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to Toryism as suburbia spread (this was much more than a London or a Home Counties phenomenon even before 1914).

These, however, are not criticisms so much as pointers to the need to set such themes within a much wider culture context: possibly Dr. Bebbington's fellow Baptist historian Dr. Michael Watts will do just this in the second volume of *The Dissenters*. Meanwhile, our appetites whetted by this present work, we eagerly await its companion, which will refine the pioneering insights of Wearmouth, Inglis, Mayor and Peter d'A. Jones and provide us with a definitive account of Nonconformity and the rise of the Labour movement.

IAN SELLERS.

Ellen Wilkinson, by Betty D. Vernon. (Croom Helm: pp. [xvi]. 254, £14 95p.)

No one under forty will be able to remember the forceful and sparkling impact which this fiery little red-haired Mancunian made upon British politics before, during, and just after the second World War. Born in a Methodist home, and never divesting herself of—or ever denying her debt to—that Methodist background, with a sympathetic brother in the Methodist ministry, Ellen Wilkinson rose by dint of sheer persistence, hard work, and native wit, to become, ere the zeal of her mission burnt her up, The Right Hon. E. C. Wilkinson, M.A., LL.D., Privy Counsellor, Member of Parliament for Jarrow, Minister of Education, etc., etc. Nor was it without justice that she earned for herself the less laudatory titles of "Red Nellie" or "Little Miss Perky". Always fearless, generally charming, sometimes gullible, a champion of women's rights and children's education, she certainly "got things done", and done in the most difficult of days.

Betty Vernon has given us a lively and (so it would seem) a faithful portrait of her heroine, so that one does not need to be of the same political persuasion to acknowledge the debt we all owe to that heroine and to those like her who fought and won for us so many of the privileges that we enjoy today. This is another testimony, if one were needed, to the wholesome contribution of Methodism to the cause of the under-privileged.

JOHN C. BOWMER.

Dig or Die, being papers given at Wesley Heritage Conference, Sydney, 1980, edited by James S. Udy and Eric G. Clancy.

The title of this book is explained by James Udy in the Introduction. A tree marked DIG stood at Burke's Camp 65 on Cooper's Creek. Below the word was a further code, the message of which, had it been heeded, would have saved the explorer Burke from death. DIG OR DIE is a parable of sections of the Christian Church, and appropriate to members of the Uniting Church in Australia.

The book contains the addresses given by Dr. Albert Outler, Dr. Frank Baker, Dr. Harold Wood, Dr. Arnold Hunt, Dr. Frederick Norwood, Dr. Homer Calkin, and several others who attended that Conference. It is possible that some of the addresses are abridged, yet it is a book of 335 pages, with textual notes, references and appendices, and a full list of those who were present. The subjects bear upon the Wesley Hymns, Methodism in the World Christian community, aspects of Australian Methodism, Canada, Papua, Methodism among the indigenous peoples of the Pacific, a Marxist look at Methodism, and a report on the *Union Catalogue of World Methodist Manuscript Collections*.

This is a book worth having, for the material is lively, challenging, and deep. It is obtainable from Dr. J. S. Udy at Wesley College, Newtown, 2042, Sydney, NSW, Australia.

WILLIAM LEARY.

Religion and the People of Western Europe, 1789-1970, by Hugh McLeod. (Oxford University Press (1981): pp. 169, £8 95p. hard-back; £3 95p. paper-back.)

Dr. McLeod's book reflects the recent movement in church history towards the study of popular belief and practice and away from the treatment of bishops and ministers, theology and ecclesiastical machinery. Fresh evidence has emerged and is presented here concerning magical and superstitious beliefs, sex- and class-differences in popular religion, and the place of church or chapel in the community; and this concisely-written and -arranged book is especially stimulating in its inclusion of much unfamiliar evidence from Western Europe, so that contrasts between national religious cultures and between Catholic and Protestant forms of popular religion emerge clearly. The English reader is reminded of the contrasts presented by Irish, Scottish and Welsh religious practice, and learns of the very low church-attendance of the liberal middle class of Germany, of the anti-clerical secularism of the French middle class, and of the strength of Roman Catholicism in industrial working-class cities of Belgium. Our Victorian heritage of a respectable church-going middle class and a largely unchurched urban working class is clearly a pattern susceptible of continental variation. The author's description of Ultramontane popular piety among French Catholics and his point about the lack of sects in Catholic countries are also both revealing contrasts for readers from the Protestant tradition. On the other hand, it also emerges clearly from this book that common to a number of European countries was the experience of religious revival from the eighteenth century. To see the Evangelical Revival as a British growth influenced by German pietism appears increasingly insular, especially in view of Scandinavian evidence. Local historians have given us chapel-by-chapel accounts of English Methodism, and we have John Kent's history of revivalism, but a comparative account of European revivals and popular religion might be very suggestive.

Perhaps it was inevitable that a book concerned with popular religion from the French Revolution to the present should omit the religion of social élites. But in forming a picture of the place of religion in society, the beliefs and practice of the élite are often a major influence on the religion of other social groups who may seek to dissociate themselves from the dominant group by their faith, as English nonconformists did from the state church. In his previous book on religion in late nineteenth-century London, Dr. McLeod included an excellent chapter on upper-class religion, but here there is little more than a partial account of the Clapham Sect.

The theme with which Dr. McLeod seeks to give coherence to his otherwise wide-ranging evidence is the growth of pluralism in Western European religion during the period 1789-1970. He begins with an admirably clear and detailed chapter on the fractions and fissures which occurred in French religion and society when the Revolution breached the almost monolithic position of the Catholic church; and his concluding chapter on recent developments is headed "Fragmentation", which may well be a more apt characterization than the more usual concept of secularization. But, not surprisingly, in some instances the evidence seems more complex than the theme will allow. Polarization between religious and the anti-religious groups occurred in some countries, as Dr. McLeod acknowledges in his third chapter, and this is a very different thing from pluralism. Pluralism in English religion has historical roots far deeper than the late eighteenth century, yet understanding of these is precluded by the scope

of this book. Another omission is the development of religion in America, which has perhaps served as a model of pluralism for Europe. With all its difficulties and exceptions, it may be that class structure is the more satisfactory theme with which to unify the religious history of this period.

SARAH POTTER,

Charles New and the East Africa Mission, by R. Elliott Kendall. (Nairobi: Kenya Literature Bureau (1978), pp. xi. 194. Obtainable from the Methodist Church Overseas Division Bookshop, 25, Marylebone Road, London, N.W.1 5JR, £1 60p.)

A little late for the centenary of Charles New's death in 1875, a former Chairman of the Kenya District of the Methodist Church pays fitting tribute to one of its founders.

The heart of the story is New's own *Life, Wanderings and Labours in Eastern Africa*, deservedly reprinted by Frank Cass in 1971. This is supplemented by secondary sources, by the sadly scanty overseas records of the UMFC, and by the author's personal exploration of places in which New lived and worked, both at home and abroad.

The author strikes a happy balance between mere chronicle on the one hand and a full assessment of New's achievement (best left to African historians) on the other. New is frankly presented as a man of his time—conscious of European superiority in his dealings with Africans, yet humble in his commitment to Christ; not spectacularly successful as an evangelist, yet the initiator of education in the area; a man who saw no contradiction between British colonization and "Africa for the Africans". From the whole account there emerges a double impression: first, of the almost insuperable difficulty of human contact in a pioneer situation; and secondly, of the shortness of time. New had barely thirteen years, and it was not enough.

Mr. Kendall modestly says that he is not attempting a biography of Charles New; yet in fact New's life is well set in the context of the beginnings of the East Africa Mission and the society from which the missionaries came. Kendall's other 1978 publication, *The End of an Era* (SPCK), has been attacked as a piece of liberal anti-missionary *Schadenfreude*. The motto of the present work shows how far this is from the truth: it reads simply, "There are so few now."

Negative comments concern externals. The bibliography could perhaps have been better presented. Among significant misprints, "conversation" near the bottom of page 25 should be "conversion"; "internment" near the bottom of page 83 should be "interment"; "St. Chishone" on page 45 should be "St. Crischona"; and the author's name is mis-spelled on the back cover.

PAUL ELLINGWORTH.

Soldiers and Preachers Too, by Owen Spencer Watkins, is an account of Wesleyan chaplaincy work in the British Army, first published in 1903. It has now been reprinted in paper-back by the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force Board at £2 50p. The text has been reproduced in type-script, and no attempt has been made to bring the story up to date.

The Achievements of Cumbrian Methodism, by John Burgess, may be had as a separate issue of the Cumbria Religious History Society, 65p. post free from the author at 41, Millcroft, Whiteclosegate, Carlisle, CA3 0HZ. The development of Methodism in Cumbria is also the subject of an article by Mr. Burgess in volume xvii of *Northern History* (1981).