

Christian. It is only in the light of Christian experience that we can come to see, at least in the concrete, that all things were *created*, and that the everyday world can in fact be made to sustain the kind of metaphysical analysis which brings us to talk about God.

If we are able to talk about God from a position of Christian assurance, as Professor Collins is, then all these centuries of groping, disputable and often crazy speculation can be *placed*, and can offer more fruitful insights and directions than would at first appear. At any rate, this is a definitive work, and it goes as far as a book can to vouch for the continued relevance, and the urgent need, of fresh reflection about God.

FERGUS KERR, O.P.

REBELLIOUS PROPHET: A LIFE OF NICOLAI BERDYAEV. By Donald A. Lowrie. (Gollancz, 25s.)

Mr Lowrie tells us that 'Quantitatively, Berdyaev's works have been more widely disseminated in English than in any other' of the fifteen languages in which writings of his have appeared. It is therefore not inappropriate that what will probably prove to be the definitive biography of this 'great, lonely thinker', as Professor Maritain called him, should be written in our tongue. Donald Lowrie, an American, was closely associated with Berdyaev in Paris for a quarter of a century, and has since devoted years to collecting and digesting material, personal and documentary. In his preface he seems to imply that the result is simply a factual record. Mr Lowrie is too modest; facts, yes, but not bare facts: this is a whole portrait of a man. It is not a 'warts and all' picture in the vulgar sense, but a frank, loving story and study, well balanced, perceptive, and sensitively written. Without doubt its publication will mean an increased demand for Berdyaev's own writings.

From the start in Paris, Berdyaev 'had to combat a tendency on the part of non-Orthodox to consider him a spokesman for the Orthodox Church'. That he was not in fact representative even of Russian Orthodoxy is perhaps the first thing that the western Christian reader has to learn. He had considerable influence among Catholics in France; he knew Jacques Maritain, Étienne Gilson, Gabriel Marcel and Emmanuel Mounier personally, and was present at the meetings at which *Esprit* was projected. In England, his influence was predominantly amongst Anglicans; but it was a Catholic publishing house, Messrs Sheed and Ward, that first introduced him to the English-speaking world: *The Russian Revolution*, two essays on its implications in religion and psychology, appeared in 1931, and others followed. Through Berdyaev, more than one errant Catholic found the path again.

It is gratifying that, in 1947, the year before his death, Berdyaev was honoured by the University of Cambridge by the conferring of the degree of Doctor of Divinity, *honoris causa*. In the procession to the Senate House he was followed at some distance by Ernest Bevin and Field-Marshal Wavell. Berdyaev was not the man to bother about precedence, which was in fact that of the degree being conferred, but there seems a certain inner appropriateness about it, on more counts than one. He himself said of

England that, 'In no other European country have I met such sympathy, such a high appreciation of my thought'.

DONALD ATTWATER

THE KINGDOMS OF CHRIST. By Peter Bamm. Translated by Christopher Holme. (Thames and Hudson; 42s.)

THE CHURCH OF APOSTLES AND MARTYRS. By H. Daniel-Rops. Translated by Audrey Butler. (Dent; 45s.)

The history of Christianity is more than a history of ideas: the incarnational truth that lies at the heart of its teaching has, from the beginning, its concrete realization in sound and stone and stuff. The story of the Early Church is necessarily a matter of fragments and conjecture if what we seek is an ordered account of its life and practice, though the essential pattern is plain as early as the second-century *Didache* and Justin Martyr. But the evidence of the manuscripts is early supplemented in inscriptions and wall-paintings and mosaics, and as the Church emerges into freedom and public power the growing treasure of buildings and the sacred things within bears its own testimony to the Church's teaching and the life it inspires.

It is this realization of the importance of the pictorial evidence that marks Peter Bamm's magnificent book. Close on four hundred illustrations follow the story (itself a clear account, though sometimes impeded by the need to comment on the wonders displayed), and they match the Church's own geography—from Rome to India, with Anglo-Saxon illuminations to match Persian miniatures and Russian medallions. The choice of illustrations is brilliantly done, reflecting as it does the Church's catholicity. One finds the expected things, of course: the 'Orpheus' Good Shepherd now at the Louvre, and the Syon Cope. But who would expect to find photographs of Welsh inscribed stones or one of Jenghiz Khan from a Formosa museum, a mosaic from Gast Lebia in North Africa or a nineteenth-century engraving of the ruins of Laodicea?

There emerges a portrait of the Church in its true dimensions, transmitting its truths to all peoples and using, as it must, the wealth of the world of created things to express them. The author's enthusiastic curiosity, which cares as much for the Irish monks as for the glories of Byzantium—and rightly—has created a rich store of manuscripts, photographs of sites and hundreds of sacred objects which should provide an invaluable companion to the intelligent study of Church history. Admirably printed in Western Germany, and most moderately priced, this book can be commended, though it does not always avoid syncretic generalizations.

The first volume of M. Daniel-Rops' *History of the Church* is the third to appear in order of publication, and it begins with 'Brethren of Jerusalem' and ends with Theodosius and the eve of the Barbarian invasions. Once more, the author's capacity for ordering in a coherent narrative the complex researches of specialists is brilliantly displayed.

A.I.