation was a very gradual affair in which success as uncertain for many years; the Lutheran Reformation did not become

firmly established until the Diet at Augsburg in 1555 after which Emperor Charles V retired.

The main deficiency of this book is that, despite the author's intentions, he gives very little space to the theological issues, and the first part of the book on the 'Theological Reformation', by far the shortest of the two parts, is more concerned with the history of theological debates than the issues themselves. It would, for example, have been invaluable to have had a fuller account of the controversy between Erasmus and Luther on free will (the issue over which a Catholic must part company with Luther, if only to be faithful to St Paul's view of justification), and to have had an account of the complex theological differences between Calvin and Luther. Still, it's impossible to please everyone with a book on the Reformation and this is a very useful study; there is, however, a misprint of some consequence on page 106: Calvin arrived in Geneva for the first time in 1536, not 1539.

GEOFFREY TURNER

THEOLOGIANS TODAY: An introductory Selection from the Writings of Today's Leading Roman Catholic Theologians. In 8 volumes: von Balthasar, Congar, Durrwell, Küng, de Lubac, Rahner, Schillebeeckx, Sheed. *Sheed and Ward*. Edited by Martin Redfern, Cloth £1.25 each, £8.00 per set. Paper 60p each, £4.80 per set.

The post-war renewal in Catholic Theology has certainly produced its corresponding book boom of such enormous proportions that most of us who are interested in theology or who have a professional responsibility to 'keep up to date' tend to throw up our arms, despairing of ever reading half of them. Sometimes one thinks we should all agree on a five-year pause in new book publications, just to allow us to catch up with what was modish in 1968. What was *the* book of 1968, by the way? Fortunately, however, after a time one realizes that most of the books published needn't have been and would have been better in some periodical as an interesting essay—for that is what so many of them are: an interesting essay ballooned out into a book by long-windedness and footnotery.

But of course there have been a number of truly seminal theologians, whose work, because it has been grounded in expert scholarship, profound grasp of the authentic tradition, imagination and intelligence, has had an enduring value and interest. In this series, Martin Redfern has selected his top eight Catholic theologians, from which Chenu is surely a surprising omission. Each volume

attempts to give an introductory selection of essays of the theologian concerned and each essay is keyed to some document of the Second Vatican Council. The selection of essays is very much Martin Redfern's own and, generally speaking, is a good one. For the most part they are certainly representative of the main lines of the theologian's thinking, even though one or two are a bit light-weight—e.g. Rahner on 'The Sacrifice of the Mass' and Schillebeeckx on 'Marriage in The Divine Revelation of the Old Testament'. For those interested in introducing themselves to the work of these theologians this series is easily recommended, and perhaps a good essay to start with would be Rahner's on 'The Prospect for Christianity', which sets the tone and emphasizes the need for the theological renewal already started, of which, happily, these theologians have been pioneers and sustainers.

An interesting novelty has been introduced into this series by the proof reader. As well as educating yourself theologically, you can also, as you read through these volumes, test your powers of perception by spotting the extraordinary number of printing errors and word-omissions.

ALBAN WESTON, O.P.