

of history, and the part they had in God's will, led them to understand that God must have created the world. They did not begin with creation, they began with the covenant and the people of God, then they thought about their environment and only lastly the origin of the world in the will of God.

There is a small demonstration of this gradual realisation in the enlargement of the content of the divine title, 'Lord of Hosts'. The hosts of God were first thought of as the men who fought Israel's battles in the period of the conquest, later Yahweh was understood to be Lord of other hosts, of the stars, and, with the introduction of elements from neighbouring religions, of angels. Men, natural phenomena and angels are linked together in one creation, they all belong to God and all are involved with one another. This theme, made familiar to us in the New Testament by St Paul, leads on to another. The creation of material things and the saving of men are seen in the same terms. God made his world in light, a light that shone before the stars, and a light in which they participate. The final editor of the Genesis narrative did not make a scientific blunder or an error in everyday observation, he wanted to show the same power at work with things as with men. God has made his people, 'numbered like the stars of heaven', to come from darkness and chaos into the light and to participate in his life and light. It is this ancient biblical theme that St John takes up and enriches, and which the Church has placed at the centre of the Easter liturgy. As St Justin pointed out in the *Dialogue with Trypho*, the Church has always desired to unite in the one eucharist the creation of the world and the redemption of mankind.

This is a Franciscan book, shot through with a sense of 'the gift of the soil' and the wonder of science. It is not a work of great scholarship, nor is the translation distinguished by a felicity of language, but it is a book that opens the mind to the goodness of the world that God has given us.

HAMISH SWANSTON

WE ARE CHRIST'S BODY, by Pius Parsch; Challoner, 8s. 6d.

This booklet is an astonishing mixture of mumbo-jumbo and bad theology. It is hard to credit that it could have been published at a time when the theological revival is at last beginning to have its effect in England. It is so bad that it is hard to pick out a particular area for attack.

The horrors begin in the very first paragraph. 'A message from the Vicar of Christ is a message from Christ himself' (this apropos the encyclical *Mystici Corporis*.) Its theology of grace is a dark commentary on the state to which theology can fall. It contains an account of grace as a 'created share in the life of God', a phrase which in itself needs careful explanation if it is to have any meaning—despite its common use—but its handling here sounds not unlike a Samuel Beckett travesty of true doctrine. The sacraments are presented as things in precisely the way most consistently attacked by modern continental theologians. In the account of the establishment of the Church (pp. 21-22) no

mention is made of the Resurrection and the Ascension. The place of the glorified *Kyrios* in relation to the community of Christians is not touched upon. The worst of the book is probably to be found in chapter five where a comparison between sacramental grace and sacramental character is made which defies comprehension. That any Catholic claiming any degree of theological literacy could begin a sentence thus: 'We learn in the catechism of three sacraments which confer an indelible character— . . . ' and then continue to confound confusion by saying later 'For it is not through grace that we become members of the Mystical Body . . . grace however can be lost; so he binds his members to himself by the character which has a permanent nature' (p. 47). Yet 'What about those who have been baptized as Christians but belong to sects in heresy or schism? Can we regard them as members of the Mystical Body? . . . It is certain that they are not actually members, etc.' (p. 41). One despairs.

It is hardly a matter for surprise that such a book should use the Knox translation including (pp. 30-31) a very curious passage from Romans which seems to bear very little relation to what was in fact written.

The translator says in his introduction that the late Pius Parsch gave him permission to alter the text of this book in any way that he considered necessary for English consumption. It is difficult, therefore, to decide how much is due to the poverty of the author's work and how much to the ineptitude of the translator. In either case it is a matter of the deepest regret that such works should still find a market here.

REX O'HEA

LIVING SPRINGS, by Olive Wyon; S.C.M. Press, 8s. 6d.

GOD IS ALWAYS GREATER, by M. Basilea Schlink; Faith Press, 7s. 6d.

*Living Springs* in 128 pages gives us a chapter on the meaning of monasticism, and then a series of descriptions of recent communities and institutes in Western Europe. It is all very brisk. 'St Basil the Great (c. 330-379), the next great figure, came from a leading Christian family in Cappadocia (Asia Minor)'. It is also necessarily incomplete, though giving us the address of each community described was a good idea. Perhaps this book might be useful for someone wholly ignorant of the subject. Dr Wyon tries very hard to be fair but she cannot avoid being misleading. 'Holiness is one, but it must be apprehended by each in the manner appropriate to his way of life and not in terms that have been worked out within the monastery. In this connection it is significant to note the deep influence in these latter days of two saints, Thérèse de Lisieux and Charles de Foucauld, both of whom drew their spirituality from the Bible itself'. This is all the harder to understand coming from a writer who speaks of 'the gap' left in Protestant Christianity by the rejection of monasticism.

The most interesting part of the book is in the accounts of the formation and growth of new communities. It is clear that effective contact with 'the world', circles of associates and friends, are a feature of virtually all those that flourish.