

Surely if it has failed it is high time that it were abandoned. But it is only the title of this book which is illogical; as we read, it becomes increasingly clear that, according to Professor Ferré, what we need is not a return to Christianity at all but rather 'a new theology . . . equipped with keen analysis and powerful insights along new and deeper lines'. (p. 29.) This 'new theology' is propounded with, as might be expected, a certain obscurity, in four chapters which treat in turn of truth, the individual, the church and society. Here is a short quotation which indeed speaks for itself with purple eloquence: 'There are, nevertheless, believing souls whose basic intention is to live in and for this fellowship. Many of these have sacrificed the beautiful flower of their loyalty on the showy altar of traditional Christianity or have had their vitality sapped by the false chanting of its servile priests. Yet in the depth of their spirit they have helped to keep alive the reality of the fellowship of intention, forgiveness, and some attainment.' (p. 50.) One is tempted to echo the last two words.

D.S.

STUDIES IN DEUTERONOMY. By G. von Rad. (S.C.M. Press; 7s.)

This is No. 9 in the series of Studies in Biblical Theology, several of which have been noticed in this review. The present work consists of a number of loosely connected essays on Deuteronomy and the writings akin to it. The method is that of form-criticism; the studies are technical in character and of immediate interest chiefly to students. Yet where their conclusions are well-established, these throw new light on the text and add to its spiritual value for ordinary readers. The author's main assumptions are already widely accepted, while his more original line of thought is often attractive. Deuteronomy is a book with a long history. This is generally agreed; it has a groundwork of ancient legislation, but was gradually built up in hortatory form. G. von Rad would connect its earlier development with the gathering of the northern tribes for worship or war at Shechem. After the fall of Samaria the material was carried to Jerusalem; its later form represents a reaction of the pure religious and martial spirit of Levites and Judean people against nature gods and foreign domination. The same spirit inform 3 and 4 Kings, where the sacred writer looks at history from a single theological viewpoint. Rulers are judged, not by political success, but by obedience to God's commands, especially that of a centralised worship and the destruction of the high-places. The fall, first of Israel and then of Judah, has been the fulfilment of God's word of warning by the prophets. The translation, though readable, has some obscurities, and a few printer's errors call for correction.

JOHN HIGGENS, O.S.B.