

Recommended reading, by Vivienne Stacey

## Counsels in Contemporary Islam

by Kenneth Cragg

Published by Edinburgh University Press, #3 in its series "Islamic Surveys"

The major reactions and influences of twentieth-century Islam are surveyed in this book. We are again indebted to Dr Kenneth Cragg for another thought-provoking and penetrating study book. This is a book for students and for those who diligently seek to understand their Muslim friends.

Chapter 2 is called "Counsel for Pakistan". Dr Cragg asserts that "Pakistan as concept, policy and fact, must be seen as the surest Muslim index to Islam in our time, doing for its contemporary definition what the Hijra did in the seventh century." (p 29). Chapter 8, entitled "Macoldana Azad and Indian Islam" concludes with the thought that "maybe minority status can do for Islam what even statehood would preclude". At all events, as Wilfred Smith has observed, "their faith – Islam – is the one thing .... left to them" (p 139).

The Bible and Medical Missionary Fellowship has an active and avowed interest in Pakistan and India. In its 1966 United Conference it declared its concern for the proclamation of the good news of Christ in other areas of Western Asia. Chapter 9 dealing with "The Significance of Turkey" should be of particular interest. Dr Cragg declares "One thing is clear, namely, that Islam in Turkey is far too virile for secularism to ignore and too unpredictable to hold free rein. The fact of its survival is undoubted, the temper is still in doubt. It has outlived Ataturk but is yet in the toils of his legacy." (p 154)

**Counsels in Contemporary Islam** could profitably be studied by a group, taking a chapter at a time and discussing the ideas and interpretation given. It is not a book for one who has no acquaintance with Islam. The student will be particularly grateful for the valuable notes, bibliography and index.