

failures of Marxism, historicism and existentialism to deal with the problem; and that the category of faith, which alone would free us from the bondage to eternal repetition, can alone overcome the problems which the emancipation from mere critical repetition has set us.

But Professor Eliade is never the facile apologist, proving some foregone conclusion. He sets many problems, theological and psychological (for the revaluation of history involves the revaluation of consciousness which is back of much of our *malaise*) which he does not state, let alone solve. The American English into which the work has been translated will be read by some with more difficulty than the limpid French original. But it is a book to be read, in whatever language, with care by all who are concerned with the past and future of man, and particularly by those who would appreciate the unique debt and duty of Christianity to mankind in its present stage of development.

VICTOR WHITE, O.P.

A SHORT HISTORY OF CONFUCIAN PHILOSOPHY. By Liu Wu-Chi.  
(Pelican Books; 2s. 6d.)

For its size Mr Wu-Chi's book is a remarkable achievement. A history, in just over two hundred pages, of the central tradition in Chinese philosophy—for that is what the title really implies—required the selective skill and economy of the born lecturer, and these gifts Mr Wu-Chi certainly has. He fills, without crowding, his canvas, and dispenses with all irrelevancies and intrusions. The result is that at least the first half of his history, up to the Great Burning of the Books, carries one effortlessly forward. After that his task admittedly became more complex and a certain scrappiness is not always avoided. From this point of view the treatment of the Sung philosophers is disappointing. Anyone with a real philosophical interest would probably gladly have sacrificed some of the earlier pages devoted to the somewhat obstinate optimism of Mencius, for the sake of learning a little more about Chu Hsi. Mr Wu-Chi's enthusiasm for this period is not, however, altogether without reserve. One feels that the profound importance of Taoism and Buddhism for the very survival of a vigorous orthodox philosophy in China is only reluctantly admitted, and the role of that strangely un-Western book the *Classic of Change* is practically written off as superstition. Yet the earlier legalist phase seems to demonstrate the inevitable tendency towards atrofication inherent in the older Confucianism with its apparent lack of interest in metaphysical insight. On this latter point Mr Wu-Chi goes further than seems either necessary or warranted when he asserts that Confucianism was traditionally atheistic. Agnostic, perhaps, but it is hard

not to think that a certain modern impatience with metaphysics does not enter into a judgment of the facts which would say more. It was surely the openness of ancient Chinese philosophy to new influences, which at the same time never overwhelmed it, that explains its extraordinary power of survival, rejuvenation, synthesis and transformation. This fact must not be unconnected with any answer to the question which Mr Wu-Chi asks in his closing pages. Will Confucianism ever again become a living philosophy? He replies, probably rightly, that it will not. But this may very well be because it long ago handed on the torch to another way of life which made a special point of the cultivation of insight, and is as alive today as it was centuries ago in the great culture of the Sung. The disciples of Confucius are found mostly in libraries, but one can meet the disciples of Bodhidharma in the streets. There could be no greater tribute to the immortality of the Chinese genius.

ÆLRED SQUIRE, O.P.

CHURCH BUILDING AND FURNISHING: THE CHURCH'S WAY. By J. O'Connell. (Burns & Oates; 21s.)

For a long time architects and others concerned with the planning and design of new Catholic churches have been severely handicapped by the lack of any full and authoritative definition of both general and detailed requirements of planning and furnishing. Geoffrey Webb's *The Liturgical Altar* and the present author's *Directions for the use of Altar Societies and Architects* were useful, but they were limited in scope. This new volume of some 250 pages, including a number of photographs and line drawings, will be an essential reference work for every priest and for every architect engaged in the planning or the furnishing of churches.

The book is primarily a study of liturgical law as set forth in the two short canons (1164, §1 and 1296, §3) which summarize the Church's laws on the subject. The first section deals in general terms with the church building and its parts, the second with the altar and the third with church furniture. In each section the law of the Church is stated and commented upon with quotations from various authorities. If sometimes—particularly in the first part of the book—the authorities tend to contradict one another in their interpretation of the mind of the Church in the realm of applied art, this at least gives ample scope for the further discussion which the author hopes, as he says in his foreword, to provoke by this book.

In general two main impressions are left on the mind of the present writer after reading this book. The first is that Father O'Connell has amassed an encouragingly large body of evidence of the Church's