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# KING'S

# Theological Review

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## BOOK REVIEWS

### **The Gospel according to Saint Matthew. Volume 1 (Introduction and Matthew 1-7)**

W.D.Davies & Dale C. Allison Jr. International Critical Commentary. T. & T. Clark, 1988. Pp.xlvii + 731

Recent commentaries on Matthew have tended to be 'unusual.' There is R.H.Gundry's *Commentary on Matthew's Literary and Theological Art* (1982), described by Davies & Allison as 'not a little idiosyncratic,' followed by Daniel Patte's structuralist *Commentary on Matthew's Faith* (1987), and F. Dale Bruner's *Christbook* (1987) and *Churchbook* (promised) offering a very personal 'theological exegesis' of Matthew. It is therefore reassuring for those who appreciate a good old-fashioned commentary to find that some things never change, and among them is the nature of an ICC.

It is intended as no reproach if I describe this massive volume as traditional and unsurprising, both in its style and in its contents. Anyone who has used ICCs in the past will know what to expect here, and will not be disappointed. The learning is impressive, the judgement cautious, and the presentation clear. It is all that an exegetical commentary on the Greek text should be.

But it is huge! Judging by this first volume, the complete commentary (in three volumes) will run to well over 2,000 pages. It is therefore a bit galling for one who has struggled to do justice to Matthew within the confines of a more limited commentary series to find the authors complaining of the restraints of space which have prevented 'more expansive treatments of many aspects of the text' and have forced them 'to prefer leanness to fullness.' They must be joking! What sort of commentary would they have written given a free hand? Those who need to count their pennies, and who can afford to contemplate buying even this 'lean' three-volume work, have cause to be grateful that the publishers were not more accommodating!

It is an indication of the recent explosive growth in Matthew studies that one reason for the size of this work is the sheer quantity of literature to which they feel it necessary to refer. The main bibliography fills 27 pages, and there are substantial bibliographies of more specific treatments for each section of the text. They have missed little, though it is an unfortunate result of the scale of the work that production has clearly taken at least three years, since no items since 1985 are cited, and even Carson's major commentary (1984) is not mentioned. By the time the trilogy is complete, the main bibliography will be badly out of date.

The introduction covers only the more basic higher-critical issues (discussion of Matthew's theology and of the place of the gospel in the development of early Christianity is postponed until vol.3). The higher-critical conclusions are very conventional. A 51-page discussion should put an end to any lingering doubts that the author was a Jew; but the authors show no further interest in who he was. They claim to have started with an open mind on the Synoptic Problem (is that really possible, I

wonder?) but to have come down firmly on the side of Streeterian orthodoxy as a result of detailed study of the text; pp. 97-127 must now rank as one of the most effective shorter defences of Marcan priority, though I did wonder whether the authors had given sufficient weight to the prior question, raised e.g. by John Robinson, of whether it is realistic to postulate a simple one-way dependence at all.

The one place where the introduction does try to break new ground (as opposed to presenting freshly-minted arguments for traditional views) is on the currently fashionable question of the gospel's structure. Building on Matthew's known liking for groups of three, they have produced analyses of the five main discourses in terms of triads, and have further observed that the narrative of chapters 1-12 can also be set out in three sections each containing three groups of three pericopes. It all looks too good to be true — 'the sight of perfect symmetry ought, we freely confess, to cause some uneasiness!' But it is encouraging that the authors have resisted the temptation to squeeze the rest of Matthew's narrative into the same mould; they found it would not fit, and concluded that from chapter 14 on Matthew simply followed Mark's structure. Matthew does offer good scope for triad-hunters, but whether he consciously planned his book (or rather half of it) triadically may be less easy to decide.

The commentary itself is above all *historical*, in that its concern is what the text *meant* much more than what it means. To this end, the authors offer an unrivalled collection of comparative material from literature of the period, Jewish and pagan; the rabbinic material adduced is, as might be expected from this partnership, full and fascinating, and is judiciously applied to a first century Christian text. For instance, 5:18 is well illuminated by a consideration of the rabbis' ability to hold a view of the permanent validity of the law together with a willingness to alter and reapply it to new situations. There is no attempt to 'modernise' Matthew. Thus the subtle hermeneutics which underlie a text such as the Hosea quotation in 2:15 are sympathetically analysed in relation to Matthew's own context, while the reader is left to draw his own hermeneutical conclusions.

Following the example of Cranfield's pilot volumes for the new generation of ICCs, the authors excel in setting out clearly the various exegetical options (no less than 16 are offered for the significance of the dove in 3:16), and then working through by process of elimination to their preferred interpretation. Quite often they are unable to decide, which may be frustrating for some readers, but shows a proper sensitivity to the complexity of the issues involved. You do not feel with this commentary, as with some, that you are being offered slick solutions on the basis of a partial presentation of the evidence.

I hope it goes without saying that this *must* be the standard technical commentary on Matthew for a good time to come.

Dick France

## The Pauline Churches. A socio-historical Study of Institutionalisation in the Pauline and Deutero-Pauline Writings

Margaret Y. MacDonald. Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 60. Cambridge University Press, 1988. Pp.xiii + 286.

The use of the social sciences in the analysis of the Bible is now making a major contribution to New Testament studies. As the preface to this book indicates, one key figure in the encouragement of this interaction of disciplines in this country is Robert Morgan, who supervised MacDonald's work at its Ph.D. stage in Oxford (as well as the innovative study of Luke-Acts by P. Esler). MacDonald's focus of interest is the process of institutionalisation, whereby a new movement solidifies its structures, and establishes its patterns of behaviour and belief. She argues that this process can be clearly traced in the development of the Pauline churches as we see them reflected in the relevant New Testament documents. Her work is based on the assumption that Colossians and Ephesians are pseudonymous and that the Pastorals come from a period as late as A.D. 100 - 140. Accordingly, it falls into three sections describing community-building (Paul), community-stabilising (Col and Eph) and community-protecting (Pastorals).

This project is especially fruitful in its capacity to balance the prevalent one-sidedness of Lutheran-dominated New Testament scholarship. This latter charts the development of the Pauline movement in purely theological terms (the fading of imminent eschatology and spontaneity; the imposition of rules and church offices; the threat of gnosticism etc.); and, out of devotion to the 'real' Paul, it cannot refrain from making derogatory remarks about the onset of 'early Catholicism.'

MacDonald rightly questions "whether cerebral activities are the only, or even the primary, factors determining development within the early church" (p.9). She insists on the significance of the social realities which influenced the Pauline communities and the dialectical relationship between these realities and the beliefs of the Pauline Christians (p.28). For instance, the social changes which come when a new movement stabilizes itself, passing on its traditions to a new generation, make some forms of initial originality no longer necessary and even no longer possible. She also emphasises that the developments were complex and gradual and had their roots within the lifetime and letters of Paul. There are the beginnings of love-patriarchalism and an institutional approach to church ministry even in the authentic letters of Paul so that "one is prevented from claiming complete discontinuity between the situation in Paul's churches and the situation of those who wrote in the Apostle's name after his death" (p.15).

Thus MacDonald makes some effective criticisms of von Campenhausen, Käsemann and others, whose sweeping generalisations lead to unsympathetic judgements on Deutero-Pauline Christianity. In her survey of Paul's letters (heavily dependent on Meeks and Theissen) there is a valuable emphasis on the tensions within a "conversionist sect" (Wilson), which has a "simultaneous interest in avoiding and evangelizing outsiders" (p.40). It would

have been helpful here to discuss the social precariousness of Paul's churches amongst the competing loyalties of first-century city life. In fact, in general, MacDonald seems more familiar with certain popular sociological theories (propounded by Weber, Troeltsch, Wilson, Berger and Luckmann) than with the social realities of life in the Graeco-Roman world. A comparison with other minority communities (e.g. synagogues) could have helped bring such realities to the fore, and an awareness of the sociological study of minority groups and their identity-maintenance might have helped to broaden the focus of this study. In particular, I suspect that the church-sect typology, embedded in the question whether the Deutero-Pauline communities are closer to the church-type or the sect-type (pp.200-1), is of limited value and potentially misleading.

On Colossians and Ephesians, MacDonald acknowledges our poverty of information about the social realities underlying these letters. She squeezes as much as she can out of them on the topics of ethics, ministry, ritual and belief (the main topics in each section of the book), but the results do not add a great deal to our understanding of these documents. Although she considers that the "rule-like statements" of the *Haustafeln* are "more conservative" than the Pauline letters, at several points she highlights the similarities with the authentic Paul — similarities which might cause her and others to reflect a little more on the authorship questions.

Probably the most valuable section of the book is that on the Pastorals. Here MacDonald introduces useful comparative material (Hermas; the Acts of Paul and Thecla) and develops a worthwhile thesis that the author is primarily combating ascetic women-teachers whose unmarried state and authoritative teaching challenge the patriarchal notions which were the bedrock of Graeco-Roman society. The author of the Pastorals, concerned to protect the respectable reputation of the church, reinforces the traditional value-system by silencing the women and linking church-leadership to patriarchal household-roles. While explaining the sociological causes of this stance, MacDonald understandably makes no secret of her disappointment with it!

Apart from this final section, however, the book suffers rather from a lack of fresh exegetical analysis and insight. Rather than cutting new paths of her own, MacDonald is mostly content to draw the map of where others have been. Although this indicates some interesting intersections, it also shows how much uncharted territory still remains. I hope the occasional verbosity of this work will not deter other New Testament scholars from pursuing this sort of enquiry in greater depth and with broader vision.

John Barclay

## One God One Lord. Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism

Larry W. Hurtado. SCM, 1988. Pp.xiv + 178. £8.50

The theme of the book, in the writer's own words is, "How did the early Jewish Christians accommodate the veneration of the exalted Jesus alongside God while continuing to see themselves as loyal to the fundamental emphasis of their ancestral tradition on one God, and without the benefit of the succeeding four centuries of Christian theological discussion which led to the Christian doctrine of the Trinity?" The answer is not to be found in a 'paganisation' of Christianity, the result of later contact with hellenistic religion in the first period of its expansion. Speaking of Jesus and God 'in the same breath' is seen as an unquestioned feature of the earliest stratum of Jewish Christianity, reaching back, even, into the Aramaic-speaking period. A high christology, variously expressed, based on the quasi-credal affirmation of the exaltation of Jesus as Lord is common, in some form or another, to most if not all strands of the New Testament.

If 'devotion to Jesus alongside God' is not to be explained in terms of direct hellenistic influence, might not the background to it be best sought in the Judaism of the post-exilic and inter-testamental periods? Later Judaism itself was not, of course, immune to contacts with hellenism. These have been supposed, by W. Bousset and others, to have given rise to a great deal of unhealthy interest at this period in angels, dualism, the divine hypostases of 'word' and 'wisdom' and the like. This preoccupation with divine agents, it is argued, served to compromise the older and purer forms of monotheism. From here it would be but a short step to the position that Christianity is a development of Jewish heresy.

Such a view is strongly contested by Hurtado. Evidence for the widespread existence of Jewish heterodoxy is lacking. Warnings against the teaching of 'two powers in heaven' do no more than show that people were alive to the possible dangers, not that the dangers themselves existed. Even Philo in his strenuous efforts to find a common ground with Greek philosophy remained true to the faith of his fathers. Indeed a closer examination of the treatment of the roles of the various divine agencies shows that this served to emphasise and strengthen monotheism rather than compromise it. However extravagant the language that is used of them, the divine agencies, be they angels, divine hypostases, or prophets and patriarchs who ascended or were 'assumed,' nevertheless remain most definitely subordinate to God himself. After all it is much easier to describe the glorification of a biblical figure or concept than to attempt the impossible by seeking to express the immeasurably greater glory and majesty of God in any kind of human language.

These categories of later Jewish speculation, it is argued, provide a plausible 'matrix' for New Testament development — "the Christian mutation." This occurred when the early Jewish Christians combined together all the various categories of the divine agencies in a variety of mixtures — these were the only theological categories available to them — and applied them to Jesus whom God had raised up and exalted to his right hand.

Obviously they were not able to fit Jesus neatly into any single category. 'Prophet' or 'angel' are hardly sufficient to describe him by themselves. Moreover, unlike their fellow Jews, the Jewish Christians were talking not of an angel or some legendary biblical personage, but of someone who had died in recent memory.

The argument is sustained persuasively and convincingly in broad terms with copious notes and references, but the fine print of evidence will need to be tested by the experts in various fields. In particular, the choice of the term 'mutation' is perhaps unfortunate, suggesting as it does a sudden and random shift. To what extent did the Jewish Christians realise consciously what they were doing? Furthermore, the evidence of the New Testament itself does not suggest that the process was quite so even or universal as we might otherwise have been led to believe. There are, for example, texts like 1 Corinthians 15:28 in which the Son is explicitly made subordinate to the Father, exactly as a classical Jewish orthodoxy would require.

The great question is not raised of how much of this 'mutation' might be ascribed to Jesus himself. It should not be thought unreasonable to raise the point. It is claimed that the subject is being treated historically, and in any historical study the historical Jesus must be part of the equation, however elusive a part. J. Jeremias may not have said the last word about *The Lord's Prayer* or *The Eucharistic Words of Jesus*, but his work illustrates the point at issue. Is it Jesus himself who is the watershed between Jewish and Christian prayer, or simply his first followers' appreciation of him?

Hugh Bates

## Women in the Earliest Churches

Ben Witherington III. SNTS Monograph Series 59. CUP, 1988. Pp.xiii + 300. £27.50(hb).

The intention of this timely monograph, methodologically speaking, is to provide a corrective to the kind of study done by 'able scholars who nonetheless come to the text with a specific agenda in mind, whether patriarchal or feminist' (p.1). Away with interpretations so loaded that they can use the same biblical material to draw diametrically opposite conclusions! Here is a brave attempt at *epoche*: at pushing aside the clamant demands of twentieth century presuppositions so that the text itself has the final say.

The problem is a familiar hermeneutical *crux*, given added point by the heat of contemporary controversy. If we grant that there is no escape from the hermeneutical circle, does this mean that interpreters inevitably recreate the text in their own image? 'No!' cries the exegete. The text may be a series of signs to be decoded and interpreted, but it is *these* signs and not other ones to which hermeneutical attention must be given. True, each interpreter has his/her own style and presuppositions, which may be more or less acceptable to other contemporaries or successors. Witherington's worthy aim is balance in interpretation combined with respect for the

integrity of the text in exegesis. But if his work is to be a corrective to contemporary interpretative *imbalance*, then surely it must be within dialogue distance of the modern writings he criticises. It is at this point that one begins to have doubts. I wonder whether cultural fragmentation is now so advanced that writers of different schools are no longer listening to one another. The present work is more of an exercise in the rigorous exegesis of passages which figure in modern theological discussion than an attempt to engage in the latter discourse. If the assumption is that one can suspend hermeneutical reflection in favour of straightforward exegesis, the approach — to a subject such as this! — is questionable, at least in this respect.

Nevertheless, the book presents a comprehensive thesis, *viz.*, that while the New Testament does not call for social revolution nor depart from patriarchy outside the Body of Christ, it implies a new freedom and new roles for women 'in Christ.' Within this general thesis, there are many more particular contentions. In relation to the physical family, Paul is neither male chauvinist nor feminist (such modern terms are revealing), but is simultaneously egalitarian and moderately patriarchal, enhancing 'marital communion' and thus improving woman's status in marriage. However, an important discussion of women in the life of the faith communities is deprived of a detailed examination of Gal.3:28 (a key text) on the grounds that the author has already published an article on the subject. One cannot help feeling that this was an unfortunate strategy to adopt: the removal of social, sexual and ethnic distinctions from the entrance qualifications for Church membership and the consequences of that stance for Christian ethics in general and the place of women in particular are sufficiently weighty to have justified the restatement of a fuller study. But this section contains a helpful discussion both of the requirement that women should have a head covering when participating in worship (1 Cor. 11: 2-16) and the vexed question of the silence Paul seems to impose on them in 1 Cor. 14: 33b-36. Attention is given to the place of women among Paul's co-workers, including (the present reviewer notes with quiet satisfaction) Rom. 16. Finally, a consideration of the Pastoral epistles includes a concise but helpful treatment of 'proto-gnostic problems' of Jewish provenance.

Luke stands with Paul in maintaining a tension between the reformation of traditional practice and the affirmation of the new Christian order. The relatively high profile he gives to women in his Gospel is well known. In Acts, however, women assume a variety of roles in the Christian community: John Mark's mother and Lydia 'mother' the young churches in Jerusalem and Philippi; Tabitha is the prototype of a deaconess; Philip's daughters who prophesy — a function of leadership — illustrate that 'roles other than the traditional ones of wife and mother were possible and appropriate for Christian women'; above all, Priscilla is prominent and proficient enough to give instruction in the understanding of baptism to an evangelist of the stature of Apollos. Witherington suggests that when Acts was written, resistance to the notion of women in leadership roles may have prompted Luke to document their historical contribution to the life of churches in some detail.

The monograph includes a chapter on the other three

evangelists who also employ male-female parallelism and role reversal and cite women both as exemplars of faith and as witnesses to Gospel events. Finally, trajectories beyond the New Testament era bring us to contemplate the consequences of Gnosticism and Montanism — together with growing asceticism and a deficient view of human sexuality — for the ministry of women. What we find, Witherington argues, is a regression towards cultural conformity and the acceptance of patriarchy on the model of the Old Testament rather than the New. He concludes with the thought that to pursue the direction which the New Testament indicates would eventually take the Church *beyond* patriarchy. This suggestion, however, the reader is simply left to ponder, for the author does not include this important limb of biblical interpretation within his remit. He is content to underline the groundwork of careful historical study and exegesis, which his own work has exemplified. Within its acknowledged limitations, this monograph makes a useful exegetical contribution to an area of biblical interpretation which needs balance and integrity in exegesis today.

J.I.H. McDonald

### Biblical Interpretation

Robert Morgan with John Barton. OUP, 1988. Pp.ix + 342. £8.95

It is difficult to review a book from which the reviewer has learned so much and about which he feels so enthusiastic. It is the kind of book which well repays a second reading and which repeatedly provokes further thought on a wide range of issues. I begin with a few preliminary observations.

First, the book helps fill a major gap in British biblical scholarship — or perhaps I should say several gaps. One of these is the history of biblical interpretation where, for so long, the staple diet has been Albert Schweitzer's *Quest*, W.G. Kümmel's *History*, and Stephen Neill's recently revised *Interpretation of the New Testament*. Another is hermeneutics, or models of interpretation. The dominance in Britain of the historical model of interpreting the Bible has tended to mean that hermeneutics *per se* has been pushed to the periphery of the scholarly agenda. This book is a welcome corrective, both helping to explain why the historical mode has been dominant and also giving an account of important alternatives.

Second, this is not a book for beginners, in spite of the fact that it is a contribution to 'The Oxford Bible Series' and the editors' preface says that the individual volumes are intended for a 'general readership' In my view, this is a work of mature reflection on the state of the art in contemporary biblical scholarship and its implications for the relationship between reason and faith. I would encourage bright undergraduates to read individual chapters, in order, for example, to find out about the new literary approaches to the Bible or interpretation from the viewpoint of the social sciences. In that sense, the book is an excellent study and teaching resource. Taken as a whole, however, it is a work which will prove of greatest benefit to theology graduates, especially perhaps

those brought up on a strong diet of historical-critical study of the Bible and who are wondering what all this has to do with theology today, the life of faith and the practice of religion.

A third preliminary point is that the book is selective, and necessarily so. Most attention is given to the interpretation of the New Testament, although excellent treatments (by John Barton) of Gunkel, Wellhausen and von Rad and others are woven skilfully into the discussion. But readers looking for a discussion of the distinctive approaches to the Bible taken by feminist theologians and other theologians of liberation will be disappointed, apart from the reference to the work of Gottwald, Belo, Fiorenza and Tribble, on pp. 152-159.

As I read it, the book has two main concerns. One is descriptive, the other is constructive. The descriptive concern is to tell the story of biblical interpretation in the West since the Enlightenment. Chapters 2,3 and 4 survey the growth of a biblical scholarship dominated by historical questions and developing the necessary historical-critical tools of interpretation. These chapters include excellent case-studies of major figures in the history of interpretation, from Reimarus in the eighteenth century to Bultmann and his heirs in the twentieth. The fifth chapter describes more recent developments in historical criticism, where an interdisciplinary, social scientific approach has become characteristic and the main centre of impetus has moved somewhat, away from Europe to North America. Chapter 7 is like chapter 5 in describing some of the most recent advances in interpretation, but the important difference is its delineation of a major shift from the historical paradigm to the study of the Bible as literature. Here, what is fundamental is the reading of the Bible as a literary text, not just as a historical source; and the appropriate methods are those of contemporary literary criticism.

But Morgan is not content just to describe what has happened in biblical interpretation over the past two hundred years. He has a constructive concern as well, which is woven into the discussion, in chapters 1,6 and 8. Observing that rational, scholarly criticism (both historical and literary) tends, for good and ill, to create a gulf between scholarship and faith, Morgan proposes a model of interpretation which bridges the gulf. Insisting upon the legitimacy and desirability of interpretation according to the canons of secular Western learning, Morgan wishes also to provide a theoretical basis for specifically theological interpretation of the Bible within communities of faith. For, he says, 'if "purely historical" scholarship was ever to become a substitute for theological reflection on the Bible, Christianity and Judaism would cease to exist as living faiths' (p.179).

The fundamental way of bridging the gap is, effectively, to deny that one exists; but, intellectually and sociologically, this solution involves retreating into a supernaturalist ghetto. The conservative solution is to try to bridge the gap by 'stretching historical methods to make them speak of God' (p.186); but this brings historical method into disrepute and, at the same time, makes the believer's truth claims alarmingly vulnerable to historical criticism. The liberal tendency, on the other hand, is to accentuate the gap by a rigorous respect for the

autonomy of rational criticism; but the effect of this is to drive a wedge between biblical interpretation and theology and seriously to reduce the direct religious appeal of the Bible.

What is needed, therefore, if full justice is to be done to both reason and faith in biblical interpretation, is a theory of 'pre-understanding' which sets the act of interpretation in a wider context. Living as we do in a secularized, pluralistic culture, the methods of interpretation we use and the theological meanings we establish need to be linked by a rationally defensible theory of religion and reality. Says Morgan, 'The middle term which here links reason (rational methods) and faith (religious understanding of the Bible) is a theory of religion which makes sense of the historian's empirical data without denying the truth of a religion's own claims' (p.187). Morgan himself does not develop such a theory of religion and reality. His more modest concern is to argue for its necessity if reason and faith are to be sustained in a life-enhancing relationship. As well, he shows that theoretical pre-understanding (sometimes theological, sometimes philosophical) have played a very significant part in the biblical interpretation of all the scholars whose work he describes. He also makes the important suggestion that the methods of interpretation most congenial to a theological appropriation of the Bible in Jewish and Christian faith communities are those based upon a literary paradigm rather than an historical one.

As one who for some time has struggled to overcome a kind of intellectual schizophrenia induced by the almost inevitable tensions between historical criticism of the Bible and the intuitions of Christian faith, I have found this book immensely helpful. It maps out a way towards the integration of biblical interpretation and Christian theology, and of reason and religion. It takes the phenomenology of religion seriously, in particular, the role and status of the Bible as scripture in Judaism and Christianity. It is irenic in tone, presenting in a nuanced way the strengths and weaknesses of both traditionalist and liberal approaches to interpretation. Its intention is constructive, calling for a flexibility of approach which allows the aims of interpretation to determine the appropriate method. Added to this, there are some nice touches of humour: for example, D.F.Strauss being compelled to take 'very early retirement' (p.42); and tradition-historical scholarship as 'a European butter-mountain of research out of all proportion to its religious usefulness' (p.117)!

Stephen C. Barton

### **People of the Book? The Authority of the Bible in Christianity**

John Barton. SPCK, 1988. Pp.xi + 96. £4.95

The general direction of John Barton's 1988 Bampton Lectures is clear from the question mark in the title. Are Christians really a 'people of the book,' in the way that biblicists claim? The question is raised in the name of those who are reluctant to accept such a claim, and the

lecture-series as a whole is intended to give intellectual substance to this perhaps intuitive ambivalence towards the Bible. The problem is identified with great clarity in the opening words of the book:

May Christians today have a bad conscience about the Bible. They hear it read in church, and described as 'the Word of the Lord'; they find some parts of it inspiring; but they cannot honestly say that it is the book they turn to first when they are perplexed, or the most important source of the hope that is in them. (ix)

How is the bad conscience of these unfortunate persons to be allayed? Salvation lies in biblical criticism, which makes the claims of biblicism and fundamentalism untenable. This theme runs right through the book, which closes appropriately with some words of Richard Hooker (judicious as ever), warning us to take heed

lest, in attributing unto scripture more than it can have, the incredibility of that do cause even those things which indeed it hath most abundantly, to be less reverently esteemed. (90)

Scripture is, broadly speaking, a good thing, but it needs to be kept rather firmly in its place: this is the position that must be maintained in opposition to its over-zealous advocates. The argument is directed not only against pre-critical 'fundamentalism' but also against post-critical trends such as canonical criticism, hermeneutics and literary approaches, which, Barton thinks, are implicitly biblicist in their anti-critical enthusiasm for the canon and the integrity of the text.

Rather than sketching out Barton's whole case, a fuller analysis of just one of his arguments may be more useful. In his opening pages, he alludes to the well-known conservative claim that the New Testament's attitude towards the Old must determine our view of the whole Bible. Along with other recent writers such as James Barr and J.D.G. Dunn, he is prepared to accept this claim in the belief that it actually leads to the opposite conclusion to the conservative one. Thus,

Paul felt no need to begin with Jewish Scripture, or even to bring Scripture in at a later stage. The Christian message was self-contained and had its own logic. (9)

In other words, Paul does not regard Scripture as an infallible authority which must be the touchstone of everything he says. His use of it is:

informal, and indicates that it was part of the air he breathed, rather than being cited as an 'authority'. Biblical texts often provide convenient tags, hallowed ways of expressing pithily something Paul wanted to say on other grounds. (18)

This relaxed approach is contrasted with the later attempt to baptize the whole Old Testament, setting it in the new and artificial context of the whole Christian Bible, with disastrous results for exegesis.

Yet it may be that the dichotomy assumed here between authority and informality, heteronomy and

autonomy, is inadequate both exegetically and hermeneutically. I would prefer to see the New Testament's use of the Old in more dialectical terms: present experience of Christ causes the sacred text to be read in a new way, but the sacred text simultaneously shapes the form that the experience takes. Text and experience illuminate each other, and it is as difficult to ascribe priority to one over the other as it is in the well-known case of the chicken and the egg. Using this exegetical conclusion for hermeneutical purposes, the old notion of an undifferentiated, tyrannical authority would indeed have to be abandoned. Yet it would be replaced not by a perhaps equally undifferentiated and tyrannical freedom, but by a dialectic in which both authority and freedom have their rightful place. The authority of the text is realized when it is not abandoned to its pastness and alienness but freely reappropriated in the light of the changed circumstances and insights of the present. The authoritative meaning lies not in the text in isolation, but in the free interaction between text and interpreter, past and present.

To make such statements is, of course, to use the language of hermeneutics, of which Barton is suspicious. He believes that communal continuity (Israel, the early church, the contemporary church) gives scripture an honoured place as the historical record of the church's origins, and that this situation not only necessitates historical critical evaluation of that record, but also excludes any other approach. That seems to be the implication of his dismissive comments about hermeneutics as a 'set of devices that would extract edifying meanings from an unedifying text' (65), as a desperate attempt to 'make something useful' out of what is perceived as 'antique rubbish' (66). The false assumption that critical study has alienated and distanced the Bible from us is, Barton thinks, the result of unrealistic (biblicist, Protestant) expectations about what it can be for us. It is impossible and unnecessary to go beyond historical criticism; what is required is to assimilate and continue the recent 'unprecedented flowering of historical study' (43), and this is one way in which we can 'use our commitment to Christ' to 'make the subordinate position of the Bible a reality' (83).

For one biblical interpreter, the spectre of authoritarianism is so alarming that the need to subordinate the Bible is paramount. For another, the restriction to purely historical questions comes to seem constricting and tyrannical, for all the undoubted achievements that this approach can claim. There is no neutral ground from which one might adjudicate the respective merits of these positions, and the well-meaning suggestion that the truth must lie somewhere in the middle is not necessarily very illuminating. One must wait to see which view prevails.

Francis Watson

## Institutes of the Christian Religion. 1536 Edition

John Calvin. Translated and annotated by Ford Lewis Battles. Collins, 1986. Pp. lix + 396. £17.95

It is always interesting to observe the development of a great thinker, and the reading of Calvin's 1536 *Institutes*, written when he was twenty-seven, provides no exception. The characteristic marks of the mind, clarity, intensity and brilliance, are all there. What is interesting about the book is to learn how little, in one sense, was changed in the later theology. Many of the sentences either survive intact in the final edition of the work, over twenty years later, or are very much the same.

What does this imply for our understanding of Calvin? That his thought, like that of another great theologian of our Western tradition, George Berkeley, sprang fully developed from his pen in early years, to change little in later times? There is much more to it than that. Calvin's later work was far more than simply a matter of additions, a kind of scissors and paste cumulation, but developed in breadth as well as depth as the context — and that meant both political and pastoral context — demanded. Moreover, the alterations in the order in which topics appear in later editions show the ceaseless thinking in which this man of affairs engaged.

What this book makes clear is the way in which the context provides the matrix for the theology. What would Irenaeus have been without the gnostics, Origen without the particular traditions of Alexandria? All thought is particular, and its greatness lies in what it makes of the demands of the time. In this case they were, as the introduction makes clear, both catechetical and apologetic. The people had to be instructed in the faith, while persecuting authorities, unable to distinguish between the classically catholic theology of Luther and Calvin and some of the excesses of the sects were to be informed, however fruitlessly.

There are five chapters in the work, covering just over two hundred pages, in contrast to the fifteen hundred in the final edition. The first begins with the famous description of the content of sacred doctrine, but in the context of an exposition of the law. Here Calvin signals both his differences from Luther, and his continuity with the Reformation concern to show that the gospel and its way of life is equally for all, clergy and laity. There are no counsels for monks only, but 'to be Christians under the law of grace does not mean to wander unbridled outside the law, but to be engrafted in Christ, by whose grace we are free of the curse of the law, and by whose Spirit we have the law engraved upon our hearts' (p.30).

The chapters which follow are on faith ('Containing an exposition of the creed'), prayer, the sacraments, the five false sacraments and, finally, Christian freedom, ecclesiastical power and political administration. They make clear how concerned Calvin's theology was with the life of faith and its embodiment in church and society. The teaching of the faith and its practice go hand in hand, in a way the modern world is in danger of forgetting. And as the above citation makes clear, the thoroughly trinitarian structure of the thought ensures a perhaps unrivalled

comprehensiveness in the way in which different dimensions of the Christian gospel are treated.

There is, then, much illumination and profit to be found in this volume, especially for those who would know something of the mind of this shaper of the modern world, but have neither the time nor the inclination to engage with the final edition. Other advantages are the introduction and the notes, which will ensure the scholarly usefulness of the edition for many years to come.

Colin Gunton

## Theological Investigations, Volume XXI: Science and Theology

Karl Rahner, translated by Hugh M. Riley. Darton, Longman & Todd, 1988. Pp. vii + 279.

This collection of articles and lectures from 1979-1982 reverses Rahner's earlier decision to terminate *Theological Investigations* with Volume XX. It testifies to his continued mental vigour, but contains little which is essentially new. Its subtitle is misleading in that this theme takes up only one 30-page section in which he argues that there can be no basic conflict with natural science if theology bases itself on 'transcendental' reflection on the 'conditions of the possibility' of our 'knowledge and freedom' since this should lead (for reasons which Rahner does not pause to explain to any baffled first-time reader) to the affirmation of a 'one and absolute ground of all realities' which is itself 'incommensurable' with the 'manifold world' to which empirical science, which 'is and should be methodologically atheistic', is necessarily confined. So only the 'secondary conflicts' can arise and 'in principle ... a truce can regularly be achieved'. But more than that, a 'link' can be 'forged' between theology and 'an evolutionary "world view" because transcendental reflection should lead to the essentially Fichtean conclusion that to be a 'finite' spirit, whether human or angelic, is necessarily to exist in dialectical relationship with 'materiality' (which means 'finitude'), for it can only 'realize itself step by step' (i.e. *evolve*) by progressively climbing over its materiality in order to return to its source in the Infinite Spirit which is God.

Apart from several discussions of the current state of Catholic theology, which Rahner sees as declining from a creative peak in the immediately post-war decades and endangered by renewed authoritarian conservatism in Rome, the rest of the book concentrates on Christology, together with what can be regarded as a final presentation of Rahner's 'transcendental' argument for God. Here he stresses that the question of God, taken to be that of whether there is a 'total and definitive...all-embracing meaning of existence,' cannot by its very nature receive an answer 'pieced together from things which yield a partial fulfilment of meaning.' Therefore, if there is such an absolute meaning, it must remain inaccessible to normal experience and thinking. To raise the question is therefore to remain 'essentially and inexorably confronted with an unencompassable mystery' which it is 'possible' to decide is a 'void' of 'senselessness' since moral and physical evil seems to give every justification

for denying absolute and universal meaning ' It follows that we are left 'in freedom' either to interpret life as a 'desert journey passing through an oasis here and there' but ending with death in a 'desolate wasteland' or 'living on the basis of the hopeful conviction that there is an ultimate meaning,' which is 'identical' with belief in God. Yet this plea for existentialist fideism is inconsistently intermingled with a voice from Rahner's past, which is more consonant with Vatican I's decree that the existence of God can be known with certainty by the light of natural reason, which loads the dice in favour of the option of affirming absolute meaning, e.g.: 'the question about an absolute meaning, if it is really accepted... gives of itself the existence of absolute meaning' since insofar as sceptics sometimes 'are selfless contrary to all advantage and profit' they must 'affirm in the actual realisation of their existence absolute meaning contrary to the way they themselves interpret their life'.

The Christological discussions display no such inconsistency; Rahner repeatedly makes the bold claim that one can 'ascend' from consideration of the historical facts about Jesus alone (i.e. leaving aside 'transcendental' philosophical considerations) to an affirmation of the formula, which for Rahner attains virtually credal status, that 'Jesus is the unsurpassable word of God in his self-promise to mankind,' which is 'necessarily coterminous' and 'interchangeable' with 'the classical statements of Christology concerning the hypostatic union...the communication of properties, and so on'. There is space for only two comments. First, the credibility of this claim is greatly lessened by the virtual absence of any references to modern New Testament scholarship. Secondly, Rahner's formula is intelligible only granted a substantially German-Idealist, dialectical view of the God-world relationship that God 'has his own fate in and with this world' being 'not only himself the giver but the gift', so that Rahner's affirmation of the divinity of Jesus turns out to be (as in Hegel) the claim that the human species is the high point of the cosmic process and Jesus is its definitive realization. Since Rahner himself concedes that this view of God is 'totally different from what the average Christian perceives' it is surely misleading for him to claim that it 'shows us how and why an apparently simple relationship of trust in Jesus' which 'ordinary Christians who are not professional theologians can be expected to achieve...can contain within itself the whole of classical Christology.'

R.M. Burns

## **The Roots of Christian Freedom. The Theology of John A.T. Robinson**

Alistair Kee. SPCK, 1988. Pp.xvi + 190. £8.95

## **Where Three Ways Meet. Last Essays and Sermons**

John A.T. Robinson. SCM, 1988. Pp.xiii + 210. £8.95

John Robinson, most controversial of all Anglican bishops and theologians since the Second World War, died in 1983. Five years later saw the twenty-fifth anniversary of the publication of his best-seller *Honest to God*, an appropriate point at which to reflect on that book, its author and his theology as a whole, as well as providing just enough time for a whole view to be taken of his life and work. Alistair Kee provides the first full-length examination of Robinson's multi-textured thought, a notable counterpart therefore to the biography by Eric James which also marked the anniversary.

In his last months, Robinson had in fact left a number of guidelines for biographers and theological analysts, and Kee closely follows the pattern which, once seen, seems inevitable: the New Testament scholar, the theological explorer, and the social ethicist. A subject as wide-ranging as Robinson's mind and interests provides a stern challenge and Kee answers it masterfully. That is, his is not merely a descriptive account of the progression and levels of Robinson's theology, but conveys the liveliness and freshness of Robinson's own mind and style. Robinson, Kee never tires of reminding us, was so interesting because of his habit of querying assumptions — especially of his New Testament work — and 'liberal' no less than 'conservative' assumptions. He did this not because he wanted to swim against the stream as an end in itself, but because he genuinely wanted the documents and their histories to be taken seriously in their own right (as in the case of his argument for the priority of John) rather than be subjected to prevailing and customary assumptions, however academically respectable. Above all, as Kee is able to demonstrate clearly, the apparent contradiction between a mild-mannered bishop and an iconoclast stemmed from his deep rootedness in the Christian tradition and his identification with the heart of belief, enabling him to question with imperturbable honesty the things that could be shaken.

Kee's major interpretative thrust is that Robinson's Cambridge doctoral thesis (regrettably never published) on the personalist philosophy of Buber and others, was foundational for all else in his work, and that where he is inadequate (Kee is no hagiographer) it is usually because he has not been true to his own best insights. Thus when he wrote *Honest to God* in 1963 he was not a New Testament scholar straying into the foreign fields of systematics and philosophy of religion. Rather, he was a specialist returning to his primary theme, that of the doctrine of God which he wished to express in a personalist vein. I must confess myself still unpersuaded here. If anything, *Honest to God* appears even more problematic as the work of one who earlier had been so immersed in Buber, and whose work had been so highly

praised by no less an authority than John Baillie. Statements about God, says Robinson, are statements about the transcendent value of our personal relationships. That, on a number of grounds, can hardly be validated from Buber's Eternal *Thou* (which is not an example tied to human interpersonal relationships). The ambiguity of much of what Robinson wrote in *Honest to God* (and this is not to deny how vital and intriguing it was) is either a departure from that earlier personalism, or a disclosure of an inherently subjectivist trait in it. I am inclined to the former view, and feel that there is a more direct line from the personalist thesis to the later writings such as *Exploration into God* than through the headline hitting paperback of 1963. Above all — and my reading of Kee confirms me in this — as a theologian Robinson was at his best in christology, whether in *Honest to God* or *The Human Face of God*.

Creative theology makes an impact by style as much as by content. When recently researching into Robinson on my own account, I was startled on a number of occasions to discover that a particular way of putting a theological idea, or setting up a contrast, which had been with me from student days, was in fact owed to early readings in John Robinson. One hopes, for that reason alone, for a wide readership of *Where Three Ways Meet*, essays, lectures and sermons from his last years plus a complete bibliography. Here again is the theological explorer, the biblical scholar and the social theologian (especially now concerned with peace issues). 'In fact in everything I am a great both/and rather than either/or man,' he says towards the end of his final sermon in Trinity College Chapel, and so sums up his whole life's work. That did not mean being all things to all people, but the recognition that, in one of his other famous titles, 'Truth is two-eyed,' deeper than the simplistic alternatives we often opt for. Especially illuminating here is his dialogue with Don Cupitt whom he chides (with typical charity and humour) for polarizing questions of truth and meaning into unacceptable dichotomies. Not that Robinson wanted easy harmony: he wanted truth, and wanted it with passion.

Above all, he wanted other people to have it, or rather to enter into the quest for it. To that end he was prepared to be vulnerable. *Honest to God* was effective as a catalyst of theological liberation for so many people precisely because it validated their own need to ask the repressed questions about belief, ethics and spirituality. His final thoughts on honesty in the face of cancer, and his own testimony of belief in the God who is both in, yet greater than, the cancer may likewise bring a liberating courage to many. These papers are a fine and moving testament. In him the three ways meet, of theological explorer, New Testament scholar and social thinker. They meet as *pastoral theologian*, and there can be no higher title than that in Christian theology.

Keith Clements

## The New Christian Ethics

Don Cupitt. SCM, 1988. Pp 174. £6.95

The creation of the new Christianity proceeds apace, and the spooks are banished. But it will not be easy, for Mr Cupitt writes among the ruins of the old Western civilization. Did it fall because of the growth of critical thinking, or modern capitalism, or multiculturalism? There is no clear answer, but what is certain is that the road out of the ruins will be a dangerous journey to travel on. As values diminish, and the Christian tradition enters its last stage of corruption, a hundred flowers must bloom. 'I know that I am the first Christian' (p.143).

Mr Cupitt writes a manifesto for the new world, in which the valuing of the valueless is paramount. At the same time he explores the collapse of the old Christianity. By means of a series of thematic presentations, the repressions of St Paul are elucidated. On the one hand there was the cultivation of dependence, on the other the vigour and dynamism of a creative personality. This confusion was resolved disastrously by the monastic celebration of contemplation, in which the immediate knowledge of Absolute Being, *totum simul, actus purus*, is attained. And this cast a pall over the Christian church: 'even in ruins, the ideology remains potent' (p.20). Mr Cupitt dismisses the Victorian religious ethic of self-realization in Christ, with which some sought to replace it. The nineteenth century narratives of Providence and progress burnt their engines out pulling the Christian drama of salvation out of the metaphysical mire. There is no self, no soul: we die in our work, but the work is of value in and for itself.

But not because it reflects a timeless essence of value. If humanitarianism is to survive, and the homeless not to die in the streets, we must value our values by ourselves. Thus the great inspiration is Michel Foucault, and the great delusion is that offered by Kierkegaard. Kierkegaard was seduced by Pauline Master/slave psychology. (How Mr Cupitt has changed!) Private prayer produces self-deception, repression and alienation (p.91).

If there is no self, no inner conflict, no psychodrama of redemption, what will replace the world of sin and the old morality? In his final three chapters, Mr Cupitt turns to the 'remaking of Christian action' and the justification of a moral community seeking the way of virtue. Thus, like Alasdair MacIntyre, the identification of the problem reveals false prophets prowling amidst the ruins. Modern Western civilizations are swept by moral panics and waves of intense hatred (p.100). Yet civilization is all we have: post-structuralism demonstrates the cultural priority of emotions, the will to live, and nature itself. The way out is by seeing 'nature' as the accumulated cultural evaluation of life; 'grace' is the attempt to change culture and value the valueless. Religion holds the key, for it 'surrounds the moral life with a supportive symbolic and institutional context.' But the struggle is hardest inside the church, for it is also the most repressive element in culture.

Few would disagree with Mr Cupitt's brilliant attack on a stultifying metaphysic which degraded Christian ethics into a false cultivation of a perfection closer to classical culture than anything else. Equally impressive is

the author's awareness of the difficulty of remaking Christian ethics. The issue is whether 'the love of God who first loved us' must be expressed as simply metaphorical language, or whether a metaphysic of love can retain its coherence in the post-structuralist world — in a manner which the saints of old would have recognized. Trusting in the presence of the Lord does not sound the same as joining a discussion group about the environment. Perhaps I should give up reading Kierkegaard too.

Peter Sedgwick

### **Jesus, Man for God. Contemporary Issues in Theology**

John Toy. Mowbray's, 1988. Pp.viii + 144 £4.95

Jacob Epstein's glorious 'Majestas' in Llandaff Cathedral adorns the cover of this stimulating little book by John Toy, Chancellor of York Minster, and reveals at once its over-riding concern: the nature of the risen Christ and his significance for us today. The book falls neatly into three sections covering a vast amount of material overall. Questions relating to the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection lead us, via major Patristic and Modern christological issues on the one hand and the development of Christian credal formulae on the other, into an understanding of the nature and place of Christian confession today. The book is equipped with useful tables on 'The Evolution of the Creeds' along with notes and bibliography reflecting Toy's comprehensive concern with his subject matter.

Each section operates with a similar strategy: a consideration of the evidence followed by a discussion of modern problems and the implications of these for belief today. Toy kicks off, bravely, with the Virgin Birth noting its minor role in the New Testament texts. A discussion of the various relevant features of the Matthaean and Lukan infancy narratives leads into an exposition of some of the modern problems which arise. A human being born with only female genes, for example, would be female. Both parents are necessary to the full humanity of Jesus. Toy knows, however, that to concentrate on the biological aspects of this matter will ultimately be to miss the point, and concludes that "we cannot know" what the historical and biological truth concerning this really is. Likewise, the Resurrection cannot be reduced to an extra-special event and the empty tomb is not, in the New Testament or in faith, "of the essence" of the Resurrection itself.

A third section treats us to an illustration of the development of the Christian creeds. A glance at New Testament credal formulae invites us into a consideration of the emergence of the Apostles' and Nicene creeds, of the place of creeds in the theology and liturgy of East and West and of the development of the filioque clause. Then, by means of a look at issues arising out of the controversies surrounding the reformation, particularly those relating to the Thirty-Nine Articles, and through a brief re-telling of the tale of Hensley Henson, Bishop of Durham earlier this century, Toy brings us full-circle

to his opening concerns with Virgin Birth and Resurrection.

Overall, the book should be commended for what is surely its central insight, that is, that 'doctrinal positivism' (not a phrase used by Toy) flies in the face of faith itself. Clinging to particular historical and doctrinal 'certainties' fundamentally contradicts the nature of Christian faith. Theology must be done with very great respect for the past and yet with a radical openness to the future. Ripples from recent 'Durham controversies' can be felt here as elsewhere in the book. Citing Tillich, whose christology he follows overall, Toy maintains that to assert or to deny the existence of God is to reduce him to the status of "being among other beings" (p.81). If Toy manages to communicate this truth through his writing, it will have been more than worthwhile.

The book culminates with an affirmation of *lex orandi* over *lex credendi* and with an underlining of Angela Tilby's view of Christian faith as pilgrimage and dance. Some reader may feel that there are far too many controversial issues raised here for comfort and that the result is a sort of intellectual indigestion. There is the feeling that Toy is far too optimistic where the relation between believing and worshipping is concerned. However, he has raised the issues which are most central to Christian believing today and in doing so has provided us with a valuable tool for use in Christian discussion groups. Interestingly, he has also brought York, Durham and Llandaff a step closer in the process.

Stephen W. Need

### **Lovers of Discord. Twentieth Century Theological Controversies in England**

Keith W. Clements. SPCK, 1988. Pp x + 261. £8.95

The author is about as successful as it is possible to be in aiming this book broadly both at students of modern Christian thought and at general readers whose interest has been aroused by recent controversies. He has also justified his theme with his observation that "one of the features of modern Christianity seems to be a scanty knowledge of events only just out of living memory" (p.ix).

The six chapters between the introduction and conclusion fall into three pairs. The outer pairs mirror each other: *The New Theology* of a pre-First World War 'bishop,' R.J. Campbell (for Congregationalism had an informal episcopacy), and the essay collection, *Foundations*, are complemented by the 1960s pairing of *Soundings* and John Robinson's *Honest to God*. Covering the intervening period of less sharply focused controversy are two chapters each with two themes: Hensley Henson and the 'Modern Churchmen' are followed by T.R. Glover and E.W. Barnes. The author was an undergraduate at King's College, Cambridge (*Soundings* editor Alec Vidler's college) in the early 1960s and it is not surprising that the discussion of context and the analyses are best developed in the chapters on this period.

Accuracy in language and detail is not all that it might be: thus the impression is unintentionally conveyed that Ripon was named after Ripon Hall (p.87), and the brief allusions to the Down Grade controversy of 1887–88 contain several inaccuracies. Clements tends toward tendentiousness in his judgements, for example in assessing Ramsey on Robinson on *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. 'From a later time, and from another tradition, an observer may perhaps be pardoned for wondering just what, on such a view, the nature of the episcopal office amounts to. The prime duty of the bishop, it appears, is not to upset the faithful. The chief criterion of what is to be taught is what the people already think they know they believe, in which case it would seem that a bishop, let alone one who is a former Cambridge don, is hardly necessary' (p.185). He is also not entirely immune from a failing he condemned in modernists, 'a whiff of intellectual superiority, with an implied dismissal of all lesser minds' (p.100).

Clements draws some thought-provoking conclusions. He offers a promising summary of the theological issues of the century as an irreconcilable tension between a liberal search for unity and a conservative insistence on the otherness of God. On a practical level, he goes beyond suggesting more systematic theology in theological education to call for a greater emphasis on teaching students to engage in creative doctrinal thinking in relation to their experience and discipleship. Believing that controversy is a permanent feature of Christianity, perhaps he should have suggested that it too should feature prominently in the curriculum?

The conclusions, however, have the limitation of seeing twentieth century controversy in static rather than dynamic terms. Here his failure to start the study half a century earlier may have been a handicap. He might then have observed more clearly how a pattern like a rising radical tide, each young generation going further than its predecessor, came to an end between the two World Wars, to be replaced during the greater part of this century by irregular eddies and cross-currents. One symptom of the change was the contrast between the compact peer groups responsible for *Lux Mundi* and *Foundations* and the greater spread and higher average age of contributors to *Soundings* and *The Myth of God Incarnate*. Clements quotes a significant comment about the 1950s made by Vidler: '...often during those years I used to say to my friends that I was disconcerted by the fact that theological students, the younger clergy and the like, when I conversed with them, never seemed to shock me by coming out with any startling novelties or disturbing thoughts: on the contrary. I could shock them by the things I said much more than they ever shocked me by anything they said. It should have been the other way on, as I was now a fuddy-duddy who should be allergic to new ideas.'

The book would have been even more useful if the theological analysis had been just a bit sharper, developed a little further, applied from a few more angles. Having noted the ethical revision and tentativeness that made the theology of the 1960s distinctive, Clements rightly opens his concluding survey of the last two decades with a sense of *déjà vu*. Casting around for a theme for the next major controversy, he ventures to prophesy that it might be in

the as yet under-explored field of political theology. While we wait and see we might take note of the two well-trodden modern routes to controversy — the provocative bishop and the essay collection by groups of academics — and speculate on the megacontroversy a handful of like-minded scholarly bishops might care to unleash

Mark Hopkins

## BOOKS RECEIVED

Paul Avis (ed.) *The Threshold of Theology*. Marshall Pickering. Pp.vii + 182. £12.95

Paul Avis *Anglicanism and the Christian Church. Theological Resources in Historical Perspective*. T. & T. Clark. Pp.xviii + 352. £19.95 (hb)

Nicholas Bradbury *City of God? Pastoral Care in the Inner City*. SPCK. Pp.x + 207. £6.95

Heinz W. Cassirer *Grace and Law. St Paul, Kant, and the Hebrew Prophets*. Handsel Press. Pp.xvi + 265. £9.95

Charles Lloyd Cohen *God's Caress. The Psychology of Puritan Religious Experience*. Oxford. Pp.xiv + 310.

Don Cupitt *Radicals and the Future of the Church*. SCM Press. Pp.183. £6.95

Paul S. Fiddes *Past Event and Present Salvation. The Christian Idea of Atonement*. DLT. Pp.x + 243. £10.95

Colin E. Gunton *The Actuality of Atonement. A study of Metaphor, Rationality, and the Christian Tradition*. T. & T. Clark. Pp.xiii + 222. £11.95

John Hadley *Bread of the World. Christ and the Eucharist Today*. DLT. Pp.xiii + 130. £6.95

Wentzel van Huyssteen *Theology and the Justification of Faith. Constructing Theories in Systematic Theology*. Eerdmans/Paternoster. Pp.xxi + 205. £14.95

Kenneth Hylson-Smith *Evangelicals in the Church of England 1734-1984*. T. & T. Clark. Pp.ix + 411. £19.95 (hb)

Eric James Judge *Not. A Selection of Sermons preached in Gray's Inn Chapel 1978-1988*. Christian Action. Pp.196. £4.95

Walter Kasper *Theology and Church*. SCM Press. Pp.xi + 231. £12.50

John Knox *Chapters in a Life of Paul* (Revised edition). SCM Press. Pp.xxii + 137. £6.95

Gerd Lüdemann *Early Christianity according to the Traditions in Acts. A Commentary*. SCM Press. Pp.ix + 277. £15.00

Hyam Maccoby *Judaism in the First Century*. Sheldon Press. Pp.136. £4.95

Bernard McGinn, John Meyendorff, Jean LecLercq (eds.) *Christian Spirituality. Origins to the Twelfth Century*. SCM Press. Pp.xxv + 502. £17.50

Martin E. Marty and Dean G. Peerman (eds.) *A Handbook of Christian Theologians*. Lutterworth Press. Pp.735. £9.95

Margaret R. Miles *The Image and Practice of Holiness. A Critique of the Classic Manuals of Devotion*. SCM Press. Pp.xi + 207. £10.50

Wolfhart Pannenberg *Christianity in a Secularized World*. SCM Press. Pp.ix + 62. £4.95

Michael Perham (ed.) *Towards Liturgy 2000. Preparing for the Revision of the Alternative Service Book*. SPCK/Alcuin Club. Pp.ix + 102. £4.95

E. P. Sanders and Margaret Davies *Studying the Synoptic Gospels*. SCM Press. Pp.ix + 374

Eduard Schweizer *Jesus Christ. The Man from Nazareth and the Exalted Lord*. SCM Press. Pp.96. £5.95

Russell Stannard *Grounds for Reasonable Belief*. Scottish Academic Press. Pp.xiv + 361. £12.50 (hb)

Graham N. Stanton *The Gospels and Jesus*. The Oxford Bible Series. Oxford. Pp.x + 296

Lynne Strachan *Out of Silence. A Study of a Religious Community for Women*. Oxford. Pp.307. £28.00 (hb)

Stewart R. Sutherland and T. A. Roberts (eds.) *Religion, Reason and the Self. Essays in Honour of Hywel D. Lewis*. University of Wales Press. Pp.xiv + 173. £20.00 (hb)

Brian Wren *What Language Shall I Borrow? God-Talk in Worship: A Male Response to Feminist Theology*. SCM Press. Pp.xi + 264. £9.95

Hugh Wybrew *The Orthodox Liturgy. The Development of the Eucharistic Liturgy in the Byzantine Rite*. SPCK. Pp.x + 189. £8.95

## OUR CONTRIBUTORS

John M. Ross, a former civil servant, devotes his retirement to theological studies. His 'How did the Holy Spirit get into the Trinity?' was published in the Autumn 1982 edition of this journal.

Stephen Sims is a research student in the field of Old Testament Studies at Regent's Park College, Oxford.

Alan Spence was recently awarded the degree of PhD for a thesis on the theology of John Owen.

Nicholas Watson is engaged in postdoctoral study on mediaeval women mystics at the Memorial University of St John's, Newfoundland. His previous article was published in this journal in Spring 1988.

John D. Zizioulas is Metropolitan of Pergamon and Visiting Professor in the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies at King's College. He is the author of *Being as Communion. Studies in Personhood and the Church*.