oppressed, but that their perceptions of the demands of justice were too easily moulded to fit the contours of prevailing Western ideologies. In this respect [Stanley concludes tellingly] our predecessors reflect our own fallibility more closely than we care to admit.’

This admirable study falls short on two counts; the first is that its dense and detailed prose may not make it as ‘accessible to the non-historian’ as intended. More crucially, by examining the whole question at the end ‘from a specifically Christian perspective’, the author weakens the book’s effectiveness as an historical work. It might have been better if he had put his ‘theological evaluation’ in a separate volume, thus avoiding predictable accusations of religious bias. This critic has heard one historian describe the book as an ‘apologia’—unfairly, because in its central core it presents an independent-minded and convincing historical analysis.

University of Leeds

HUGH CECIL

Simensen, Jarle, Norwegian Missions in African History Vol. 1: South Africa 1845-1906, Oslo, Norwegian University Press, 1986, 280 pp., 82 00 07418 8

This volume of essays is an interesting contribution to the study of Christian missions in Africa as well as to the history of the Zulu kingdom. It is the first of two volumes to be produced by the Norwegian University Press on Norwegian missionary activity in Africa and Madagascar structured so as to be a contribution to the history of the local people.

One essay in this volume serves to paint the background. It is a general history of the Zulu kingdom by a non-Norwegian, non-mission scholar, Charles Ballard. The other three essays are based on doctoral research done in the 1970s at the University of Trondheim in the field of mission history. The first essay, by the editor Jarle Simensen and Vidar Gynnild, deals with the founding and early history of the Norwegian Missionary Society in the nineteenth century. Unusually the society, though a product of the influence of both English Evangelicalism and German Pietism, remained firmly rooted in the Norwegian State Church. In other
ways it was very similar to developments earlier in the century in England and Scotland, where support for missions was essentially a lay movement rooted in the lower middle-class and working class. Although no different from the main British societies in a lack of openness to African traditional culture, the Norwegian Society was significantly different in its initial lack of concern about education and 'civilisation'. One area this essay does not touch on is that of race theory which, in the second half of the nineteenth century, profoundly influenced the British and American intellectual world. There is one hint of this issue which, regrettably, is passed over without comment by the authors. It is when they inform us that in 1881 the General Secretary of the Society chose to translate into Norwegian the work on mission of the German, Professor Theodore Christlieb, who complains of 'the Jewish controlled liberal press'! The other two essays concern the interaction of the work of the Mission and the Zulu kingdom. One is by Per Hernaes, 'The Zulu Kingdom, Norwegian Missionaries and British Imperialism', and the other by the editor, aided by three of his past doctoral candidates, 'Christian Missions and Socio-Cultural Change in Zululand'.

These essays are useful studies of the work of the Norwegian Society in the Zulu kingdom, where they managed to create a small Christian community by the beginning of the twentieth century. This is unlike the other missionary societies in the area. They gained many Zulu-speaking converts in Natal but had little or no impact in the Kingdom itself until well into the twentieth century.

However, when the authors make comparisons with other areas, they expose curious gaps in their perception of southern African history. For example they insist that the Norwegian Society was the only one to try to carry out its work entirely within an independent African kingdom. Yet the Paris Evangelical Mission did just that in Moshweshwe's Lesotho, and the LMS in Lobengula's kwaNdebele.

Again the authors do not draw on that Sotho experience as a helpful parallel and contrast with what happened in the Zulu kingdom. Moshweshwe gave the French great opportunities and strong support because they contributed loyally to his drive to expand and modernize his kingdom. In contrast, the conservatism of successive Zulu kings profoundly restricted the work of the Norwegians even when they were, under Schreuder, attempting to