

Science/Philosophy of Science

***The Universal Computer: The Road from Leibniz to Turing* by Martin Davis Norton and Co Ltd 2000, 257 pp., £18.05, h/b.**

A fascinating and well written book about the underlying concepts on which computers are based and the people who developed these concepts, from Leibniz onwards through Boole, Frege, Cantor, Hilbert and Goedel to Turing. Martin Davis has been on the cutting edge of developments since his career has been involved with the relationship between the abstract logical concepts and their physical realisation. He found himself writing software for some of the early machines and was hooked. The book also contains enough analysis to get the reader thinking, especially the mathematically minded one, even though it is by no means overly technical.

***The Savior of Science* by Stanley L Jaki William Eerdmans Publishing Co. 1988, 255 pp., £12.99, p/b.**

Second edition of a book that first appeared over ten years ago. Its starting point is the failure of science as we know it to develop outside the monotheistic West and the role of theology, or more specifically belief in Christ, in scientific development. Essays fill in the history of these encounters and turn to issues of the loss of purpose in a materialistic evolutionary picture and the loss of conscience when hubris and utopianism.

***Science, Order, and Creativity* by David Bohm and F David Peat Routledge 1987, 316 pp., £10.99, p/b.**

Second updated edition of a very important book on creativity that I reviewed in full when it came out over ten years ago. The ideas are still fresh and this edition contains a new chapter by David Peat, following his recent book 'The Blackfoot Night' which returned to some of these issues. The central argument is as relevant as ever - the need for science to transcend a narrow and fragmented understanding of nature to embrace a holistic view. A seminal and highly recommended work.

Medicine/Health

***The Healing Energies of Light* by Roger Coghill (SMN) Gaia Books Ltd 2000, 159 pp., £12.99, p/b.**

A beautifully illustrated and highly informative book about the whole spectrum of light and its healing effects. It moves from a consideration of sacred light to light and life cycles, the science of light, the power of sunlight, light in the house, and finally various techniques for healing with light. The author takes the view, rightly I think, that light therapies will be an important part of the medicine of the future. Will appeal to a wide range of readers.

***Herbal Antibiotics: Natural Alternatives for Treating Drug-Resistant Bacteria* by Stephen Harrod Buhner Newleaf 2000, 135 pp., £7.99, p/b.**

A timely book, as can be seen from the subtitle. The author begins by documenting the evolving resistance to antibiotics and the rather horrifying figures of iatrogenic infections in hospitals. He then explains the effects of a number of botanical medicines. Take garlic, for example: he lists 35 active ingredients compared with the one in penicillin! The next chapter proposes some lines of defence for the immune system, followed by a few recipes for herbal medicines that the author has found effective. Stimulating and well informed.

***Understanding Hypnosis: A practical guide to the health-giving benefits of hypnotherapy and self-hypnosis* by Dr Brian Roet Judy Piatkus (Publishers) Ltd 2000, 272 pp., £9.99, p/b.**

Charles Montagu writes: Dr. Brian Roet was trained as a doctor in Australia and now lives in London, where for the past 20 years he has used hypnosis as an adjunct to allopathic and other systems of healing. His approach is down to earth and I am always impressed by his analytical mind and passion for hypnosis. The book is primarily written for the lay reader. It is characteristically jargon-free and also informs the professional about the uses of hypnosis within a psychotherapeutic setting. The first part of the book sets out to demystify hypnosis and to refute the suggestion that it can in any way be unsafe. Topics are covered simply and clearly. There is an excellent chapter on obesity, perhaps one of the most challenging conditions for any practitioner to treat. There are numerous case histories throughout the book, as well as self-hypnosis exercises for the reader to practice presented in a simple, step-by-step format.

***Breath of Life: Breathing for Health, Vitality and Meditation* by Swami Dharmananda
Saraswati Motilal Books 1996, 37 pp., £2.50, p/b.**

A small practical introduction to a range of standing, seated and yogic breathing exercises. Very clearly set out and explained. The Book of Magnet Healing by Roger Coghill (SMN) Gaia Books Ltd 2000, 127 pp., £10.99, p/b.

Written by an expert, this book is a comprehensive guide to the use of magnetism in healing. It takes a scientific and historical view then moves on to a most valuable chapter on electromagnetic hazards of modern life that may be associated with insomnia and chronic fatigue. It then describes various magnet treatments for a variety of ailments. Must be the best introduction available.

***Is Religion Good for Your Health?: The Effects of Religion on Physical and Mental health* by Harold G Koenig
The Harrington Park Press 1997, 135 pp., \$24, p/b.**

An important new research review that summarises the positive and negative effects of religion on health. It is an excellent and even-handed introduction to the topic and covers both mental and physical health. Research shows that religious people are less depressed, anxious and cope better with adversity and that better results are obtained when religion is incorporated in treatments for depression and anxiety. Dr. Koenig makes the interesting point that Freud and others are wrong about the negative effects of religion but goes on to explain how religion may be used neurotically by those with mental disturbances.

***Dying to Live* by John Rogers
Minerva Press Publishers 2000, 117 pp., £8.99, p/b.**

'You cannot imagine how much you want to live, until you are told you are going to die'. This is the remarkable and inspiring story of the author's fight against stomach cancer. Vividly written and pulling no punches, the book reveals the full devastation of a medical life sentence and the courage required to take things in hand. Its basic message is about the true value of relationships and love, and the importance of gratitude.

***Smile for No Good Reason* by Lee J Jampolsky
Hampton Roads Publishing Company Inc 2000, 228 pp., \$18.95, h/b.**

A number of readers will remember the pioneering work of Gerry Jampolsky on attitudinal healing. Here is an update and development from his son, a psychologist. It is divided into twelve spiritual principles with a number of subsections unpacking the principle and showing how it can be put into practice. These include: the essence of our being is love, health is inner peace, we can let go of the past and the future, now is the only time there is, since love is eternal, death need not be regarded as fearful. This is a beautiful and practical book of wisdom that should be by every bedside.

Philosophy/Religion

***Philosophy's Own Religion* by Don Cupitt SCM-Canterbury Press Ltd 2000, 180 pp., £12.95, p/b.**

First the end of history and now the end of religion and philosophy in what many will regard as a reductionist cul-de-sac. One can admire Don Cupitt for his rigour and determination, but not his apparent closure from the transcendent. The fact that physical life is transient and that this makes it precious does not mean that it has no transcendent context. Cupitt rejects both outdated doctrines and, in common with materialistic philosophy, all intimations of the 'supernatural'. While I can agree with him that salvation involves expressive living rather than ascetic withdrawal, I do not regard this as inconsistent with transcendence. However, Cupitt is always challenging and his work worth pondering, even if only to work out in detail why one's own views differ!

***Eastern Wisdom for Western Life* by Joseph Apraia and Lobsang Rapaig Newleaf 2000, 260 pp., p/b.**

Books on meditation are pouring off the presses but this one is different, and is introduced by the Dalai Lama. It draws on Tibetan techniques and in the first half offers guidance on centering, attending, concentrating and opening. Discipline of the mind is an initial step that most of us do not take. The second part applies the lessons of the earlier chapters to health, performance, relationships and spirituality. Throughout the book the authors use the experiences of typical characters, Brian and Maria, to expose challenges likely to be met. This gives the narrative an extra dimension of immediacy. Brian's section on performance - moving into the zone - concentrated on improving his golf handicap through a combination of focus and relaxation, a state all sports players aspire to! The section on relationships is concerned with peace and the spirituality chapter suggests how we can live with love. A fine book.

***Bonaventure: Mystical Writings* by Zachary Hayes The Crossroad Publishing Company 1999, 152 pp., \$14.95, p/b.**

For those unfamiliar with the work of the Seraphic Doctor, this is a good place to start. Bonaventure was described by the philosopher Etienne Gilson as 'a St. Francis of Assisi gone philosopher and lecturing at the University of Paris'. He was indeed the head of the Franciscan order and was healed by Francis as a child. The book introduces his life and work, then examines one of his major works 'Journey of the Soul into God', culminating in his mystical understanding of Christ as the Centre. The word 'into' is key here since it suggests a contemplative process involving a descent into Being and a transcendence of rational limitations. All this is beautifully presented in this book.

***Dzogchen: The Heart Essence of the Great Perfection* by His Holiness the Dalai Lama Snow Lion Publications 2000, 271 pp., p/b.**

These are a series of talks given by the Dalai Lama in Paris, London, Helsinki and San Jose between 1982 and 1989. Three of these meetings were arranged by Sogyal Rinpoche, who provides the background and writes the preface. There are questions and answers included in the text, which is lucid and straightforward. The teaching may be simple but the application is difficult! For instance, how does one deal with anger? A necessary preliminary to achieving not only world peace but also a state of compassion and love. The Dalai Lama speaks directly to the human condition through his tradition.

***Jesus After 2000 Years* by Gerd Lüdemann SCM Press 2000, 695 pp., £30.00, p/b.**

An extraordinary work of scholarship, rightly described as the author's magnum opus. It begins by setting out the book's presuppositions and methodology, then provides systematic translations and analyses of the four Gospels. The commentary makes clear which passages are considered authentic and why. There follows a chapter on the Gospel of Thomas, little of which the author considers authentic since it is so rooted in Gnosticism. This may come as a bit of a surprise to some readers, but then many of us are of a Gnostic persuasion! A chapter on apocryphal traditions is followed by Ludemann's own short life of Jesus where he concludes that 'Jesus is a sympathetic, original figure, a man of humour and wit', although he criticises Jesus for his confident dialogue with God and seems to be unsympathetic to his mysticism. In the light of this it comes as less of a surprise that he finishes the book with a forward-looking statement by Bertrand Russell. The book is nevertheless a remarkable achievement.

***Religion in the Dead Sea Scrolls* by John A Collins and Robert A Kugler (Eds) William Eerdmans Publishing Co. 2000, 167 pp., £11.99, p/b.**

A collection of essays reviewing developments in understanding the scrolls since the release of previously unpublished manuscripts in 1991. One of the most interesting essays addresses Qumran and Hellenism, concluding that the Essene movement resembles a typical product of the new age in its sociological structure and organisation, in its use of technical progress, and its ideological system from abstract language up to the holistic system of creation and history, including astrology and magic'. The irony is that the Essenes as fervent enemies of the Greek way of life became the subject of a Greek reinterpretation thanks to Philo and Josephus. Other essays throw useful light on apocalyptic and messianic themes.

***The Life of Columba* An abridged translation by John Gregory Floris Books 1991, 63 pp., £5.99, h/b.**

Based on the original Latin MS written by Adamnan, ninth abbot of Iona, this small book is a real treasure. Divided into three sections -Prophecies, Miracles, Visions - it recounts many stories from the life of Columba. The book is interspersed with beautifully atmospheric photos of the island.

***The Old Zen Master: Inspirations for Awakening* by Trevor Leggett Buddhist Publishing Group 2000, 144 pp., £8.99, p/b.**

A 'freewheeling' bedside book of stories and parables from Zen and other spiritual traditions. Such stories can form a point of departure for further reflection and growth - the editor tells us that his teacher advised him to memorise striking phrases and meditate on them in subsequent weeks. One poem quoted goes: As in spring, flowers. As in autumn, moon. Think about it!

***Ta Chuan: The Great Treatise* by Stephen Karcher (SMN) 2000, 159 pp., £15.00, h/b.**

A seminal work by a leading scholar which sheds light on the background of the I Ching. It contains a comprehensive introduction followed by an annotated translation of The Great Treatise. The text was originally a set of instructions for using the I Ching but dealt with central questions about the Way. In an era of rapid change, this is the kind of timeless wisdom about change itself that we need most. The book is beautifully produced both in typeface and illustration and will be a treasure for students of Chinese philosophy.

***Stories of the Saints* by Retold by Siegwart Knijpenga Floris Books 1993, 221 pp., £9.99, p/b.**

A book of stories for 7-11 year olds based on the editor's many years of teaching religion to children. Contains stories from over forty saints, some well-known and others less so. The appendix gives useful biographical information.

***Fruits and Gifts of the Spirit* by Thomas Keating Lantern Books 2000, 116 pp., \$12.00, p/b.**

A profound meditation on the spiritual life by one who has spent 50 years in contemplation, enlarging our relationship at all levels with the divine reality that is within us. The three steps are belief in the Divine Indwelling, recognition of the benign nature of this energy, and opening to its gradual unfolding in prayer and action. Presence replaces absence and the gifts are slowly developed: reverence, fortitude, piety, counsel, knowledge, understanding, wisdom. I found that his poems captured the essence of his teaching. In speaking of inner resurrection he writes: 'Who I am arises / In the ashes of the self'. Or again: 'when the self relativises / And the "me" disappears / There is not much left of time. / There is only the present moment'. Here is the practice of the presence of God. Need one say more?

***How to Open Channels & Read the Muse* by Keith Wakelam (SMN) Mulberry Books 1999, 173 pp., £15, p/b.**

In this book Keith draws on his own wide experience and that of a few friends and colleagues to offer a course that potentially expands and enhances the use of our faculties and enables us to maximise our potential. The course is divided into seven levels with detailed exercises in each section. The exercises are in turn related to theoretical discussions underpinned by an extensive knowledge of scientific research. A great deal is distilled in these pages and the benefit will be in direct proportion to the amount of effort expended. The book is somewhat basic in its production and appearance, but the content is very instructive.

***The Fingerprints of God* by Robert Farrar Capon William Eerdmans Publishing Co. 2000, 163 pp., £9.99, p/b.**

Subtitled 'Tracking the Divine Suspect through a History of Images', the author explores a number of images used to talk about God and the Bible. He discusses images used by many great theologians and adds many of his own for good measure. It is a highly original approach. For instance he sees literalism as 'a box of particles, all equally true, all propositions of the same sort'. The he adds: what literalism actually does is turn Scripture into a Coke machine filled with uniform cans of revelation'. More seriously he discusses central images like the cross and its literalising of the process of atonement which comes to be seen as a series of tests to be passed. Original and entertaining.

***The Quest of Historical Jesus* by Albert Schweitzer SCM Press 2000, 562 pp., £30.00, p/b.**

Astonishingly for a book published in 1906, this is the first definitive English translation of the second edition (1913). It is described by the editor as unquestionably the greatest book written on the subject during the 20th century. It appears that the original translation of the first edition was flawed, not to say distorted in parts. Although it is a book for specialists, it has as much historical interest as the 1835 book by David Friedrich Strauss and is accessibly written. I remember Schweitzer describing the writing of it in his autobiography, commenting that for weeks he had to make his way through precariously piled books representing the references for each chapter

***No Easy Answers: An Exploration of Suffering* by Barbara Baisley Epworth Press 2000, 146 pp., £8.95, p/b.**

A compelling book written by a priest telling the story of her own cancer and reflecting on

questions of blame, guilt, death and healing in the light of Christian thinking about prayer, meaning, acceptance and the role of the Cross. Her first reaction was one of bereavement, after which she covers the gamut of emotional processes with admirable honesty. The author draws on a wide literature in her exploration and the book can be recommended to anyone wrestling with issues raised by suffering.

***The Celtic Wheel of Life: A Path to Health, Happiness and ...* by Andy Baggott Gill & Macmillan 2000, 208 pp., £10.99, p/b.**

A book by a practising shaman and healer in the Celtic tradition. Begins from the Celtic understanding of spirals and cycles, especially the archetypal cycle of birth, life, death and rebirth which to every aspect of nature - including ourselves. There are good chapters on the four elements and the wheel of the year. The chapter on nutrition pulls no punches in its somewhat stark but sound recommendations. There follow chapters on tree medicine, the land, ceremony and the use of the sweatlodge. I know of no other book which provides the inside story of a Celtic shamanic way of life that can be applied in our own day.

***Dictionary of Eighteenth-Century British Philosophers- 2 Volumes* General Editors - John Yolton, John Valdimir Price, John Thoemmes Antiquarian Books Ltd. 1999, 502 pp., £175.00, h/b.**

An extraordinary undertaking involving nearly a hundred scholars and providing a comprehensive biographical coverage of 18th century British philosophers. For every one entry on people one has heard of like Smith, Hutcheson, Johnson and Clarke, there are ten about neglected, not to say obscure thinkers complete with bibliographical entries and further background reading. A real resource for scholars and a fascinating encyclopaedia for the general reader with an interest in philosophy.

***Remembering Heraclitus: The Philosopher of Riddles* by Richard Geldard Floris Books 2000, 163 pp., £9.99, p/b.**

'Much learning does not teach understanding - this one thing is wisdom, to understand thought, as that which guides all the world everywhere'. A couple of fragments from Heraclitus quoted in this excellent new book which comes from a similar stable to Peter Kingsley's book on Parmenides. The author sees Heraclitus as among those primarily concerned with human transformation. The book is arranged around a number of key Greek concepts: apophasis, logos, physis, nomos, ethos and telos. These are treated in relation to Greek thought in general and Heraclitus in particular. Highly recommended, especially to anyone interested in the roots of Western thinking.

Psychology/Parapsychology

***Seven Steps to Eternity* by Stephen Turoff Clairview Books 2000, 179 pp., £8.95.**

A fascinating narrative about the post-mortem existence and development of a soldier killed in 1916. Provides a plausible scenario for the interaction of various dimensions of consciousness with some important insights into the struggle between light and dark forces, especially as this relates to war. Travel in thought dimensions is interestingly explored, as is the creative power of thought and telepathy.

***My Descent into Death* by Howard Storm Clairview Books 2000, 164 pp., p/b.**

Ken Ring is right to say that this is one of the most powerful books on near-death experiences. It is a gripping read from the moment when the author suffers a perforated stomach in Paris. It is divided into two sections: the journey and the message. There is a

dramatic encounter with a being of light in which Howard learns that the purpose of life is not acquisition but learning to love. The effect is tantamount to a conversion, bringing with it an awareness of angels and, on one occasion, an appearance near Thomas Merton's grave. A powerfully expressed message.

***Light Beyond the Darkness* by Doré Deverell Clairview Books 2000, 127 pp., £8.95, p/b.**

A moving book by a mother telling the story of her son who committed suicide and how she continued to read to him after his death. This process and their contact finally leads to a healing as well as an expansion of her own understanding through the writings of Steiner and Valentin Tomberg

***Life is for Ever* by James Webster (SMN) Woodside Publications 2000, 200 pp., £9.99, p/b.**

Subtitled 'a personal investigation for evidence of survival', this book contains some remarkable accounts including a story of a dead solicitor (as a solid apparition) conversing with and directing a woman to his practice in the high street. She did not realise that he was dead at the time of the encounter but only realised later, even if she was mystified that the person had vanished. The book is very much a personal record but does contain interesting sections on pioneers such as Sir Oliver Lodge and an explanation of the mind-brain connection that does take this kind of evidence into account. There is plenty of food for thought, especially for those less familiar with the field.

***From Atoms to Angels: The Spiritual Forces Shaping Your Life* by Paul D. Walsh-Roberts Gateway Books 2000, 122 pp., £7.99, p/b.**

The author is a business consultant now providing workshops based on the content of this simple and direct book. It deals with principles and forces such as purpose, separation, synchronicity, power, love, responsibility, healing, life force and fulfilment. It contains a good deal of helpful insight and clear diagrams and is basically an articulation of new age intuitive philosophy with its metaphors of flow, blockage and balance. As such it reflects both the strengths and some of the shortcomings - mainly oversimplifications - of this kind of view. Examples include statements about the relationship between truth and beliefs, and the origins of illness in higher dimensions. However, the overall effect is an empowering and affirming one. See www.lovenlight.net

***Forgiveness: Theory, Research, and Practice* Ed. Michael E McCullough and Others The Guildford Press 2000, 334 pp., £18.95, h/b.**

Sponsored by the John Templeton Foundation, this volume explores the possibilities for creating a scientific understanding of forgiveness and ways in which this might reduce conflict and hostility. The book falls into four parts: conceptual and measurement issues, basic psychological research, applications in counselling, psychotherapy and health, and conclusions. The perspectives are interdisciplinary and include religion, neuropsychology, marital therapy, pastoral care and health. A valuable sourcebook.

***Coincidences* by James Plaskett Tamworth Press 2000, 256 pp., £10.00.**

An intriguing book by a former British chess champion which begins with an autobiographical (and literary) narrative before moving on to an account and analysis of a range of coincidences recorded by the author in his diary from 1984 onwards. Some stories are quite short while others are much more involved, with comments on interesting books he is reading and the occasional diatribe against materialistic science. The book reveals curious connections between inner and outer that readers may well find reflected in their own experience.

Future Studies/Economics/Ecology

***State of the World 2000* by Lester R Brown, Christopher Flavin, Hilary French (eds)
Earthscan Publications Ltd 2000, 275 pp., £12.95, p/b.**

The authoritative flagship publication of the Worldwatch Institute and, as usual, compulsory reading for the environmentally aware (even more for the unaware!). It offers an interdisciplinary analysis of planetary health and prospects. A new development at the Institute is the electronic distribution to some 1,650 editors and reporters of new papers, briefs or magazines. You can look them up on www.worldwatch.org/alerts/index.htm - this volume contains essays on the danger of environmental 'surprises', irrigated agriculture, food, organic pollutants, paper, IT, employment and globalisation. For Lester Brown the two major challenges are climate and population stabilisation, both of which feed into the sustainability issue. As he points out, we can either build a sustainable economy or stay with the unsustainable one until it declines. We cannot refrain from choice and the long term implications will be momentous.

***Blueprint for a Sustainable Economy* by David Pearce & Edward Barbier Earthscan Publications Ltd 2000, 273 pp., £12.95, p/b.**

Ten years on from 'Blueprint for a Green Economy', the authors revisit environmental economics and reflect on progress made and challenges still ahead. They think that the most work needs to be done on the monetisation of the environment, but feel that applications of environmental economics principles has already borne fruit in developing countries. The authors are concerned with the whole concept of sustainable development in relation to property rights, policy instruments and environmental degradation. The level is that of a textbook but it can be profitably read by non-specialists. They continue to believe that we have to look at the misworkings of the economy to find the causes of environmental degradation and are gloomy about our prospects in the light of a 50% population increase and the slowness of institutional change. However our curiosity and creativity balance this and the bottom line is that 'we know what to do. We need to get on and do it'.

***The Fertile Earth* by Viktor Schaubberger, ed. Callum Coats (SMN) Gateway Books 2000, 206 pp..**

This is Volume 3 of the eco-technology series setting out the work of the remarkable Austrian forester, Viktor Schaubberger. His message of understanding and collaborating with nature is a vital one for our time: 'a sick forest does not die alone, but in dying also kills its destroyer -humanity. Another way of phrasing the same message is 'masses without roots perish', although I would extend this to metaphysical roots as well as ecological ones. In his introduction Callum Coats quotes Schaubberger's simple account of humanity's task: to make a small piece of the earth fertile, to evolve oneself to a higher level, to preserve oneself and the species. Themes covered include his philosophy of nature, water movement, agriculture, soil fertility and trees. Vital reading for a new eco-philosophy.

***The Psychology of the Internet* by Patricia Wallace Cambridge University Press 1999, 264 pp., £19.95, h/b.**

An up to the minute book on the psychological aspects of cyberspace which draws on a wide variety of disciplines. Deals with the personas, group dynamics (including conflict and cooperation), the psychology of romance (and pornography) on the Net, altruism and gender issues. Thorough and most informative with plenty of live examples.

***Managing the Planet: The Politics of the New Millennium* by Norman Moss Earthscan Publications Ltd 2000, 225 pp., £16.99, h/b.**

A well informed study starting from the observation that global warming is our most pressing problem and this has political, technological, economic and ecological implications. The author draws a parallel with nuclear weapons as an erosion of national sovereignty in the sense that nations cannot defend themselves in isolation. This means that we have to move beyond the politics of national interest and treat these issues in a global fashion - the politics of the planet. There is a slightly surreal appendix of items from the US press of 2060, one of which reads that the US government is threatening military action against any country emitting more than 3 tonnes of carbon per capita. It would have been a joke in poor taste at the Hague recently! The book is nevertheless required reading for aspiring politicians.

***The Ecological Indian* by Shepard Krech II Norton and Co Ltd 2000, 318 pp., £10.95, p/b.**

A very important scholarly book, subtitled 'myth and history' and described by writer Carolyn Merchant as 'a stunning, provocative reassessment of the image of the noble Indian living in harmony with nature'. The author uses the title term 'Ecological Indian' to denote the myth which he traces partly back to Rousseau's noble savage (while pointing out that savage has the opposite connotations as well) and partly to the powerful poster of the crying Indian released in 1971. This image has driven much ecological thinking over the last 30 years and is archetypally contrasted with the white polluter. Both images, argues the author, are ultimately dehumanising as they fail to honour diversity. The book examines a number of historical episodes as case histories, notably Indian parts played in near-extinction of certain animals such as deer, buffalo and beaver, as well as the use of fire in forest management. A groundbreaking work.

***70 Years A-Growing* by Jean Westlake Hawthorn Press 2000, 256 pp., £14.99, p/b.**

A fascinating autobiographical account of the history of the author's family and the development of their organic estate at Sandy Balls in Hampshire. Her father was Aubrey Westlake, an early Network member whose book I recall reviewing nearly 15 years ago. Readers will glean an enormous amount from the author's experience. The book is brought to life with copious illustrations and line drawings.

***The Green Office Manual* by Wastebusters Ltd Earthscan Publications Ltd 1998, 316 pp., £39.95, p/b.**

A quite remarkably thorough guide to responsible practice across the environmental board. Deals with office waste, purchasing products and services, buildings, transport, environmental management. Typically, each section (for instance on laser printer cartridges or office furniture) will itemise the environmental issues, give industry standards where applicable, then recommend practical action, with summary guidelines. Numerous case studies bring the practice to life. This must be the definitive book which should be read by anyone in charge of an office. We will be making our own audit.

***Vital Signs: The environmental trends that are shaping our future.* by Ed. Linda Starke Earthscan Publications Ltd 1999, 197 pp., £12.95, p/b.**

One cannot help agreeing with the Guardian view of this annual publication that 'it makes all other reference books look trivial'. The same can be said of the companion volume, 'the State of the World'. Lester Brown contributes the Introduction in what he calls an 'off the chart year', where the world temperature went off the top of the scale they had been using for years. He himself looks at trends in energy, climate (proliferation of algal blooms and

pesticide-resistant species), food (restructuring the protein economy), transport, communication and population. Among trends to watch he highlights fast food (and its long term health implications), the changing role of public and private sectors, and the developing role of NGOs. The rest of the book examines key indicators in a wide range of areas and adds an analysis of special environmental, economic, social and military features. Indispensable. See also www.worldwatch.org

Education

***The Enchanted Kingdom* by Guido Visconti Floris Books 1997, 24 pp., £8.99, h/b.**

Review by Charlotte Lorimer (5) : I like stories about princesses and this is one of the best. A king has no trees or birds in his kingdom and the princess gets a painter to paint trees and birds, which suddenly come to life! So the whole kingdom once again has trees, flowers and birds - it's wonderful!

***The Secret of Happy Children* by Steve Biddulph Thorsons 1984, 148 pp., £8.99, p/b.**

It is not hard to understand why this book has sold a million copies - it is practical, humorously written and illustrated, and extremely helpful to parents. It covers all the problems one is likely to encounter - such as whingeing, shyness, procrastination at bedtime, tantrums and TV - and suggests tried and tested approaches to resolving them. The discussion of assertiveness as compared with the extremes of aggression and passivity is very useful. The main issues are all backed up with case histories. A must read for all parents of young children.

***Games Children Play* by Kim Brooking-Payne Hawthorn Press 1996, 157 pp., £14.99, p/b.**

An amazing resource coming from the Steiner tradition and giving games for all ages. Each age group and their games are characterised by certain appropriate qualities. There are over 200 games with diagrams and full instructions and some even have music. The foreword stresses the importance of playing healthy games for the development of a sense of movement and balance. Highly recommended for families.

***Curriculum of Love* by Morgan Simone Daleo Grace Publishing & Communications 1996, 172 pp., \$17.95, p/b.**

Subtitled 'Cultivating the Spiritual Nature of Children', this award winning book presents a series of activities for children to help them nurture and express spiritual qualities such as harmony, mindfulness, service, compassion, joy and appreciation of beauty. The resource section after each chapter is almost overwhelming, with books for children and adults, tapes and music. A book for every aware parent (and child).

***A Quiet Revolution* by Frances Farrer Rider 2000, 177 pp., £9.99, p/b.**

This is a remarkable story about the values programme at West Kidlington School in Oxfordshire. The headmaster, Neil Hawkes, contributes the first chapter and it is obvious that we have here an inspiring example of 'best practice' stemming from his philosophy. He starts from the quality of the teacher as the most significant aspect of teaching and a model of the child as a 'reflective learner'. On the basis that 'calm, happy, focused children produce good work', he has devised a positive values programme imbued with spirituality. Comments from parents, teachers and locals make it quite clear that the programme is effective and the atmosphere of the school special. The values - such as peace, hope, courage, love, appreciation - form an integral and reflective part of school assemblies as well as being imbued in the curriculum and other school activities. The book is engagingly written and

there is a blueprint summary at the end of each chapter. I would urge all readers involved in education to read this book.

***A Child is Born: A Christmas Story* by Illust by Kindra Capek Floris Books 1984, 24 pp., £8.99, h/b.**

Charlotte Lorimer (5) writes: another beautiful book from Floris, a little like their 'Lost Kingdom' that I reviewed last year. An adventure story about a boy who comes to the stable where baby Jesus was born and who meets people along the way who give him things to take along. My Daddy liked this story too.

General

Bronwen Astor: Her Life and Times by Peter Stanford Harper Collins Publishers Ltd 2000, 365 pp., £19.99, h/b. Quite a number of readers will know Bronwen as the hostess of our local Guildford group but fewer will be familiar with her remarkable life story sympathetically told in this book. It begins with an evocative visit to Cliveden more than thirty years on from the tumultuous events of the 1960s that engulfed the Astor family and led to such a sharp reversal of fortune. The success of her modelling career in the 50s is vividly portrayed, as is the glittering period in the early 60s. The most important theme running throughout the book, however, is Bronwen's spiritual journey, painfully misunderstood by many of her erstwhile friends. Her interest in Teilhard de Chardin has been long-standing, as has her involvement with the Alister Hardy Foundation. Her faith in God and the inspiration of her mystical experiences has sustained her. We learn of her forging a new career in psychotherapy and rebirthing and can appreciate how it harmonises with her spiritual convictions. It is above all the story of Bronwen's integrity and capacity to reinvent herself: from model to psychotherapist and mystic; and of her courage and persistence in the face of adversity.

***The Ten Second Internet Man@ger* by Mark Breier Judy Piatkus (Publishers) Ltd 2000, 153 pp., £9.99, p/b.**

A breathless book, as one might surmise from the title! The author is former CEO of Beyond.com, and also worked for Amazon in the early days. The style is crisp and concise. Topics include fast action, uses of email, managing meetings (have power coffees rather than lunches!), brand building and investment strategies. A useful guide to managing information and decisions in a fast-moving world, and well illustrated from the author's experience.

***The Collected Poems of Vernon Watkins* by Vernon Watkins Golgonooza Press 1986, 495 pp., £16.95, p/b.**

Vernon Watkins may not be known to many readers of this Review, but he deserves to be. He has been acclaimed by Eliot, Yeats and more recently by Kathleen Raine. His nature poems are especially powerful and evocative of the passing seasons in relation to human experience. Unreservedly recommended. I hope to print a poem as an example in a later issue

***The Book of Inspirations: A Directory of Social Inventions* by Nicholas Albery et al (Eds) The Institute for Social Inventions 2000, 320 pp., £15.00, p/b.**

The annual volume from the Institute of Social Inventions, which always makes entertaining reading. Entries are arranged thematically under such headings as housing, health, environment, neighbourhood, communications, politics and social inventions. Two of the

awards for 2000 were Charley Tart's TASTE website, mentioned in this Review, and Member Rachel Remen's network of Hippocratic drop-in groups for doctors. Rachel is quoted as saying that 'more mistakes are made by objectivity than were ever made by intimacy'. For more details of the Institute, see www.globalideasbank.org

***How to Stop and Influence Planning Permission* by Roy Speer & Michael Dade Stonepound Books 1994, 159 pp., £12.50, p/b.**

You never know when you might need a book like this! Written by two experts, it gives an overview of the planning system, applications, appeals, local plans and compulsory purchases. Includes sample forms and even an analysis of grounds for objection to plans!

Death and Dying

***Dying, Death and Bereavement in a British Hindu Community* by Shirley Firth (SMN) UitgeverijPeeters 1997, 240 pp., £20.00, p/b.**

An in depth study of Hindu theory and practice surrounding death - the book derives from a doctoral thesis and is therefore very detailed in its treatment of the issues. It is very much a picture of contemporary practice but as it relates to an ancient tradition. It is important to understand the rituals of other communities in a multi-racial society otherwise misunderstanding arises that can cause great distress. The book is an important contribution to sociology of religion and should be on the shelves of every hospital and hospice, especially those with concentrations of Hindu communities.

***The Wisdom of Dying: Practices for Living* by N Michael Murphy Element Books 1999, 231 pp., £9.99, p/b.**

I first met Michael Murphy on Iona in 1987, when he had been in hospice work for about ten years. Here he distils the wisdom of his experience of caring for the dying and their families, showing how important lessons for living are derived from a profound understanding of death and loss. Stories are central to the book, as are visualisations - including one of one's own death. A (literally) touching ritual involves the giving and receiving of blessings within a family circle when a member is dying. This enables much to be expressed and processed and brings an unusual sense of intimacy. Later on, Michael speaks of the importance of surrender in the spiritual life and the need to release one's hold on the body itself. He also outlines the successful course that he has pioneered, one which empowers people to connect with their depths, with each other and with life itself. A sensitive and insightful book.

***Ways to Go Naturally* Ed. Nicholas Albery The Institute for Social Inventions 2000, 77 pp., £6.20.**

A publication of the Natural Death Centre covering a whole range of topics related to death, dying and funerals with a special emphasis on woodland burial, which the Centre pioneered. Very useful for families and palliative care workers as it contains some practical suggestions about support systems and types of care.