

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. By Fr Sebastiano Pagano, O.M.I. (University Seminary, Ottawa, Canada; n.p.)

This is a most ingenious table, a lithographed typescript covering ten pages on a single folded sheet of stout paper, with a continuous date-line beginning in 1370 (Ugarit, etc.) and ending with the birth of Christ. The main periods and reigns are clearly marked at the top, and the various writings of the old testament are placed beneath, showing graphically their situation on the chronological background. Here are some examples of placings. The early epics belong to the fourteenth, thirteenth and twelfth centuries. J is placed in Solomon's time ('uses earlier oral and written traditions'), E in the eighth century and P in the exilic period. The first recension of Deuteronomy is placed with Hezekiah, and the Pentateuch is edited in the fifth century. Job is in the fifth century, as also Obadiah, and Joel is about 400. Zechariah 9-14 is placed in the fourth century, Daniel in the second and Wisdom about 50 B.C. While not everyone will agree with all these datings (for no such table could please everyone), the plan does represent fairly general opinion today (Catholic and non-Catholic alike) and provides a useful working hypothesis (with one's own reservations). Its clarity will make it a most useful instrument for any day-to-day teacher of Scripture.

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH, O.P.

AN OUTLINE OF ANGLO-AMERICAN BIBLE HISTORY. By Edgar Newgass. (Batsford; 25s.)

A pleasantly produced but slight book (forty-eight pages of text, followed by seventeen plates of title-pages), purporting to tell as a simple story the growth of the protestant Bible in England and America. The story is told from Tyndale to King James, and then moves to America until the Revised version of 1881. A few modern versions are then mentioned, including Knox, and here a few lines are rather inaccurately given about Douay. There are a few samples of texts, old and new, and a sketched bibliography. The author says on page 37 that each translation has been 'a labour of love', and the same may certainly be said of his own book.

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH, O.P.

ON THE ETERNAL IN MAN. By Max Scheler. (S.C.M. Press; 63s.)

This new addition to *The Library of Philosophy and Theology* more than justifies its considerable expense. It consists of five sections, of which the third is by far the longest and most important. The first

deals with the vital function of repentance in the metabolism of the human soul; a past action is never wholly irremediable, as it can only acquire final significance in the context of one's life as a whole. The second section, 'The Nature of Philosophy', is a sketch of the tasks of philosophy as envisaged by Husserl and his followers—to apprehend the essences of things without cultural or scientific preconceptions. 'Christian Love and the Twentieth Century', the fourth of the series, relates the contemporary moral chaos to a *de facto* replacement of Christian belief by the values of capitalism or the unsatisfying worship of a 'homogenized world-purée' of mankind; to those who deny that there has been such a change, Scheler replies that it must be admitted either that Christianity has lost its former place as the dominating spiritual force of European culture, or that it is bankrupt—now that Europe is guilty of so many crimes, no third position is tenable. 'The Reconstruction of European Culture', which seems even more pertinent to the aftermath of the second world war than to its original context at the end of the first, insists that only by recognizing our collective guilt can we hope to rebuild our civilization.

The third section, 'Problems of Religion', is outstanding among modern writings on the philosophy of religion for clarity, erudition, and power of argument. Recent catastrophes have cleared men's eyes for God by removing both the pantheist shadow of him and the idol of humanity. Metaphysics may be a way to religion, but neither is a satisfactory substitute for the other, as metaphysics apprehends God primarily as *ens a se*, religion as *summum bonum*.

Two outlooks in particular are obstructive to religious knowledge: the Kantian, which conceives the mental habits of a particular epoch to be fundamental laws of human thought; and the positivist, which skims from our experience only those elements which relate to the control of our physical environment. Any epistemology which includes both 'an evolutionary theory and a sociology of mental structures' will show these defects quite clearly. Man has a natural experience of God, the psychological reduction of which is based merely on prejudice; special revelation, on the other hand, seems to depend rather on individual *homines religiosi*, who must be distinguished sharply from the genius or hero as well as from the apostle, saint or reformer within a religious tradition. Apart from such revelation, human knowledge of God is an essentially collective enterprise; will not be complete until every man from every civilization has made his own contribution. A heretic is one who does not realize that a private knowledge of God is impossible, since in principle this knowledge can be conserved and extended only on the basis of a tradition independent alike of individual caprice and cultural change. That he

who speaks might have kept silent is essential to personal communication; so the contingency of historical events is appropriate to the revelation of a personal God. Of all known historical persons, Jesus seems the most plausible manifestation of the divine, both in his acts and in the claims he made for himself.

Scheler's Achilles heel is his theory of the intuitive certainty of religious and moral knowledge, which is particularly vulnerable to neo-positivism with its canons of verification. But this facet of his thought can be modified without damage to his argument as a whole.

Bernard Noble's translation is clear and readable, and the frank confession where paraphrase has had to be resorted to, invites the reader's confidence as to its overall accuracy.

HUGO MEYNELL

THE FAMILY BOOK. By Rosemary Haughton. (Darton, Longman and Todd; 6s.)

OUR LORD'S LIFE. By Amelia Tondini Melgari. Translated by Joy Mary Merruzi. (Oldbourne Press; 25s.)

BERNADETTE. By G. B. Stern. (Nelson; 12s. 6d.)

1. 'It is not your job to pick the fruit, it is your job to keep on planting the seed!' is the final piece of advice from this mother of six. Illustrated with her own pen-and-ink sketches, this excellent small book is packed with suggestions as to how Catholic parents can 'plant the seed' of the love of God in their children. A homely outline of all essential Christian doctrine, it is enlivened with many practical examples of how one Catholic family live out their faith. Particularly stimulating are their celebrations of the feasts and fasts of the liturgical year, and the ways in which they teach their children to grow from infancy in understanding of prayer, the sacraments, the mass—and sin. Though addressed throughout to parents, the extreme simplicity of language and illustration leads one to suppose that the older children are expected to read the book over their parents' shoulders.

2. The text of this life of Christ for children of any age is in the main very readable. The slightly stilted or jejune passages probably derive from the translation. It might have been more lively if at least all direct speech instead of being paraphrased had been rendered in a known English version. The illustrations dominate the narrative—there's a large one on every page. Some of these will hardly fail to please. They are extremely colourful, well drawn and dramatic. A few may be too frightening for younger readers. This is a finely produced book that practically all will appreciate once past the lurid dust-cover.