

duce further illustrations of the truth of what Peter Viereck stated in 1940, that "Catholic baiting is the anti-Semitism of the liberals." Or one may quote Arthur Schlesinger *père* who admitted to Tracey Ellis, a fellow historian, that "the most luxuriant, tenacious tradition of paranoid agitation in American history has been anti-Catholicism." Turner's book proves that the paranoia keeps producing startlingly new strains. The book, intended as a grenade, will prove a mere firecracker when hurled against Newman's intellectual and spiritual grandeur.

Of this grandeur Turner sees practically nothing. He is one of those whom Gladstone might have had in mind when he wrote in *Vaticanism*, his ill-fated reply to Newman's *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk*: "It has been said that the world does not know its greatest men; neither, I will add, is it aware of the power and weight carried by the words and by the acts of those among its greatest men it does know." Some merely think they know them as they look at them through glasses intentionally distorted. These fail to show even the difference between apostates and an "apostate." ■

BRIEFLY REVIEWED

The New World of Faith. By Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J. *Our Sunday Visitor Books*. 175 pages. \$14.95.

The back cover of this book

carries the following description: "In this confident, unified, and unflinching assessment of the key elements of the Catholic Faith, Father Avery Dulles, S.J., illuminates the darkness of skepticism and unbelief that plague modern life, truly presenting apologetics without apology." While this is fine as far as it goes, this description neglects possibly the most remarkable feature of the book: a surprisingly youthful joyousness, befitting one of the more famous modern-day converts.

To be sure, Cardinal Dulles presents a marvelous short course on the Faith with such clarity and purpose that this book would be very useful for would-be converts, as well as for other catechetical purposes. But there is more going on here: Even seasoned Catholics will thoroughly enjoy this book and experience something of a call to action, because the Cardinal conveys to the reader a certain irrepressible joy, a passion and lively love for the Faith. The book has a pervasive *esprit* that will lift the hearts of members of the flock who might find their burdens heavy or who might be growing jaded.

The vision of the book is unquestioningly consonant with the vision of the Holy Father: It is directed to a new evangelization. With the West in clear decline, *de facto* pagan or worse, with the Culture of Death all around us, we are called to re-evangelize what were once the bastions of the Faith. The missionary call is to bear witness to Jesus Christ and His Church in our neighborhoods, in our places of employ, and often even in our

parish halls. For such purposes Cardinal Dulles's book is a *vade mecum* of what the Church teaches, and then some.

In 12 short and well-written chapters, Cardinal Dulles offers us a work of apologetics in the traditional meaning of the word but in a contemporary style. We emerge intellectually prepared to defend our Faith against all opponents, from street-corner cynics to jaundiced academics. Starting with an analysis of "the present situation of faith," Dulles proceeds to the proofs of God's existence, the Person of Christ, the particular charisms deposited in the Church, and her responsibilities — and he differentiates proper teaching from heresy.

Dulles goes on to delineate three stages of evangelization, all in keeping with John Paul II's personalism. Indeed, it is proper to regard Dulles's writings as intimately tied to the unique pontificate of John Paul II, whose characteristic orthodoxy, joy, empathy, and regard for tradition (mixed with a modern consciousness) resonate beautifully with what we discern about Cardinal Dulles from the pages of this book.

Michael Berg

Catholic Social Teaching, 1891-Present: A Historical, Theological and Ethical Analysis. By Charles E. Curran. *Georgetown University Press*. 261 pages. \$19.95.

Fr. Charles Curran is a well-known dissenter from Catholic

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moral teaching who teaches at Southern Methodist University. In this volume Curran undertakes an ambitious review of Catholic social teaching since Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum* of 1891.

The subject of this book, the Church's teaching on the right ordering of the socio-economic order, is of immense importance. Many Catholics are entirely ignorant of this aspect of magisterial teaching; others reject it outright. Many who are otherwise orthodox take great pains to reinterpret social doctrine to fit their personal notions about economics, notions derived not from Catholic tradition but ultimately from 18th-century Deism, notions which in America fall under the general heading "conservatism" (though in other parts of the world they are called by their right name, "liberalism").

As one might expect, Curran is not an entirely reliable guide. Although this work contains considerable information about the Church's social doctrine, it is mixed with so much erroneous interpretation, and presents so many hypotheses as facts, that it is not a safe guide for those not already familiar with Catholic social teaching and theology.

Curran's account of events in the life of the Church, especially since the Second Vatican Council, reflects the modernist interpretation of Church history. For example, he contrasts the approach of the social encyclicals of Leo XIII and Pius XI, in which, by the authority of the Roman See, the Popes gave an authoritative interpretation of the natural law

and the Gospel, with the approach that he claims has increasingly come to the fore since the 1960s, in which the Church is willing to "learn from the world." As he says, "The hierarchical teaching office has changed from the authoritative source of eternal and natural law applied to human problems to a dialogue partner that has something to contribute to the world but also can learn from the world." It is true that the tone of papal pronouncements on the social order has changed from Leo XIII to John Paul II. Much of the *style* of papal social statements and actions does reflect the times — one can discern this by comparing statements from the Middle Ages with those of Pius XII. Though the changes since Vatican II have been more abrupt than usual, one who looks carefully at magisterial documents since the Council can see an essential continuity. Curran, it seems, does not look at this essential continuity, but only at changed forms, and thus concludes that we are in a new situation. He is far from alone in making that judgment, for it seems to be the received wisdom that the Church has altered her teaching in many ways in the past thirty-five years. But Curran's view, doubtless on purpose, plays into the hands of the modernist project, which necessarily assumes this great change in order to pursue its own agenda.

Although this book raises some valuable points and contains some interesting reflections, I cannot recommend it. A more elementary yet more authoritative approach is Fr. Rodger

Charles's *An Introduction to Catholic Social Teaching* (Ignatius), reviewed in the February 2001 NOR.

Thomas Storck

The Old Religion in a New World: The History of North American Christianity. By Mark A. Noll. Eerdmans. 340 pages. \$24.

Three hundred and sixty-seven years ago, the Rev. Richard Denton, priest of His Majesty Charles I's Church of England, having found the Church's *Book for Sports on the Sabbath-Day* "insupportable," set sail with his wife Helen and their five children aboard the ship *James* and arrived in Boston in 1635. He would be known as a dissenting clergyman "of the Presbyterian variety," and served as pastor of several churches in Connecticut and on Long Island. He is also my "great, great...grandfather." As I read Noll's *The Old Religion in a New World*, I could not help but reflect on the Presbyterian Church, its vicissitudes often figuring in Noll's historical accounts. What would "Grandfather" Richard make of the Presbyterian denomination in the late 20th century, approving "the right of a woman to choose an abortion"? What would he, a Cambridge man, make of the first Presbyterian seminary in America, later known as Princeton University, seating in the late 20th century an atheistic Jewish "ethicist" who supports infanticide in an endowed chair