

Gnostic writings, and so to Mark and Matthew, Luke, John and Paul, showing with immense skill and insight the variations and further projections which it undergoes. Dr A. N. Wilder, in the final essay on 'Kerygma, Eschatology, and Social Ethics', superbly restates the idea of the creation of the Church as 'a social-historical operation' with the ethical implications on a social and communal plane which such a conception entails. It is exactly the position which Bultmann has so vehemently attacked in his essay, and here again Bultmann's theory is conclusively rejected. . . . 'The New Testament's symbolic presentation of the conflict between good and evil, between the Gospel and the world, and between the Church and the false authorities of this age . . . in which the Church militant is engaged, must not be theologized into an other-worldly abstraction or a banal version of the moral struggle of the individual.'

One may be permitted to hope that it will give Dr Dodd deep happiness to see in this superb tribute how profoundly and how fruitfully his own master-concept of Realized Eschatology is being explored by the most distinguished of his contemporaries.

JOSEPH BOURKE, O.P.

EARLY BIBLE ILLUSTRATIONS. By James Strachan. (Cambridge University Press; 18s. 6d.)

'Mr Strachan writes as an amateur; this means principally that he communicates his own interest, freshness of approach and pleasure in discovery.' This passage from the publisher's blurb indicates very justly the quality of the book. Starting from the Great Bible of Henry VIII, the author has traced back the history of biblical illustration from 1541 to the first printed Bible which contained any pictures, that printed by Zainer in Augsburg in 1475. His interest is primarily in the subjects of the illustrations, and he writes as one familiar in the first instance with the Authorized Version.

The subject of Mr Strachan's researches is one of great interest, and also of bewildering complexity. Most of these early Bibles contain a great many pictures, some difficult to identify, some incorporating unintelligible inscriptions, some which seem oddly chosen in subject, or oddly placed in the text. The reason for this is that though a printer might order a whole new set of woodcuts for his publication, as Lufft did for Luther's translation (first published as a whole in 1534), it was far more usual to buy up, or copy, blocks used in some previous edition. In this the printing trade was indifferent both to national and sectarian origins; German and Italian designs are copied in French and English books, and those first appearing in Protestant publications

reappear in Catholic texts. Mr Strachan has been through the many editions of his period and unravelled the obscure and complicated relationships between the many woodblocks used. In so doing he has illuminated many curious subjects and explained some odd mistakes. Particularly interesting, and liable to misinterpretation, were the illustrations derived from the learned commentaries of Nicholas de Lyra (1274-1349) and earlier traditions, both Christian and Jewish; diagrams of the Ark of the Covenant, the Temple, the vision of Ezekiel with the living creatures and the wheels, etc. It is obvious that by the time these were copied for the printed book the artists had lost grasp of the meaning of the representations.

The author does not, however, manage to reduce his material to an order which is entirely intelligible, partly because he has not attempted to put it in a wider setting. One is confronted by this limitation in the title of the book, which without its subtitle, 'a short study based on some fifteenth and early sixteenth century printed texts' (not printed on the jacket or binding), is most misleading. In the history of biblical illustration these pictures are late, not early; they are the end of a tradition which in 1475 was more than a thousand years old. A closer comparison with medieval prototypes would also elucidate the meaning of 'copy', which so frequently occurs throughout the book. Throughout the Middle Ages it was quite normal for artists, even of genius, to copy, in the sense of illustrating a traditional subject in a traditional way, even to the exact choice, disposition and setting of the figures. The result might be mechanical, or it might be a recreation with new feeling and in a new style; it is difficult and not really profitable to try to make the vital distinction between the two on the basis of which is a copy; and actually Mr Strachan almost gives up the attempt half way through his book. But he does not attempt to analyse the stylistic change which marks the real watershed in his material, at the turn of the century. There is a world of difference between the flat linear patterns and literal approach of the Quentel woodcuts of 1478-80, and the descriptive shading, elaborate perspective and turbulent emotionalism of the Luther Bible; though subject and arrangement (but not costume) may be the same.

The change of course follows the general course of stylistic change at the Renaissance. But one would like to see some connection with the artist's attitude to the text of the Bible. The traditional subjects which these artists were largely recreating were an immediate legacy from generations which had not read their text and were not even illustrating the original, but paraphrases and arrangements, such as the *Bible Moralisée*, *Speculum Humanae Salvationis*, *Biblia Pauperum*. One has to go back to the thirteenth century for illustrated Bibles and even

then one wonders if the artist was always familiar with the words he illustrated as opposed to its traditional representation. The earliest printed illustrations were obviously of the same nature, which accounts for so much hack-work, but which reflects also on the printer who was prepared to incorporate so much indifferent work and frequently to misplace it. One might have hoped the new knowledge and enthusiasm for the Scriptures might have provided a new inspiration. The nearest to this are the *Icones* of Holbein, his Old Testament illustrations, to which he added some of the Apocalypse. They are skilfully designed woodcuts but curiously lacking in spiritual vision; as the author comments, the New Jerusalem is a delightful sketch of the city of Lucerne. It is perhaps a pity that the inspired biblical illustrations of the period, Dürer's superb Apocalypse woodcuts, fall outside the scope of this book.

The numerous illustrations give a good idea of the range of the material. As always seems to be the case with line blocks, they lose much of the clarity of the original. The Holbein title-page is misleading as the hand-colouring comes out black, and no. 48 is surely Pharoah and the Hebrew midwives, not Esther.

NICOLETTE GRAY

A POPULAR HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION. By Philip Hughes. (Hollis and Carter; 21s.)

Popular this book certainly is in the best sense of the word. It is written with clarity, lightness and humour in that nervous, staccato style that Mgr Hughes has made his own. It explains in simple language such words as 'vow' and 'justification by faith' that Catholics, and especially priests, all too often assume are self-evident. Popular also it is, in that it does not give references to the vast array of learned books that have gone to the making of it. But it is not popular in the sense of being superficial or sensational. It is a book for ordinary people, but for people who want to learn and above all are prepared to think. For most English people, bred in an insular tradition, the Reformation is a matter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn. Such readers will find it refreshing and illuminating to study this survey of religious thought and practice in most parts of Europe—Germany, Switzerland, Holland, and in Rome itself—at one of the great turning-points of history. Mgr Hughes is the first English historian to treat this momentous revolt as primarily a religious upheaval and to give full weight to its theological foundations, and here we have the quintessence of his conclusions, with many still unanswered questions, after years of close and profound research.

In such a wide survey—wide in time and place—it is inevitable