

for Kant was exploring both the bounds of meaning and the bounds of the sensibly perceptible. The limits of meaningful assertion are defined for Kant by his principle of significance, the principle that, in Mr Strawson's words, 'there can be no legitimate, or even meaningful, employment of ideas or concepts which does not relate them to empirical or experiential conditions of their application' (p. 16). It is on this side of his thought that Kant is among the ancestors of logical positivism and of the kind of 'making an experientiable difference' criterion of factual meaningfulness that remains today as the acceptable deposit of logical positivism.

The bounds of the sensibly experientiable are sought in Kant's investigation of that limiting framework of ideas and principles which are essential to the awareness of a sense field, and which are therefore implicit in our concept of conscious experience. The point of central interest is Kant's persistent wrestling with the question of objectivity. That is to say, in showing that the conditions of the occurrence within a unitary consciousness of a manifold of sense impressions are conditions inherent in the structure of consciousness itself, Kant does not want to arrive at the conclusion that the experienced world exists only as a mind-dependent phenomenon. He continually uses the non-solipsist language of a community of experiencers. He wants to think, in basically commonsense terms, of an individual's stream of experiences as, in Mr Strawson's illuminating phrase, 'a single, subjective, experimental route, one among other possible subjective routes through the same objective world' (p. 104). Kant welds subjectivity and objectivity together in his famous, but notoriously difficult, transcendental deduction of the categories. Mr

Strawson states Kant's conclusion as follows: 'What is required for a series of experiences to belong to a single consciousness is that they should possess precisely that rule-governed connectedness which is also required for them collectively to constitute a temporally extended experience of a single objective world' (pp. 92–3). As Strawson comments, 'what Kant above all insisted on in the Transcendental Deduction was the necessity of a certain unity or connectedness of experiences, just that connectedness which involves and is involved by the employment of concepts of objects conceived of as together constituting an objective world. The conception of an objective world is bound up with the conception of alternative possible experiential routes through it, with the distinction between subjective experience and the world of which it is experience, and with the possibility of empirical self-consciousness' (p. 121).

These are only indications of one of the main themes. Mr Strawson offers detailed and patient disentanglings of Kant's often tortuous discussions. *The Critique* is so rich in exciting insights and novel arguments that it should not be surprising that it also includes some fallacious reasoning and a number of instances of a point of view being forced into unsuitable moulds supplied by the logic or the science of Kant's own day. At these points Mr Strawson is ruthless in his criticisms. But the total effect is to make more clearly apparent the truly epoch-making importance of Kant's thought and its direct relevance to philosophical work today.

No book that deals honestly with so difficult a work as the *Critique of Pure Reason* could itself be easy to read, and Mr Strawson's is no exception. But it is definitely a book to read, and then to read again after a return to Kant's own text.

JOHN H. HICK

THE LAWS IN THE PENTATEUCH AND OTHER ESSAYS by Martin Noth, translated by D. R. Ap-Thomas: *Oliver & Boyd*. pp. xiv + 289. 55s.

Martin Noth is a scholar whose work illuminates areas far beyond his chosen field of study. The eleven essays in this book originally appeared in German between 1940 and 1958 in a wide range of periodicals and Festschriften; it is good to have them in an accessible form.

The essays are all concerned with the Old Testament; they range in time from pre-conquest influences on Israelite covenant making to the period of the apocalyptic writings, and in scope from the sources and authority of Israelite

law to the Hebrew attitude towards history. Except for the first one, they are comparatively short, but these shorter studies penetrate into the heart of the problems they are examining. Noth's combination of sharp insight and wide concern for fact is well shown in his examination of the work of the 'Myth and Ritual' school of thought associated with S. H. Hooke, which he criticises in the essay 'God, King and People in the Old Testament'. '... we need the sort of scientifically controlled intuition which is indispensable in all

scientific work that aims at opening up new experiences,' writes Noth; yet at the same time intuition is not enough: 'There is a very real danger of a subjective and unacceptable viewpoint. Any view expressed must prove its correctness by demonstrating that it makes a large number of recorded occurrences more understandable, and shows them in a convincing new light.'

It is precisely this scientific combination of intuition controlled and verified by empirical application that distinguishes Noth's work, and this is impressively demonstrated in the extended essay 'The Laws in the Pentateuch' which occupies more than a hundred pages in this collection. This essay was first published in 1940, and one can see in it the kind of thorough investigation of the Old Testament community which lies behind his later book 'The History of Israel'. The essay is a fundamental examination of the relationships between law and community as the Israelite society developed from the early confederation, via the changes produced by the introduction of monarchy, into the complex structure of the post-exilic situation. The early, undifferentiated society remained the ideal, but in the course of time the essential dependance of law on the covenant community was reversed, and in its final stages 'the law' became an absolute entity with an authority that was

independent of the community which had produced it: 'The law became a power in its own right. If it did in fact stand in a historical relationship to a particular human community – the post-exilic community at home and in dispersion – the old, obvious relationship was now reversed; it was not now this community which formed the prerequisite for the being and application of the law, but rather it was the law, as the unprecedented primary entity, which fashioned this community, which was nothing but the union of those people who submitted to the law on all points.'

It is from this realisation that we can begin to understand why the Christian community had to break with Judaism, and why St Paul was so concerned that the new covenant community, initiated by Christ and formed and maintained by sharing in his risen life, must never again be chained by the law which emerged within it. The relevance of this insight is immediate and obvious as we continue the process of examining the Church afresh, for there is always a tendency for societies to petrify into rigid institutions in which the proper relationship between the living community and law becomes reversed.

Mr Ap-Thomas is to be congratulated on giving us Martin Noth's work in such readable English.

JOSEPH RHYMER

THE WIDE HORIZON

'*Christian Ashram*' by Bede Griffiths. Essays towards a Hindu-Christian Dialogue. *Darton Longman and Todd*

It was Albert Schweitzer, himself a lonely pioneer, who said that anyone who is called to an extraordinary mission should first make sure that he is willing to do anything that is the will of God, however ordinary. Only so can he hope for real stability in what he undertakes. This book is a proof, if proof were needed, that Fr Bede Griffiths' monastery in Kerala is no airy dream. One of the illustrations shows him standing before the mountain range near Kurisumala Ashram, a range which may not yet be fully mapped, but which corresponds well with Fr Bede's vision of the human territory of the world awaiting transformation in Christ. For any who think that the trumpets of doom are already sounding, with only a quarter of the Church's task done, Fr Bede gives the alternative. And it is expressed with no false optimism or emotional challenge, but with the positive wisdom of faith. Here and there we read 'This is difficult

but . . .' and we realise the many frustrations which this form of Christ's gospel must meet, and which Fr Bede must know better than any.

The book is in five parts, one of which describes Kurisumala Ashram and its place in the long and interesting history of Christianity in India; another entitled 'Towards a Non-violent Society', deals with the message of Gandhi and his spiritual successor Vinoba Bhave, which is seen as a challenge to our so-called Christian society with its practical denial of the Sermon on the Mount. The other three sections deal with the broad and deep issues of Hindu-Christian dialogue, and although at first the reader may think he will be subjected to some repetition, since the chapters are essays and addresses written on different occasions, this does not happen more than a few times. They are more like separate petals of a flower, each drawing towards Fr Bede's central thought, but com-