

at the intellectual inertia of much that passes as popularly Catholic. So, 'Catholic truth' must sometimes be explained as some rather special kind of truth in fields of scholarship which permit of no dual standard of criticism and interpretation. As John Lynch suggests, there is no advantage in applying the word 'Catholic' indiscriminately to everything in which Catholics may be engaged—what are Catholic science, Catholic history, or (I even saw the other day) Catholic football?

The countries covered are England (an excellent article by John Lynch), India, Norway, America, the Lebanon, part of the Congo, Australia, Wales, Japan, the Netherlands, Vietnam, Brazil, Egypt and Southern Africa. There is an alert introduction by Adrian Hastings. Those who wish to know the other contributors should consult the book. They will probably buy it.

GODFREY LIENHARDT

IN PLACE OF PARENTS. By Gordon Trasler. (Routledge and Kegan Paul; 25s.)

This is a most useful book for the professional case worker and will also be of interest to lay people such as members of Children's Committees, Juvenile Court Magistrates and the many people who interest themselves in voluntary child care. It is a serious, thoughtful piece of research into the results of foster-home placements made by the Devon Children's Department, a department which has a high reputation for careful casework and was one of the first to close its residential nurseries by boarding out all the babies.

The study was made of fifty-seven children who, over a period of three years, broke down in their foster homes; twenty-one of these children had records of previous breakdowns. A control group was used of eighty-one children who had remained in long-term foster homes up to, and during, the period chosen and had developed secure relationships with their foster parents.

The greater part of the book is taken up with well-written case histories, giving examples of each main reason for the breakdown; some of these have subsidiary causes and many are inter-related. The histories have been compiled from three main sources: the child's previous history from records, interviews with the foster parents, and discussions with the case worker concerned. The main cause of breakdown seems to be, in the majority of cases, the child's inability to understand his parents' failure to continue their relationship with him and his anxiety caused by what he can only feel to be a rejection of himself. This anxiety inhibits the child from risking any new relationship and proves most bitterly disappointing to the new foster-parents. Many of the case histories are sad little stories of couples who with the highest *conscious* motives have still failed to provide homes for children whose future depends on their ability to learn to give and receive affection. Not all foster-parents take children for the highest motives; sometimes it is for profit (although small) or sometimes as a weapon against the other partner. In passing it seems a pity that Mr Trasler should describe

under the heading 'The Charity Foster-Mother' a woman who takes a child in order to gain merit with the community; surely a misuse of the word 'charity'?

The statistical findings at the end are clear and not too elaborate and pose some interesting questions on which further research might well be done. One wonders why only one child appears to have been placed with relatives; did none come forward? Were they considered unsuitable? Were they overcrowded? Would not a relation, even if a not very satisfactory one, have been better than a period of care in an institution? A relative could at least have provided the security of the familiar and, tremendously important, would have been able to talk to the child about his parents and home. Secondly, one queries if any help is given to the 'failed' foster-parents or are they left insecure and unhappy, weighed down with a feeling of inadequacy to face their neighbours and explain that it was the fault of the Children's Department who should never have sent them such a child?

Throughout the whole of Mr Trasler's book we are kept very much aware that a foster relationship is not a normal one; like adoption it has many difficulties which the ordinary parent and child happily escapes. It is an extremely difficult undertaking to foster an unwanted child; those who do it deserve our support and admiration and those who fail need our sympathy.

HILARY HALPIN

BERENSON: A Biography. By Sylvia Sprigge. (Allen and Unwin; 35s.)

This is the first biography to be written about this very remarkable man, a man outstanding in the world of art history and of so strangely diverse a character that we may be long guessing what he was up to. The author, for all her close research and careful documentation, perhaps indeed because of these things, does not rekindle in living terms the vivacity and drive, the tenderness, loneliness and assurance of her hero; she is perpetually diverted into side-issues which no longer add colour to her central figure, however interesting they may be in themselves. It does not help the reader to know to whom Crowe, the associate of Cavalcaselle, was married, or that he was knighted; nor that Mrs Strong was given free lodging by the Italian Government in 1940; yet such information is on every page. It is more a book around Berenson than about him, and should be of value to future biographers.

Berenson's life is a unique case of an art historian of conventionally accepted cultured and refined tastes turning these gifts to the amassing of great wealth, while holding always to a vision of quiet retirement. In 1875 a Jewish boy of ten leaves the Pale of Settlement in Lithuania to migrate with his parents in extreme poverty to a slum in Boston. There, through his personal vision, he so educates himself that within thirty-two years he has become not only a highly cultured man and the leading expert in the field of Italian Renaissance art, but, too, commands a salary of £20,000 a year and perhaps as much again or more in commissions on the sale of pictures—holding this for thirty years while living an elegant personal life in his