



Life Without Birth: A Journey Through the Third World in Search of the Population Explosion.

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Man, New Series, Volume 6, Issue 2 (Jun., 1971), 328-329.

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original. But it contains many insights, and much of it will command agreement.

One puts down the book with a sense of disappointment: at rigorous argument destroyed by fuzziness of assumption; at reasoning stopped because to carry it further would reveal it to be nonsensical; at a lack of awareness of the factors which do influence universities when rationing resources; at the superficiality of the conception of the university's operation.

CYRIL S. BELSHAW

WELSBY, PAUL A. (ed.). *Sermons and society: an Anglican anthology* (Pelican Books). 364 pp., bibliogr. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1970. 10s.

This anthology is confined to sermons by Anglican preachers. Given its limitations, Dr Welsby has provided a fair selection. Perhaps one would have liked to have more of F. D. Maurice (only one extract is given), of Richard Church (again, a short extract from one sermon), and from William Temple (two short extracts are provided). Clearly, Welsby wants to provide a broad coverage from Latimer (1485-1555) to Herbert Hensley Henson (1863-1947). His avowed purpose is 'to illustrate the attitude of Anglican preachers, from the Reformation onwards, towards social conditions in this country'.

The most striking impression one has is how ignorant many of these preachers were for long held to be the result of moral weakness; an understanding in these sermons of the signs of the times is conspicuous by its absence. Perhaps, we come closer to the purpose of the 'social sermon' in the work of F. D. Maurice whose hearers glimpsed a vision of a more perfect social life than selfish competition and individualistic greediness: 'Either the Gospel declares what society is, and what it is not; what binds men together, what separates them, or it has no significance at all'. Maurice was obliged to vacate his chair at King's College, London, for expressing *his* interpretation of the gospel. It is felicitous that today this wrong has been rectified by the establishment in that College of a chair of Moral and Social Theology. Today the Church of England is much more aware of the

way in which sociological knowledge complements its understanding of both human nature and destiny. This selection of sermons gives some indication of its thought on social matters up to the end of the second world war.

G. D. MITCHELL

BEAMISH, TONY. *Aldabra alone*; foreword by Sir Julian Huxley. 222 pp., plates (some col.), maps, bibliogr. London: Allen & Unwin, 1970. £2.50

Conservation enthusiasts will be familiar with the subject of this book. An island in the Seychelles group, Aldabra provided a unique living laboratory for the study of biological evolution. A seventy-mile rim of spiky coral surrounded the circumference of the island, which itself is soilless and waterless, but the home of frigate birds, giant tortoises and numerous other species. Only a few sporadic studies had been made before the one described, which was mounted by the Royal Society and filmed for the BBC. The story here is a descriptive narrative and would appeal to the general public.

The important point, however, is the way in which the island suddenly became news. Proposals to use it for military purposes provoked outrage and action by scientists, who considered its loss would be a scientific tragedy of great magnitude. The tragedy was averted at the eleventh hour.

C. GOLDWATER

JOHNSON, STANLEY. *Life without birth: a journey through the Third World in search of the population explosion*. xii, 364 pp., plates, bibliogr. London: Heinemann, 1970. £2 10s.

It took many thousands of years for the human population to reach, soon after 1800, one billion. We are now adding another billion every fifteen years. At present growth rates, the population of Tunisia would, in 800 years time, be 33 million times the present world population. There can only be two endings to this: cataclysmic wars and epidemics wiping out hundreds of millions of people, or the stabilisation of population through birth control. Mr Johnson went on a journey round the world to see how well family planning campaigns are progressing. The author reports that some hopeful progress is being made in Taiwan, Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore; in Brazil, Chile, Java, Thailand, India, China, Pakistan and Kenya little or nothing is being achieved. Even in perhaps the most promising case, Taiwan, if present plans were completely successful, with huge doses of foreign assistance, the best that is hoped for is a drop from a growth rate of 3 per cent. p.a. to one of 1.9 per cent. (which is still ridiculously high). In other

words, as Kingsley Davis pointed out in a vital article on 'Population policy: will current programs succeed?' (*Science*, 158, 1967), there is little chance that present methods will avert the holocaust. Anthropologists could contribute to the research needed to avert the impending tragedy; so far they have almost totally ignored demographic problems. It would be useful to be able to recommend them this book, for it deals with some of the political and social factors which influence population programmes, and there are, scattered through it, many useful pieces of information. But the book is marred by too many faults to be of any real use. It is badly planned, the only coherence being given by the author's flight from country to country. It is superficial; although it claims to be 'the history of a personal odyssey' it reads as a gossipy account of chats with 'top people'. There is little contact with the people who will use the condom or I.U.D. It is full of irrelevancies (Everest, we are told, is 'the highest mountain in the world'), name dropping, stale imagery, and (an occupational disease caught at the World Bank?) initials of organisations. The author admits that it will annoy anthropologists, sociologists and demographers, but it is too filled with figures to please the intelligent layman either. This is a tragedy, since his message is crucially important. As it is, it may be of value to those who wish to study the world of international conferences and intercontinental hotels within which U.N. officials move and their superficial camaraderie. The actual world of family planning, faction-filled and often tragico-comical, is completely glossed over. This is an over-long book, springing from real concern, but becoming complacent and boring in the writing. Some maps, diagrams and charts would have been welcome.

ALAN MACFARLANE

chapters the intellectual and moral consequences of the discovery. This is especially fascinating for anthropologists since, as the author makes clear, the problems of Europeans who visited South America were exactly those of anthropologists today: 'how to convey this fact of difference, the uniqueness of America to those who had not seen it' (p. 21); the inability to perceive the alien society through the framework of accepted academic disciplines; the difficulty of retaining the vision when they returned to Europe. The total impact of the new continent on Europe was very slow, yet some brilliant works of what the author calls 'applied anthropology' were achieved. The *visitas* of royal officials and their reports, as well as monumental studies by Las Casas, de Acosta, and others should provide invaluable material for contemporary (Spanish-reading) anthropologists working on South America.

The third chapter outlines the economic effects of conquest, particularly of the bullion imports into Spain. The central thesis, that industrialisation in north-west Europe would have been impossible without the discovery is ably discussed. A final chapter summarises the political consequences, the influence on nationalism and the balance of power in Europe. There is a certain amount of repetition, since the original draft was written in lecture form, and naturally there is some disputable generalising. The influence of new crops (potato, tobacco), diseases (syphilis) and medicines (quinine) are not discussed. Yet the enthusiasm, clarity of style, wide reading, and sympathy towards an anthropological approach make this a most stimulating introduction to the subject, and to classes of material which could provide as rich rewards for the anthropologist as the silver mines of South America once provided for Europe.

ALAN MACFARLANE

ELLIOTT, J. H. *The Old world and the New, 1492-1650*. x, 118 pp., front., bibliogr. Cambridge: Univ. Press, 1970. £1 15s. (cloth); 12s. (paper)

'So many goodly cities ransacked and razed; so many nations destroyed and made desolate; so infinite millions of harmeless people of all sexes, states and ages, massacred, ravaged, and put to the sword'. Thus Montaigne described the conquest of South America. Professor Elliott's problem in this book is to see what Europe learnt and gained from these horrors. His aim is 'to synthesize, in short compass, the present state of thought about the impact made by the discovery and settlement of America on Early Modern Europe' (p. 6), with special emphasis on Spain and South America. Relying mainly on literary evidence, he outlines in the first two

COHEN, JOHN. *Homo psychologicus*. 192 pp. London: Allen & Unwin, 1970. £2.50 (cloth); £1.40 (paper)

Although a collection of essays, this book does have a theme. Professor Cohen tries to show that neither psychology nor even 'science' has all the answers, as some like to believe. He does not try to provide answers, but indicates his own doubts about psychology. A scientist has to accept that human behaviour conforms to certain laws, yet a study of man must allow for his freedom. Cohen attacks reductionism in general and those who wish to reduce all human experience and behaviour to psychology in particular. His last chapter contains a critique of Lorenz, especially his work on aggression, and the way he uses ethological reductionism. Cohen throughout takes the part of man the poet against those who wish