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BOOK REVIEWS

Israel's Prophetic Tradition. Essays in honour of Peter Ackroyd

Ed. R. Coggins, A. Phillips and M. Knibb, Cambridge University Press, 1982. Pp. 272. £21.00.

"Scholarly advance in the humanities often depends less upon sensational new discoveries than upon the questioning and re-evaluation of what had become unquestioned assumptions, and it is in this latter area that Peter Ackroyd's especial contribution to Old Testament scholarship will probably be judged to rest." In beginning their Preface to this handsome *Festschrift* for Professor Peter Ackroyd with these words, the editors not only capture succinctly the distinctive character of their honorand's important place within contemporary biblical studies, but also aptly sum up the particular merits of their own volume. Their aim, they say, was to produce a more unified volume than the general run of *Festschriften* by having all the contributions relate to one theme, the prophetic tradition in the Old Testament, and they have been remarkably successful in producing a book on the prophets that is a genuinely unified work. And its hallmark is an approach to the various aspects of the question of prophecy which is cautious in claiming to have made 'advances' in the study of the subject, but carefully critical of (as well as compendiously informative about) the trends in other scholarly studies. The result is a collection of essays that provides an authoritative guide to the field, and helpfully suggests areas in which further progress is to be looked for: a worthy and appropriate tribute to Peter Ackroyd.

The first two essays survey the state of our knowledge about the phenomenon of prophecy in the ancient Near East and in early Israel. Both are inclined to argue that we know a good deal less than we thought we did, but both define more closely the questions that future discussions will have to deal with. Helmer Ringgren's 'Prophecy in the ancient Near East' proceeds chiefly by a serial discussion of various alleged parallels to Israelite prophecy in many other cultures, while J. R. Porter, 'The origins of prophecy in Israel,' is a meticulous analysis of the character of the biblical sources and a cautious critique of the main recent hypotheses about such matters as prophetic psychology, the relation of prophets to the cult, and the 'social location' of the prophet in Israelite society.

The next six essays survey trends in the study of particular books on the latter prophets. A. S. van der Woude, 'Three classical prophets: Amos, Hosea and Micah,' provides an invaluable and comprehensive guide to recent scholarship on these three books. He shows that the study of Amos has become somewhat bogged down in redaction-critical hypotheses that are attractive but essentially too speculative to admit of proof, given the paucity of material that the book of Amos contains; but he suggests that the time is ripe for some fresh work on Hosea, and urges us to reconsider the question of authenticity in regard to the later chapters of Micah. His bibliography is outstandingly useful even in a volume which is marked by particular care in the selection of bibliographies. John Eaton picks up Ackroyd's own interest in 'The Isaiah Tradition', and tries to show that his and other recent studies of the whole book of Isaiah as a proper subject for interpretation might be enhanced by

attention to the liturgical tradition in Israel. The unity which the finished book possesses is traced back to a constant reshaping of Isaianic tradition in a cultic setting. Eaton is perhaps inclined to see all prophets as having some connection with liturgy, but in the next essay, 'An alternative prophetic tradition?', Richard Coggins distinguishes between 'anthologies' of prophecy (such as Isaiah) and those prophetic texts that *originated* as liturgical pieces: Joel, Nahum, Habbakuk, Zephaniah, Zechariah 9-14 and (a thought-provoking addition) Isaiah 40-55. One value of recognizing these prophecies as a distinct group is that they are, on the whole, rather little affected by the deuteronomistic redaction that has had a certain standardizing effect on the other prophetic books; another is that they may help us to form a clearer picture (or to challenge the idea) of 'cult-prophets'; and a third is that the very absence of personal information about the prophets whose names they bear might divert our attention from the *personality* of the prophet to the *themes* of the individual books.

Walther Zimmerli offers an essay on 'Visionary experience in Jeremiah', which brings out distinctive features of the Jeremiah tradition as against, for example, the tradition of Ezekiel. R. E. Clements contrasts the same two prophets, but this time with reference to the redactional influences which have given us the finished books of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. He provides a more exact statement of a position that would be widely agreed when he shows that the Jeremiah redactors can broadly be characterized as 'deuteronomistic', the Ezekiel redactors as 'priestly'. In both cases we have a single substantial reworking of the basic material to adapt it to the theological concerns of the 'school' in question, rather than the complicated revision by successive generations of 'disciples' which is sometimes suggested. Clements's use of Occam's razor leaves an attractively simple working model for further study of these two books. Prophecy in the post-exilic period is discussed by Rex Mason, whose essay 'The prophets of the restoration' follows Ackroyd's own lead in rehabilitating Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, and their anonymous editors. He draws on his own research and on that of Beuken to make a careful distinction between the outlook of the prophets themselves and that of the circles who contributed the editorial framework of their books, and handles such ideas as 'realized eschatology', the relation of eschatology to 'theocracy' (with useful criticisms of Plöger and Hanson), and the question whether prophecy 'failed' (with reference to the work of R. P. Carroll).

Four essays discuss the relationship between prophecy and other traditions in the Old Testament. Michael Knibb, 'Prophecy and the emergence of the Jewish apocalypses,' continues a theme already touched on by Mason, with further criticisms of Hanson and a particularly useful survey of recent work on the definition of 'apocalyptic'. He seeks to show that the truth about apocalyptic lies neither with Rowley ("apocalyptic is the child of prophecy") nor with von Rad (who, notoriously, derived it from wisdom and saw it as utterly alien to the prophetic tradition), but in a much more subtle analysis of movements of thought and literary conventions in post-exilic Judaism. R. N. Whybray brings us up to date on the issue 'Prophecy and wisdom'. He sees most arguments for a close dependence of prophets on 'wise men' as foundering on the rocks of definition - what was a 'wise man'? - but thinks the debate has had a useful role in clarifying many questions. Robert Murray's 'Prophecy and the cult' is perhaps less a report on the state of the question

than the other essays (with the possible exception of Eaton's), being in large part a sustained and fascinating study of Isaiah 33. He argues that this is a liturgical text in which many allusions to the superstitious subculture that characterized much 'unofficial' religion in ancient Israel lurk not far beneath the surface; the poet has used memories of a time when the cult was concerned with what we should frankly call magic to produce a dense and allusive text. We are back to a survey of current trends, however, with Anthony Phillips's essay 'Prophecy and law', which provides a comprehensive guide to possible uses of legal traditions in the pre-exilic prophets, and interestingly relates this material to its author's thesis that the Decalogue formed both the criminal code of early Israel and the foundation-document for its highly distinctive, theological polity. Phillips shows how evidence from the prophets can be used to help chart the development of legal practice under the monarchy.

The two concluding essays are of a more general kind. John Sawyer describes 'A change of emphasis in the study of the prophets', by which he means the recent phenomenon of 'holistic' and 'synchronic' reading of Old Testament books, as advocated in his own book *From Moses to Patmos*. The historical-critical method, he argues, has run us into a blind alley, and the only way out is over the wall that (he believes) has for too long separated biblical critics from linguistic and literary scholars. There are some important ideas here, which limitations of space make it difficult for him to develop; there are also some quite sharp criticisms of the way the Old Testament is, in the author's experience, generally presented to students. The volume ends with an essay by Ulrich Simon, 'Martin Buber and the interpretation of the prophets,' which succeeds in combining a fascinating analysis of Buber's approach, especially as exemplified in his great translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, *Die Schrift*, with a timely treatment of the hermeneutical problem of the prophetic books for Jews and Christians respectively. He stresses the new forms this problem has assumed in a century which has come to distrust both the apocalyptic eschatology that has taken a secular form in the opposing ideologies of international Marxism and of the Third Reich, and also the realized or inaugurated eschatology represented for some Christians by the claim that the church is already the kingdom of the Messiah, and for some Jews by the establishment of the state of Israel. It is fitting that the *Festschrift* should end with a word on the modern problem of the Old Testament, a matter which mainstream Old Testament scholarship has never neglected and which Peter Ackroyd has been alive to in so many of his publications.

John Barton

Jesus Son of Man: A Fresh Examination of the Son of Man Sayings in the Gospels in the Light of Recent Research

B. Lindars, S.S.F. S.P.C.K., 1983. Pp. 260. £15.00.

The expression *The Son of Man* has been a centre of controversy among New Testament scholars for most of this century, but in the last 20 years the discussion has taken a turn that previously seemed unexpected. The term occurs nearly 90 times in the New Testament, where it is to be found almost only in the gospels, and there practically

entirely in the direct speech of Jesus. A generation ago, one explanation was that Jesus had been referring by this expression (which was taken to be a title, capable of being understood as such by his hearers) to one who would come at the end of the world, to judge all men and bring in the time of God's final rule; it was disputed whether he was referring to himself, or another. So, for example, R. Bultmann divided the Son of Man sayings into three groups: (i) those which speak of the Son of Man as coming in the future; (ii) those which speak of him as dying and rising again; and (iii) those which refer to him in the present tense, as now at work. Bultmann thought that the third group was "a mere misunderstanding of the translation into Greek"; the second group contained *vaticinia ex eventu*; and "the first group alone contains very old tradition"; in these sayings, Jesus spoke of the Son of Man in the third person. (*Theology of the New Testament*, E.T., 1952, p. 30).

All this has changed, and attention is now focussed on the third group of Son of Man sayings: the original and authentic usage is thought to be found there only, and the first and second groups are regarded as developments of the Church, probably working in Greek rather than in Aramaic, and misunderstanding what was meant.

One of the first writers who challenged the idea that Son of Man was a title, was G. Vermes, in 1965; he argued that in Aramaic it was a circumlocution, referring to the speaker. A further study of the term, with special attention to the Old Testament and the Intertestamental writings, by P. M. Casey (*Son of Man*, 1979), argued that in the original Son of Man saying Jesus was making general statements about mankind, in which he included himself. Now, we have a book from Professor Lindars of Manchester University, which builds upon the work of Vermes and Casey, and examines every instance of Son of Man in the New Testament.

Professor Lindars adopts a position that is different from that of Vermes and Casey: he thinks that the Son of Man idiom in Aramaic refers to "a class of persons with whom [the speaker] identifies himself"; e.g., "a man in my position". He finds nine instances in the New Testament when Son of Man is used in the authentic idiom; and these are either in Mark, or in the hypothetical document (Q) used by Matthew and Luke independently. All the other sayings reflect the Church's developing understanding of Jesus in the post-resurrection situation.

The main line of argument is vulnerable on two counts: first, the theory of synoptic relationships which he uses, while it is still the most popular, is under attack in many directions, and it is not clear how much depends upon it; secondly Professor Lindars proceeds from a decision on the first century Aramaic idiom to conclusions concerning authenticity; e.g., "The Son of Man here [Luke 6:22] can only be an exclusive self-reference . . . therefore it cannot go back to Jesus himself" (p. 135); when experts disagree on a first century Aramaic idiom, it seems hazardous to build everything on one hypothesis.

In the final chapter, Professor Lindars addresses himself to the question of Christology, and he shows that the authentic Son of Man sayings "do not include a claim to be the Messiah" (p. 187). He then argues that Jesus was, nevertheless, thought to be the Messiah before the crucifixion. One wonders whether "The Messiah" may not be another

broken reed: whether there is any better evidence for the titular use of "The Messiah" than there was for "The Son of Man". Writers on the New Testament may have to use more lower case in future.

The debate will continue, and it will be fascinating to see whether it takes another unexpected turn in the next 20 years. Meanwhile, every student of the New Testament will be indebted to Professor Lindars for the detailed and careful consideration he has given to these sayings of Jesus in the four gospels.

John Fenton

Jewish and Christian Self-Definition: Volume Two

Edited by E. P. Sanders with A. I. Baumgarten and Alan Mendelson. SCM Press, 1981. Pp. 485. £15.00.

The second volume of papers from the McMaster University research project is sub-titled 'Aspects of Judaism in the Graeco-Roman Period'. The material and methods of the study of Judaism remain to many students of the New Testament and the early Church a foreign field, and this is a substantial contribution to its exploration. Some papers are of a specialist nature, and their contribution to the McMaster project might have been made more obvious; thus D. W. Halivni on 'The Reception offered to Rabbi Judah's Mishnah' and A. I. Baumgarten on 'The Education of R. Judah the Prince'. Some, while useful, add nothing especially new or enlightening; thus J. Blenkinsopp on 'Interpretation and the Tendency to Sectarianism' and S. Z. Leiman on 'Inspiration and Canonicity'. Others are detailed pieces of textual analysis leading to cautious but important conclusions. J. H. Charlesworth examines 'Christian and Jewish Self-Definition in Light of the Christian Additions to the Apocryphal Writings': the alteration of received traditions is one manifestation of a community's self-definition, and in these documents the predominant tension remains that with Judaism rather than variant forms of Christianity. F. Dexinger discusses 'Limits of Tolerance in Judaism': the existence of Samaritanism over against Judaism shows how there may be a breaking point for the flexibility of Judaism; but it is a "model" to be used with care. In a complementary discussion of 'Tannaitic Perspectives on the Jewish-Christian Schism', L. H. Schiffman shows how Jewish Christians could not lose their character as Jews in the eyes of Rabbis. Though Schiffman does not make the connection, his essay is suggestive of how he may himself have understood his relation to his nation. The longest paper is that of B. S. Jackson, 'On the Problem of Roman Influence on the Halakah'; a highly technical study, but containing interesting examples of the conflict of laws, and working out models for the assessment of parallels as "influence" that are of more general applicability.

Four contributions stand out as of especial interest. J. Goldstein discusses 'Jewish Acceptance and Rejection of Hellenism', demonstrating the very broad degree of openness possible without compromising Jewish identity, and also drawing valuable comparisons with Roman intolerance of things Greek: Jewish "exclusiveness" is not exclusive! R. Kimelman on the 'Birkat Ha-Minim' gives a careful assessment of Jewish, New Testament and Patristic material to

demonstrate the 'Lack of Evidence for an Anti-Christian Jewish Prayer in Late Antiquity'. The addition of *nosrim* in the fourth century is directed against the Jewish Christian sect of the Nazareans; the *birkat* at no point marked a watershed between Jews and Christians *per se*. Church historians may wonder why the luckless Nazareans suddenly deserved such treatment. E. E. Urbach on 'Self-Isolation or Self-Affirmation in Judaism' shows that so-called universalism and particularism are not necessarily antitheses, and that the necessary affirmation of Israel's integrity does not rule out her openness to the world. Finally, A. F. Segal on the 'Ruler of this World' provides an example of sociological exegesis; his demonstration of the polemical and sectarian function of this image in the gospel of John and gnosticism is comparable to Wayne Meeks's celebrated article on 'The Man from Heaven'.

A mixed bag, then, as such collections tend to be; and others will no doubt differently identify the plums. The editorial hand could have been laid more firmly upon it (for instance, Urbach takes for granted some positions Kimelman puts in question, but there is no note to that effect). The Preface expresses a hope to probe to "the question of why the driving forces?" and to why the insistence "not only that it was important to be Jewish or Christian, but to be so in a certain way?". I should have welcomed an Epilogue assessing the contribution of these papers to these questions, and indeed the state of play of the research project. E. P. Sanders is of course the person to write it. Without such drawing together of the threads, there is a danger that the McMaster volumes will be just more essay collections; individually important no doubt, but not obviously furthering a continuing enquiry that it potentially of great significance for Jewish and Christian mutual understanding, and that not only in the historical realm.

Sophie Laws

1. *S.B.L. 1972 Proceedings*, Missoula, 1972, Vol. 1, pp. 285-313.

The Making of the Church

J. G. Davies. Mowbray Religious Reprint, 1983. Pp. 208. £4.50.

Browsing in a bookshop at Neuchatel in Switzerland during the summer of 1970, I came across a volume by J. G. Davies on the Early Church. I purchased it eagerly, for, like many of the distinguished Edward Cadbury Professor's other works, it was out of print. How good then that *The Making of the Church* which appeared first in 1960, should again be available, now under another publisher's imprint and with a new look!

Professor Davies has the gift of making Church history interesting, and of bringing to life characters that for many are little more than names with a string of writings attached. Even within the limits of the present 200 pages he succeeds in achieving this, not least by means of apt quotations drawn from original sources which add to the book's value.

I select for special mention chapter 5 entitled 'The Social Life of the Church', and chapter 7 dealing with the Church's 'Inner Life' particularly in regard to worship. The former, reflecting material found in two of the author's earlier books *Daily Life in the Early Church* and *Social Life of Early*

Christians, gives a reminder of the restrictions on a Christian in the first centuries, not only in the choice of a profession but even in the pleasures allowed, since the Church was "convinced that the test of a man's spiritual health was the tone and temper of his leisure hours" (p. 106). Chapter 7 reveals the author's interest in early Christian worship and architecture – he is editor of *A Dictionary of Liturgy and Worship*. I liked his comment: "If the step from the Upper Room in Jerusalem to the glories of Sancta Sophia at Constantinople (563) seems a long one, it may be regarded as but the natural working out of man's thankful response to the divine initiative, a response which is emphasized by the name of the principal Christian act of worship, i.e., the Eucharist or Thanksgiving" (p. 167). A pity that illustrations of early Christian buildings and works of art so graphically described could not have been included; alas, that would have been to put up the book's cost!

Of the remaining six chapters the second, entitled "The structure of the Church" gives a lucid account of the development of the various orders and of the parochial and diocesan systems. Chapter 3 on "Church and State" has a paragraph which indicates the complexity of the relationship between the two: "If hostility and persecution is not to be condoned, dualism is not without its difficulties, for while it rightly affirms that the State is not omnipotent, it is hard to be precise as to what exactly belongs to each sphere, and it involves the danger that part of life will be regarded as outside God's concern" (p. 78).

Perhaps the weakest part of the book is its scant treatment of Gnosticism and the teaching of Marcion. Certainly the uninitiated would scarcely appreciate the menace which these presented to the Church in the making. There is a slight mistake in the dating of Cyprian's martyrdom which should be "two years later" i.e., 258 A.D. (p. 87); and "Petilian of Constantine" should read "of Constantina" (p. 91).

Although *The Making of the Church* will not replace the more detailed recommended studies, it may well provide students with an additional source, supplying them with flesh to clothe those dry bones which are all that some seem to possess!

Gordon Huelin

Augustine on Evil

G. R. Evans. Cambridge University Press, 1982. Pp. 198. £12.00.

Miss Evans will need no introduction to students of medieval theology. Her previous books have earned her a well-deserved reputation for sympathetic understanding of unfamiliar, even at times uncongenial, people and ideas. She is an authority on Anselm of Canterbury, and has done much to revive interest in his work. Her latest contribution takes her further back in time, to the man whose ideas were uniquely influential in medieval thought.

Miss Evans has tackled, in a short space, a problem which was central to Augustine's theology, and which plagued him nearly all his life. It may be unwise to give full weight, as Miss Evans does, to Augustine's reminiscences in

his *Confessions*; had he really been as aware of his actions when still a child as he later claimed to be, he would probably have professed conversion a good deal sooner. The *Confessions* are a reflection rather than factual history, and this needs to be taken into account more obviously than is the case here. On the other hand, it is important to be reminded that Augustine knew that the problem of sin is inherent in man from birth, and this point is brought out admirably.

After a somewhat lengthy biographical introduction, the book launches into a discussion of the ideas which made Augustine tick. Pride of place goes inevitably to Neoplatonism. Miss Evans explains briefly what Augustine took from it, how his own thought squared with it, and why he was occasionally obliged to differ from it. In this region of immense complexity Miss Evans seldom puts a foot wrong, a remarkable achievement, though she manages this at the price of concentrating on ideas rather than facts. Several times she compares Augustine to Plotinus, but without demonstrating that there was a real link between them. She uses Plotinus as her main source for Neoplatonic ideas, though most scholars would say that Augustine was more dependent on Porphyry, whose views were rather different. On the other hand, she has hit the nail squarely on the head when she claims that for Augustine, non-Christian philosophy could never escape the bondage of sin and error. We are told, firmly and rightly, that his use of pagan philosophy was eclectic; in the end, he was his own man in intellectual as in other matters.

Miss Evans follows the course of Augustine's thought from an originally finite conception of good and evil, to the point where he was able to confess that evil was fundamentally no more than non-being, a delusion which had clouded the rational mind of Adam. On the way she takes us through a fascinating variety of topics, like the union of body and soul, the exegesis of Scripture, and the doctrine of the Trinity. At each stage her concern is to demonstrate how Augustine understood the effects of evil on the mind. Her learning is prodigious; quotations and allusions to a vast literature abound, giving us a panoramic view of the whole age.

Towards the middle of the book Miss Evans takes us from what will soon appear to be the relatively trivial question of truth and error to the much deeper problem of the *vitium originis*. Why does man sin? What is the flaw in his nature which he cannot eradicate? Augustine considered the issue in both heavenly and earthly terms; Satan and his angels belonged to the universe of responsible beings as much, if not more than, man. Miss Evans does us the very useful service of pointing out that Augustine's views sharpened in controversy, especially in the struggle against Pelagius. She represents his views as having hardened, though on his own principles it might be better to say that they were clarified. Grace became for him the *sine qua non* of all victory over sin and evil, and Augustinianism received the imprint which was to mark it down to the Reformation and beyond.

This is a book for scholars, rather than for beginners. Quotations are given in Latin and not usually translated; we are assumed to be in possession of a good general knowledge already. Those who want a quick summary of Augustine's teaching on sin must look elsewhere; this book is for those

who have gone beyond the elementary stages. At the same time it is not a work of meticulous scholarship, since it relies as much on suggestion as on proof in its re-creation of a mental world. Yet Miss Evans's work has a compelling fascination for all who are prepared to think boldly, to reconstruct in their minds not just a set of facts, but the portrait of a great thinker and a great man. It is a book for those who know the fourth and fifth centuries well, but who need to look at them in a fresh way, forging new links and changing old habits of thought. For those prepared to risk such an adventure, this book will be a stimulus to further study and exploration, and as such it can be highly recommended.

On technicalities, the notes, bibliography and index are brief but adequate for their purpose. The print is small, a sign of cost-cutting, and though there is Latin, there is no Greek, apart from the odd word in transliteration.

Gerald Bray

The Church in the Theology of the Reformers

Paul D. L. Avis. Marshalls Theological Library, 1981. Pp. 245. £10.95

In a most readable, interesting, well-written and well structured book, Avis makes a fresh contribution to the subject of the Church in the theology of the Reformers. Surprisingly, there is little written in this important field, and this book is a most acceptable contribution. The work is scholarly and well-informed, and its comprehensive and comparative nature will prove most useful, not only to ministers and clergy but to everybody interested in the current ecumenical debate. It contains valuable source references, shows a clear grasp of the secondary literature, and provides a useful bibliography with critical notes for anybody who wishes to pursue the subject further.

In his introduction, he argues that Reformation Theology is dominated by two questions: "How can I find a gracious God?" and "Where can I find the true Church?". He sees these questions as inseparably related and as constituting two aspects of the over-riding concern of 16th century man for salvation, questions answered by Luther with startling clarity and simplicity in his emphasis on justification by the Gospel of the free, unmerited Grace of God through faith alone. To Luther, the Gospel brings the Church into being: the Gospel alone, when believed, constitutes and creates the Church. It was at this point, when Luther's evangelical theology was rejected by the Roman Church, that the acute question of "What then is the true Church and where may I find it?" demanded a new answer. Avis deals with that answer.

The book rightly brings out the fundamental concept of the Church, to which all the Reformers subscribed. Avis argues that this was enshrined in the 95 Theses of Luther (1517): "The true treasure of the Church is the holy gospel of the glory and the grace of God". In Part One of the book, 'The True Church,' it is Luther's *Ausgangspunkt* which forms the basis for an account of the Protestant doctrine of the distinctive features or 'notes' of the true Church. He indicates the Christological centre and then describes its true circumference. Here he shows the ambiguities inherent

in Luther's theology of the Church, and describes how Melanchthon moved the doctrine, conceived as an object of faith, to that of a visible institution. He describes this evolution through Melanchthon and Calvin, through the radicals, proto-puritans and anabaptists, through John Jewel and Richard Hooker. He describes the work of Hooker as an effective attempt to set Reformation ecclesiology on a fresh footing while at the same time holding on to the first principles of the classical Reformers.

In Part Two of his book, he turns to the implications the Reformed doctrine of the Church has for the Christian ministry. Ministers and clergy will find this section provides a very solid base for the discussion of what the Ministry is, and what it should be in today's world. He here provides a good chapter on 'The Priesthood of all Believers' and relates this to a doctrine of the Ministry, showing that this does not mean the secularisation of the clergy, nor does it mean the idea that "we are all laymen now", as Karlstadt and the fanatics urged. He demolishes many prejudices and misunderstandings, showing very clearly the high regard in which the Reformers held both the parish ministry and the episcopate. He has here an important chapter on 'The Godly Prince', and shows exactly what was being claimed and what was not being claimed by the Anglican Reformers for the royal supremacy of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I.

He completes his work with the third part on 'The Mission of the Church'. This is perhaps the most original part of the book, for in it he gives a wholly new account of the Reformers' views of the mission of the Church to the world. He discusses the reasons why Catholicism in the 16th century was involved in mission to the New World and to the Far East, and why Protestantism was not, but rather sought to re-form and re-inspire the de-formed and de-spiritualised Church in Europe: why Protestantism sought not to take the Church to the world, but rather to take the world out of the church. There is a fine, though disturbing chapter on the attempted conversion of the Jews of Europe to the evangelical faith, and of its tragic failure, issuing in the most bitter invective against Jewish unbelief. The author rightly examines this in theological not in racial terms, even though it issued in racial consequences from time to time.

He concludes with an all too short but very good chapter on the relevance of Reformation ecclesiology for an ecumenical age. He rightly emphasises the unanimity of the Reformers, their catholicity, and their reluctance to accept schism as inevitable, and, in the fine words of T. F. Torrance, calls for the repentant rethinking of all tradition face to face with the revelation of God in Jesus Christ.

The book will help ministers and clergy how to believe again and how to preach again. It should not go unheeded.

James Atkinson

The Bishop of Rome

J. M. R. Tillard (E. tr. of French original, Paris 1982). S.P.C.K., 1983. Pp. xii + 242. £6.50.

John de Satgé has produced an excellent English translation of Fr. Tillard's recent book on the papacy. The book is intended to give an exposition of the papacy which

will make it not only intelligible but also acceptable to those who are not Roman Catholics. The book falls into roughly three parts: first we have an exposé of the extreme Ultramontanist position, very frequently met with between Vatican I and Vatican II but repudiated by Fr. Tillard. Next comes a review of the powers and titles which the author believes the bishops of Rome may reasonably claim, in the light of the evidence of the New Testament and of church history. Lastly he writes a sketch of what a future papacy might be like. The whole study is informed by a most genuine ecumenical spirit, though I am afraid that the author over-estimates the willingness of those who are not under the Pope's obedience to contemplate the possibility of accepting it.

Before taking any overall estimate of the question of the papacy, it might be as well to pick out a number of particular issues raised by the book. Fr. Tillard is aware that "apostolic succession" cannot be defended today in the old-fashioned sense of the phrase. He realises, for instance, that there was no single bishop in the church of Rome before the middle of the second century (p. 83). But he still quotes Irenaeus's account of the succession of bishops there, in which Clement is presented as succeeding to the episcopate in Rome (p. 76). And on p. 152 he can write: "The 'apostolic succession' secures the vertical communion". Another interesting point arises on p. 89. Fr. Tillard makes it clear that a candidate duly elected to the papacy cannot become pope until he is consecrated bishop, if he is not already a bishop. But there is evidence (See *The Study of Liturgy*, ed. Cheslyn Jones, etc., (London 1978) p. 215) that for several centuries during the dark ages: (a) the candidate elected pope was always a deacon, and (b) he was ordained to the office of bishop of Rome without the actual laying on of hands. A stickler for correct order would be compelled to admit that for several centuries the Church in the West had no validly ordained pope. But if the Church in the West survived for centuries without a validly ordained pope . . . ?

Again Fr. Tillard overemphasises the leadership of Peter in the N.T. At the council in Jerusalem in Acts 15, precisely where we should expect Petrine leadership to appear if it is according to the Lord's will, it is James, not Peter, who presides.

On one or two occasions Fr. Tillard seems to be hardly consistent with himself: thus on p. 165 he applauds Leo III for having refused to insert the *filioque* clause into the Nicene Creed in 808. But he makes no allusion to the fact that it was in fact admitted into the creed, presumably by the consent of the contemporary pope, soon after 1000. Or again on p. 179 Leo I is commended (rightly, no doubt) for objecting to the action of the bishop of Constantinople in ordaining a bishop for the church of Antioch. But modern bishops of Rome frequently ordain bishops for sees all over the world.

I conclude from Fr. Tillard's careful discussion (p. 176) that he holds the dogma of the bodily assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into heaven to be infallibly true. But he does not seem aware of what an appalling stumbling-block this alone presents to the vast majority of Western non-Roman Catholics. Or can infallibly true dogmas be optional only?

One could go on like this a long time. But not very much is to be gained by this sort of sharp-shooting, and it is

not really appropriate in view of Fr. Tillard's absolutely genuine desire for reconciliation. However one thing must be made completely clear: even the greatly reduced terms (compared with the ultramontane atmosphere of 1870) in which Fr. Tillard presents the claims of the bishop of Rome are very far indeed from anything that most informed Anglicans would be prepared to accept. I do not think the distinguished Dominican is fully aware of how far he is from presenting anything like the sort of papal primacy that the great majority of those who are not Roman Catholics could possibly contemplate. And I believe that this goes for the Eastern Orthodox as well.

Is there then no prospect of agreement and unity on this topic? I would not say so. I see hope in the progress of biblical and historical scholarship. The position defended by Fr. Tillard would, I venture to say, be regarded as strictly indefensible by such distinguished R.C. scholars as Raymond Brown, Robert J. Daly, S.J. and Fr. E. Schillebeeckx. The whole doctrine of the ministry is undergoing a very thorough re-assessment at the hands of Roman Catholic and Anglican scholars in the West. What will emerge may well be a consensus, but it will be a consensus that will present a doctrine of the ministry considerably different from the traditional Catholic one. In the working out of that doctrine a radically revised presentation of the papal primacy must surely have a part.

Anthony Hanson

Households of God

Dom David Parry, OSB. Darton, Longman and Todd, 1980. Pp. 199. £4.50

Historical generalisations are open to criticism but it would not seem outrageous to suggest that there have in the Christian era been three periods of major human and social disturbance, of which our own times are the third. The first was the break-up of the Roman Empire. From this emerged the thinking of Augustine of Hippo in his *Civitas Dei* and the *Regula Monachorum* of Benedict. The medieval, Christianly inspired, achievement owes more than can be estimated to the insights and institutions springing from these writings. The second major disturbance was the break-up of the medieval synthesis during the centuries we label Reformation and Renaissance. The impetus of the new learning vastly expanded the range of human exploration and endeavour. Today we would seem to be reaching the end of renaissance man. We live in a global ferment caused by exponential escalation of world population, the break-up of ancient cultures through the development of world communication systems and the accumulation of thermonuclear devices of unlimited destructiveness.

Through it all the Benedictine Households of God are still with us and many lay people are re-examining the wisdom stored up in the Rule of St. Benedict. This Rule itself was the gathering up and re-expressing by a genius of Christian experiments and experience of community spirituality flowing from the Church – communities which wrote the documents of the New Testament, and the search for God characterised by the lives and sayings of Anthony and the desert fathers in turn co-ordinated and developed in the *Conferences* and *Institution* of John Cassian.

Dom David Parry has provided for those who do not know the deep spiritual and human considerations and arrangements of the Rule of St. Benedict a most valuable introduction and interpretation "for monks and lay-people today", together with a new translation of the text. As acute for us today as it ever was is the perennial human question: "How can human beings live together?". The question relates to family and to city, to national and international tensions and distress. The churches no less than secular and political institutions are faced with the question. Dom David writes: "Two things stand out as objects of permanent desire: the Transcendent (How do I find the answer to my soul's desire for the Other?) and the Community (How do we live together in love?)"!

No one who recognises these desires within his or her own heart can fail to be helped and encouraged by becoming familiar with this priceless jewel bequeathed to us by the architect of the soul of Europe. Dom David will be found an excellent guide. "All Christianity is properly concerned with these two things: the return to God and the formation of a society such as to lead to that end."

Sydney Evans

A Social History of the Diocese of Newcastle

Edited by W. S. F. Pickering. Oriel Press, 1981. Pp. 352. £12.00

This volume of essays commemorates the centenary of the Anglican Diocese of Newcastle, and as such is an opportunity for pause and reflection. Such volumes are also perhaps an opportunity for a little sentiment and nostalgia, of which this particular one has its share.

The major problem in producing volumes for a specific and very local purpose is to produce something attractive and appealing to the captive audience – in this case the local Anglicans of Newcastle – and also something of interest to a wider audience. Dr. Pickering has attempted to meet these two requirements by blending essays of personal recollection, with more rigorous historical studies. Nevertheless, the range of topics is strangely dull and unexciting and has little to offer the reader who is not either a native or a student of the North East.

Each essay of itself is well produced and cogently written, but no attempt has been made to set these studies in any wider context. Both geographically and ecumenically the horizon is limited, and this seems at least partly to have been a deliberate policy. The Editor's aim, and indeed his achievement, was to produce a local account of local affairs and a record of Anglican activity for posterity.

What a pity that the opportunity was not taken to consider some of the social and ecumenical implications of a 19th-century Diocesan foundation. However, the volume is an admirable one for its limited purpose, and will prove to be a useful source and guide to anyone pursuing the social and economic history of the North East.

Judith F. Champ

A God Who Acts

Harry Blamires. S.P.C.K., 1983. Pp. 128. £3.95

"We can get ourselves into a fine intellectual and spiritual tangle by chattering about the *divinity* and *humanity* of our Lord, so long as we chase nouns and avoid verbs . . ." (p. 77).

Not only has this book kept fresh its integral message since it was first published in 1957 under the title 'The Will and the Way', it speaks now with remarkably topical directness to a society facing very different but no less urgent problems than when it was first written.

Harry Blamires, in his fourth decade as an important apologist for the Christian faith, writes with uncompromising grasp of principle tempered with deep understanding of what makes people tick. There is humour, irony and a delightful appreciation of life's apparent absurdity. Here is a book about God which is a pleasure to read! Blamires invites the reader to do his or her own theology, to square up to the immediate concerns, anxieties and pressures of life and to perceive them as the essential arena within which the "God who acts" is to be known.

The substantial chapter 'Personal Vocation' is a particular triumph. Urging a livelier awareness of God's *activity* in human busy-ness, whether at the international conference table or at the family breakfast table, Mr. Blamires opens our eyes to a new sense of personal vocation. Seeing life steadily and seeing it whole, our vocation is to respond to the God whose call to holiness comes to every person in every activity. Grasping the nettle of suffering and failure, the author infects the reader with his quiet exuberance and joy. His aim is to challenge, inform and vitalise the spiritual life, so that "we may find Thee in life and Life in Thee". He succeeds. Sharing his convictions – forged through years of personal discipleship – Harry Blamires ranks with such spiritual masters as Roger Schutz. What is remarkable is that this book first saw the light of day long before the Taizé Community and its Prior became a household word. Its timely re-appearance will be welcomed by the many who already value his writings. To those who do not yet know Harry Blamires as a friend, *A God Who Acts* is warmly recommended.

Richard Kingsbury

The Church of the Poor Devil. Reflections on a Riverboat Voyage and a Spiritual Journey

John S. Dunne. London: SCM Press, 1983. Pp. x + 180. £8.50

No one can doubt that Professor Dunne has chosen a difficult path in this book but one that needs to be taken if the gap between North and South is not to become as unbridgeable in matters of faith as it seems to have become in terms of political and economic goals. All Professor Dunne's books are journeys of different sorts. In *The Way of All the Earth*, for example, it was a journey into the thought of eastern religions. In his last book, *The Reasons of the Heart*,

it was a journey into the experience of loneliness and back again. In this book the journey is into the religion of the poor. It begins on a riverboat on the Amazon and ends in Manaus at the patronal festival of the Chapel of Santo Antonio – the Church of the Poor Devil of the title. On the boat, he discovers that the poor possess secrets of life from which he is excluded and he tries to share these secrets by participating in the festival two years later. The Church of the Poor Devil becomes for him an image of the religion of the poor which he explores in different ways, beginning with Marx's definition of religion of the poor as "the sigh of the oppressed, the heart of a heartless world and the soul of soulless conditions" – a much more sympathetic definition than is sometimes allowed – and ending with the definition that it is a " 'halleluyah' from the heart of God" (p. 128).

Anyone familiar with Professor Dunne's books will know that his characteristic method of enquiry is to "pass over" into the experiences of others and then to return to his own standpoint to see what difference it has made to his own spiritual journey. It is a method which involves a kindling of heart as well as mind in active contemplation. This gives his books their particular flavour. If one had to compare him with anyone, it would be with Simone Weil, for whom disciplined, intellectual enquiry was also combined with deep feeling. Many different sources are called upon in the course of the enquiry: Marx, Kierkegaard, Kafka, Roualt, Corbusier, even Ray Bradbury. But the quotations with which each chapter usually begins are not used as external authorities but rather as fragments for meditation around which Professor Dunne organises his own thought and to which he returns again and again until they have yielded all the illumination they are likely to give for his purpose. As well as the main journey into the religion of the poor and back again, therefore, there are little journeys into the thought of others. Partly as a result the range of themes and problems touched upon is enormous. (One particularly arresting example is the discussion of God's passibility and transcendence, which takes its starting point from Aquinas's statement, "God has no essence".) But these quotations are used for the purposes of reconnaissance rather than diversion and all contribute in different ways to further the main task.

But what is the main task? Professor Dunne is careful to make the distinction between poverty, as commended in monastic spirituality for instance, as a voluntary state in which there is hearts-ease and wholeness, and the misery imposed on the materially poor by unjust social and economic conditions which are at war with their deepest longings and aspirations. He is aware that to join the poor on their journey is also to join them in their struggle for emergence and recognition. On the other hand the life of the poor is not one of unremitting struggle. It has its moments of insight and rest and celebration as Professor Dunne discovered on the boat and at the Church of the Poor Devil. The poor are no more bound to their conditions than we are to ours and in the religion of the poor it is possible to discern an understanding of life that goes deeper than mere dreams of escape. Professor Dunne makes good use of the diary of a poor woman in the slums of São Paulo, who escaped them for a time and then returned to them to die. When she returned she wrote: "One can live better when one is poor than when one is rich . . . perhaps that is why Jesus Christ chose to be poor" (p. 96). Poverty of spirit as revealed in that remark and in the story of the building of a the Church of the Poor Devil is the fruit of an attitude taken

to the conditions life imposes on us. It cannot be identified with the conditions themselves. To be poor in this sense is to choose to "know and be known in our naked humanity" (p. 132). The unfulfilled need which the poor discover through the pain of material conditions and which we may discover in the pain of loneliness and our common poverty in the fact of death, can lead on the one hand to disintegration and despair or on the other to a following of the "heart's desire" in which we enact our relationship with Christ. "When the poor emerge in their naked humanity, it seems the great I AM of God is revealed in them" (p. 83). Professor Dunne goes on to explore what this implies about God and our human essence. In his exploration he reverses the Marxist chain of thought which resolved the religious essence into the human essence and the human essence into social relations. The communal celebrations of the poor reveal a human essence which is in turn the image of God.

The book stands or falls by its truthfulness to the life of the poor. It is difficult when starting from outside the conditions imposed on the poor not to be patronizing or exploitative – not to be a tourist dipping one's toe into their world, diverted by what one sees, but not allowing one's fundamental attitudes to be changed significantly. Professor Dunne manages to avoid this. He is aware that his book is "a work of contemplation more than action, though it is the kind of contemplation", he hopes, "that can be the heart and soul of action" (Pref. ix).

It would be interesting to learn what a South American exponent of liberation theology would make of this book. It reminds me of Moltmann's *Theology of Joy* in that it gives to the poor a status as "signs of Christ" which is only possible from within a Christian context whilst in no way undermining the determination to see the conditions under which they live changed. But Christian praxis, as opposed to Marxist praxis, will always be one of acting upon insight into suffering rather than resistance to it. Like Professor Dunne, we may wish to celebrate the life of the poor as a means of changing our own lives by participation, as well as changing theirs in recognising their true dignity.

C. J. Moody