

prosperous society of Holland seems not to inspire much criticism. In a word, the Church in Holland has not as yet entered the 'post-progressive' stage. The solidarity with the world has been discovered, not yet the non-conformity with this world. Nevertheless one finds some traces of the awareness that also the new ideas are provisional and open to criticism. Nobody is willing to leave the Church (the Dutch consider Charles Davis as a conservative), nobody abstains entirely from symbolic actions, the sacraments, and prayer.

For many people, Franck's book can be very refreshing, liberating and encouraging. It is a valuable book, but only if one bears in mind the narrowness of its scope: the registering of emotional reactions of 'avant-garde' Catholics

to a conservative terminology. A criticism of the book could be that the working method itself is not very satisfying. The reactions of the Dutch respondents are a little too short and pithy. Interviews with the respondents, or with some of them, could have been more fruitful. The second part of the book, the interviews with Catholics outside Holland, proves this.

There are two strange mistakes in the book: the initial of Fr Chenu is not N. but M.-D., and the Christian name of Fr van Dam is not Piet but Paul. Another surprise is that the author did not ask for thought-associations on the word 'God' at a time in which the 'God-is-dead' theology was still very much alive. Sheed and Ward have produced the book in an attractive way.

ANDREW LASCARIS, O.P.

MALCOLM BOYD'S BOOK OF DAYS. *Heinemann, S.C.M. Press Ltd.* 182 pp. 25s.

'How do we speak of God without religion. . . How do we speak in a secular fashion of God?' Malcolm Boyd, a well-known American writer, answers this question of Dietrich Bonhoeffer by saying that 'God is the spirit of relationship'. He does not start by talking about God but by probing people's minds on the question of relationship. He approaches this with the awareness that the individual does not find it easy to relate. One of the reasons for this is that each individual lives in a shell which he can only get out of with difficulty. He looks in at himself constantly and often concludes that he is unfit to help others.

This situation has been reinforced by the Church every time it has reminded its members of their state of sin and their need for salvation. There has been inward-looking to the extent that the Church has become a 'segregated ghetto' withdrawing its members into 'the self-centred web of personal piety' (p. 97).

For this reason, Malcolm Boyd has deliberately taken religion from the Church and set it in the context of relationship—concentrating particularly on the issues of Vietnam, poverty and racial unity. He also considers the damage caused by using words as a 'sophisticated method of keeping people at

arm's length' (p. 76). Once we have inhumanly labelled the other we don't have to listen to him.

His treatment of these themes is in the style of 'Thoughts for the Day', ranging from quotations from other writers to shock tactics of his own—'Jesus had a penis' (p. 72). The thoughts are uneven in quality and some may be obscure to the English reader.

This critique of inward-looking is familiar enough in modern spirituality, but if it is to be discarded altogether in favour of action, the best of the tradition will also be lost. Bernard of Clairvaux expresses it here: 'To feel your brother's sadness in your own heart, you must first know your own sorry state, which will make you aware of his condition, so that you may help him through knowledge of yourself' (*The Steps of Humility*, ch. 3). It is by being combined with self-awareness that action is saved from activism. Malcolm Boyd asks that we should look for the people who live behind the labels and the faces behind the masks, but this means that we must first unmask ourselves. Ultimately a book can only say what needs to be done. It is up to the individual to do it.

JANET HALTON

METAPHYSICS, by Emerich Coreth. English edition by Joseph Donceel, with a critique by Bernard J. F. Lonergan. *Herder and Herder, New York, 1968.* 224 pp. \$6.50.

When more than 500 pages of German (more than 600 in the second edition) become 177 pages of English with only the very rare footnote and not so much as a *zum Beispiel* remaining, only those most cynically disposed to the verbosity of German-speaking metaphysicians

will fail to wonder *wie es eigentlich geschehen ist*. The editor says of the book: 'It has been condensed; an effort has been made to keep all its essential ideas, while omitting or abbreviating that which did not seem so important, especially some of the historical passages, which