

of a flying saucer, saying (in Hebrew): 'Hey, fellas, I'm back.' One of the editors of *Oz* said he thought it a fair caricature of what most young people believe, at least those of the 'psychedelic generation'. Even the view that there was a prehistoric descent of the 'gods' is maintained by several scholars, mainly in the U.S.S.R. It is certainly the case that archaeologists have begun to recognize a fantastically advanced culture in prehistoric times, with some suggestions of a highly developed technology. Professor Thom has indicated the immense mathematical (pure and applied) and astronomical competence of the builders of the British megalithic sites; not only was there a standard and precise measurement throughout these isles, but there was also knowledge of astronomical discoveries made in the twentieth century (just as popular tradition knew of the two satellites of Mars long before astronomers discovered them with modern equipment).

It is tempting simply to shrug our scientific and commonsensical shoulders. And that is just what we must not do (that is why I think it is important). It is no longer possible for 'scientific commonsense' to legislate about the bounds of reality. Science has played traitor, for one thing, as when the electron was found to go through two different holes in a sheet of paper at the same time. There *are* more things at least on earth than our commonsense philosophy cares to admit of. Even to keep up with the scientists, we must relearn the use of myths and symbols, quite apart from the further reasons adduced by McLuhan, Lawrence, Jung, C. S. Lewis, Tolkien, Gerald Vann. The poet and the priest must become one (Rahner).

At the very least, we must acknowledge here a challenge to our presentation of the gospel. The impression we seem keen to give, and on the whole succeed in giving, is that our gospel is secular and demythologized. And we are just

too late for that. What John Mitchell is calling for, in this book and elsewhere, is desecularization and remythologization. I am afraid that people will one day look back at our Church, with its political and mythless and unmythical gospel, its deritualized sacraments, and say that once more she has jumped on a bandwagon already passing and irrelevant. (I know there are people who say that Christianity should preach secularization, whether or not we are living in a secular society. I suggest such people should read their Bibles a little less selectively.)

This is not simply a question of apologetics. Culturally, as McLuhan says, there is the question of preserving the West from too simple a reversion to tribal, mythological attitudes. The archetypes are, so to speak, arising in all their force and fantasy; unless we can point to a true use of myth and symbol, an authentic mysticism, we are going to be deluged by sheer superstition. And this is beginning to happen already. A people unprepared for myth and mystery tries to cope by means of hopelessly inadequate tools. And so myth becomes a substitute for thought, instead of a mode of thought, fantasy takes the place of action. 'I don't believe in Vietnam', said one boy to me. Innerspace and outerspace are one, according to the Oriental sages, but, buddy, they didn't mean *that!* To preach the faith, even to preach sanity, to this generation, we must show ourselves open to the whole mythological, symbolical, ritual, mystical dimension of life, and of our own religion.

It is surely no accident that two of the idols of the psychedelics are C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien, both of them Christian mythologists. It is probably true, too, that C. S. Lewis did his best theology in his fantasies.

The sermon is over. Read John Michell, it is a nice book. And then, look out!

SIMON TUGWELL, O.P.

**VIOLENCE**, by John Singleton, 11-16 Series: Year 5, Teacher's Book. *Darton, Longman and Todd, 1968.* **SCRIPTURE DISCUSSION OUTLINES**, *Sheed and Ward, 1968: Deuteronomy*, by Joseph Blenkinsopp. *Acts of the Apostles*, by Nicholas Lash. *I Corinthians*, by Laurence Bright O.P. *I Peter and I John*, by Bernard Robinson.

John Singleton's *Violence* is a collection of photographs and extracts from books, periodicals and other sources with a commentary and questions for discussion together with notes for the teacher. Both the photographs and texts chosen are forceful, but this book should be taken as an excellent example of what can be done by an enterprising teacher and his class

rather than as a textbook for use year after year in classroom discussion.

The Scripture Discussion Outlines are a very welcome contribution to Sixth Form and Higher Education work on Scripture. Plans have been made to cover all the major books of the Bible in this series and it is to be hoped that all the future volumes preserve the

high standard of these four. The volumes consist largely of selected passages from the book under discussion with a commentary which both attempts to elucidate the text where this is necessary and to raise questions from it of contemporary importance. All four of the commentators have tried to bring out the 'gospel force' of each book as something that challenges us even today.

The authors have also succeeded in giving the reader commentaries which are both lucid and reasonably up to date with current exegetical views where these are relevant to the understanding of the text. *Deuteronomy* by Joseph Blenkinsopp is a particularly good volume in this series in which the author vividly conveys the atmosphere of the book. Mr Blenkinsopp makes useful comparisons of the idea of Law in Deuteronomy, the Synoptics and St Paul. Nicholas Lash in his volume *Acts of the Apostles* rightly stresses the theological importance of Acts as against the all too familiar view of it as merely a chronology of the journeys of St Paul. He also stresses the relationship of Acts with Luke and the importance of Jerusalem as a theological motif. Laurence Bright in his volume on I Corinthians amply

proves his contention that this epistle is the best place to start a study of St Paul. Here we have many of the ideas that St Paul was to develop in his more formal treatises but discussed in a concrete situation of dissension and controversy in the Corinthian Church. Laurence Bright's stress on this makes his volume especially suited for group discussion work.

Bernard Robinson's volume on I Peter and I John is also a very competent introduction to two important but often neglected writings of the New Testament. It is a great pity, however, that Mr. Robinson in his commentary and discussion of I John did not make use of J. C. O'Neill's short work, *The Puzzle of I John*, published in 1966 as this would have thrown light on several passages which he finds difficulty in explaining. Professor O'Neill's conclusions have found considerable acceptance amongst New Testament scholars today. But despite this, this volume and the other three are to be thoroughly recommended and the series as a whole should do much to raise the standard of Christian awareness and commitment in schools and places of higher education.

MERVYN DAVIES

### ERRATA

The editor would like to apologize for certain printing errors that crept into his Comment last month. Apart from the more obvious oddities at the end of five lines on p. 620, the last six lines of p. 619 should be unscrambled to read as follows: 'Because a new philosophy and way of looking at man's being in the world is emerging haltingly to articulation, it simply does not follow that the older philosophy thereby loses its entire validity. Likewise it does not follow that a conclusion should necessarily be false even though it is worked out in terms of a philosophy that may indeed prove to be incomplete.'

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