development of modern astronomy and astrophysics. Like Robert W. Smith’s account of the expanding universe and Karl Hufbauer’s history of solar research, it is certain to emerge as a classic work in the field. But it is also a model biography that deserves a wide readership among historians and students of twentieth century science.

Corvallis, Oregon

RONALD E. DOEL

SCIENCE AND BIBLICAL SYMBOLISM


The typography of the dust jacket gives a better clue to the emphases of this book than the title page. There, like an optometrist’s chart, Bible is printed in the largest letters and the rise of natural science in the smallest.

This is a fascinating account of Biblical hermeneutics, how the Church Fathers allowed a multiple level of interpretation of the sacred texts but a single symbolic interpretation of things themselves in relationship to these texts. Thus sticks, stones, and creatures were imbued with sacred meanings, and for natural sciences to begin to flourish, a whole fresh hermeneutic was required. Peter Harrison, a professor of philosophy in Australia, argues here that the rise of Protestantism in Europe provided precisely this fresh look at nature.

Harrison demonstrates a deep, almost overwhelming, command of the sources, particularly those of the English Renaissance, giving his account a dense texture. His use of German or French materials, for example, is sufficiently more limited as to raise questions about how general his thesis really is. And “natural science” in his context means primarily the world of botany, zoology, and geology, with astronomy only in the margins. Nevertheless this volume adds valuable insights into the complex ground on which the scientific revolution took place.

Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics

OWEN GINGERICH

JHA, xxxii (2001)

ROGER LOUIS BILLARD (1922–2000)

Roger Billard, the historian of Indian astronomy, was born in Puteaux, in the outskirts of Paris, on 29 August 1922. He was the only child of parents who lived in modest circumstances. As a boy he developed an interest in both astronomy and Oriental studies, at one time selling his bicycle to buy a Sanskrit dictionary. But his