

than to suggest facile solutions, but he is scathing in his attacks on 'delegated compassion' and on a 'quantified' ministry where the standard is success. 'Almost anything can be forgiven if (the minister) increases the size of the church, adds to its budget, expands its plant and manages to be popular' (p. 110).

Dean Miller is given to listing the new and disturbing features of American civilization. One misses the analysis which would indicate how far he sees the problem as one of ecclesiastical adaptation and how far as one of changing the system itself.

NIGEL COLLINGWOOD

**EXPLODING CHURCH**, by Frederick Franck. *Sheed and Ward*, London, 1968. 309 pp. 50s.

The subject of a book with the title *Exploding Church* can only be the Catholic Church in Holland. The Dutch-born American Frederick Franck, famous because of the fine drawings he did during the first session of the Vatican council, met representatives of the Dutch Church at Rome and sensed that something had changed in the country of his youth. So he came to Holland and wrote this book.

An unusual book: the first part is formed by the answers of 37 representative 'avant-garde' Dutch Catholics to a questionnaire, made up by the author. Questions about the papacy, abortion, premarital sex, intercommunion, Jesus Christ, the immaculate conception, schism and so on. Along with the reactions of the respondents, parts of papal documents and statements are quoted so as to show the difference in style and approach between Rome and the 'avant-garde'. The second part of the book consists of short interviews with people from Belgium, England, Germany, Sweden, France, Spain and the U.S.A. People such as Chenu, Davis and Amery give their opinion about the replies of the Dutchmen. Actually this second part is more interesting than the first one, where the short answers to the questionnaire disclose hardly anything of the person of the respondent.

This book is not meant to be a description of the situation in Holland, it is not a Church History or a theological essay. The author only registered the personal and spontaneous reactions of the respondents. He asked them for free and unpremeditated thought-associations, and not for theological expositions. The psychological reaction in each of the respondents, not the contents of their sayings, was what interested Franck. The reader is offered the fragments of an exploded shell. The sort of bomb and the cause of the explosion are not the subject of the book. The reader is confronted with short and pithy answers which are emotional rather than intellectual.

The book makes one feel that something has indeed exploded. The Church in Holland has

moved out of her ghetto in which she lived so happily for a long time, into a solidarity with the rest of mankind. This process has not as yet come to an end and is attended with much pain. The answers are often emotional because people are still fighting against the past of the Church which is also their own past. They experience nearly every day that the ghetto mentality is still strong, particularly outside Holland, and that it tries to maintain its hold. The respondents are not afraid of the conflict with this ghetto but nor is it something which leaves them untouched.

The answers of the respondents are not very coherent. This is partly a result of the author's request to give their thought-associations. It is evident, however, that the respondents themselves have not as yet been able to find a new synthesis. It would have been strange if they had found one in such a short time. They are also a bit afraid to establish a new synthesis because this could mean a new 'system' and perhaps a new intolerance.

The Church in Holland is a 'progressive' Church, moving into the world, liberating herself from a defensive attitude towards the world. One is taken by the atmosphere of freedom. Not one of the Dutch respondents was unwilling to say who he is. Franck could not find anybody in Italy who was willing to give his opinion on the Dutch replies, and one of the American respondents preferred to remain anonymous. This is one of the basic discoveries of the book: the 'avant-garde' Church exists outside Holland as well. The difference is that while the 'avant-garde' mentality is becoming that of the majority in Holland, this general climate does not as yet exist in other countries. What can happen in openness in Holland, happens in the 'underground' outside Holland.

The Church in Holland, moving into the world, has not as yet found what makes the Church differ from the present world. The language of the respondents is not very eschatological. Most respondents are averse to symbolism and any kind of structure. The

prosperous society of Holland seems not to inspire much criticism. In a word, the Church in Holland has not as yet entered the 'post-progressive' stage. The solidarity with the world has been discovered, not yet the non-conformity with this world. Nevertheless one finds some traces of the awareness that also the new ideas are provisional and open to criticism. Nobody is willing to leave the Church (the Dutch consider Charles Davis as a conservative), nobody abstains entirely from symbolic actions, the sacraments, and prayer.

For many people, Franck's book can be very refreshing, liberating and encouraging. It is a valuable book, but only if one bears in mind the narrowness of its scope: the registering of emotional reactions of 'avant-garde' Catholics

to a conservative terminology. A criticism of the book could be that the working method itself is not very satisfying. The reactions of the Dutch respondents are a little too short and pithy. Interviews with the respondents, or with some of them, could have been more fruitful. The second part of the book, the interviews with Catholics outside Holland, proves this.

There are two strange mistakes in the book: the initial of Fr Chenu is not N. but M.-D., and the Christian name of Fr van Dam is not Piet but Paul. Another surprise is that the author did not ask for thought-associations on the word 'God' at a time in which the 'God-is-dead' theology was still very much alive. Sheed and Ward have produced the book in an attractive way.

ANDREW LASCARIS, O.P.

**MALCOLM BOYD'S BOOK OF DAYS.** *Heinemann, S.C.M. Press Ltd.* 182 pp. 25s.

'How do we speak of God without religion. . . How do we speak in a secular fashion of God?' Malcolm Boyd, a well-known American writer, answers this question of Dietrich Bonhoeffer by saying that 'God is the spirit of relationship'. He does not start by talking about God but by probing people's minds on the question of relationship. He approaches this with the awareness that the individual does not find it easy to relate. One of the reasons for this is that each individual lives in a shell which he can only get out of with difficulty. He looks in at himself constantly and often concludes that he is unfit to help others.

This situation has been reinforced by the Church every time it has reminded its members of their state of sin and their need for salvation. There has been inward-looking to the extent that the Church has become a 'segregated ghetto' withdrawing its members into 'the self-centred web of personal piety' (p. 97).

For this reason, Malcolm Boyd has deliberately taken religion from the Church and set it in the context of relationship—concentrating particularly on the issues of Vietnam, poverty and racial unity. He also considers the damage caused by using words as a 'sophisticated method of keeping people at

arm's length' (p. 76). Once we have inhumanly labelled the other we don't have to listen to him.

His treatment of these themes is in the style of 'Thoughts for the Day', ranging from quotations from other writers to shock tactics of his own—'Jesus had a penis' (p. 72). The thoughts are uneven in quality and some may be obscure to the English reader.

This critique of inward-looking is familiar enough in modern spirituality, but if it is to be discarded altogether in favour of action, the best of the tradition will also be lost. Bernard of Clairvaux expresses it here: 'To feel your brother's sadness in your own heart, you must first know your own sorry state, which will make you aware of his condition, so that you may help him through knowledge of yourself' (*The Steps of Humility*, ch. 3). It is by being combined with self-awareness that action is saved from activism. Malcolm Boyd asks that we should look for the people who live behind the labels and the faces behind the masks, but this means that we must first unmask ourselves. Ultimately a book can only say what needs to be done. It is up to the individual to do it.

JANET HALTON

**METAPHYSICS**, by Emeric Coreth. English edition by Joseph Donceel, with a critique by Bernard J. F. Lonergan. *Herder and Herder*, New York, 1968. 224 pp. \$6.50.

When more than 500 pages of German (more than 600 in the second edition) become 177 pages of English with only the very rare footnote and not so much as a *zum Beispiel* remaining, only those most cynically disposed to the verbosity of German-speaking metaphysicians

will fail to wonder *wie es eigentlich geschehen ist*. The editor says of the book: 'It has been condensed; an effort has been made to keep all its essential ideas, while omitting or abbreviating that which did not seem so important, especially some of the historical passages, which