

Lady in her true relationship to God, to Christ and to the Church. Judged by this criterion, the books which I have mentioned above come out in the first class.

Turning to the ecumenical problem Abbé Laurentin, rather along the lines of Fr Bouyer's *Spirit and Forms of Protestantism*, sees the Reformation principles of *Scriptura sola, gratia sola, fides sola* and *Deus solus* as expressing valid and vital insights whose anti-Marian application was conditioned by the nominalist and extrinsecist assumptions of the late medieval outlook; as regards Eastern Orthodoxy, with Dr John Meyendorff he sees the main difficulty to lie in a different understanding of original sin.

The balance and sanity of Abbé Laurentin's book make it worthy of close attention from

Catholics and Protestants alike; he is ruthless where ruthlessness is called for but never destructive and always understanding and penetrating. The French edition left his hands on 15th November, 1963, when the crisis produced by the vote of October 29th in the Vatican Council was still unresolved; in the English translation he was able to refer to the promulgation of the Constitution *De Ecclesia* on November 21st, and to the Papal utterance that followed it. I do not know whether Abbé Laurentin, himself a *peritus* of the Council, had any part in the drafting of Chapter VIII, *De Beata Maria Virgo Deipara in mysterio Christi et Ecclesiae*, but I am sure that he must have rejoiced at its adoption. The translation is admirable.

E. L. Mascall

THE FALL OF CONSTANTINOPLE 1453 by Steven Runciman; *Cambridge University Press, 35s.*

At least in the judgment of this reviewer, Sir Steven Runciman is the greatest of living English historians. In an age of miniaturists he retains the power to paint on a wide canvas but he does so with a miniaturist skill and precision of detail; his only parallel is Dom David Knowles. His *Fall of Constantinople* is a sequel to his studies of the Latin principality in the east and the *Sicilian Vespers*. It only lacks their significance since the ground was already covered so admirably by Edwin Pears in his great book *The Destruction of the Greek Empire and the Story of the Capture of Constantinople by the Turks*; still that was published in 1903 and is hard to procure. Perhaps Sir Steven slightly overstates the inevitability of the fall. It seems likely that the Turks had never expected so fierce or so successful a resistance. On Saturday the 25th of May Halil Pasha the Vizier had urged the abandonment of the siege. If in the early hours of the morning of Tuesday the 29th the Emperor had succeeded in beating back the third wave of the final assault it seems probable that the city would have been saved.

How long would it have survived? It is tenable that individual effort can only accelerate or retard the inevitable historic process. But there was

nothing in Byzantine civilization that suggested that it was ripe for destruction. It had never been so vital in so many fields as in the fifteenth century. Perhaps the young Sultan Muhammad II destroyed it prematurely. Possibly it should have come to its natural end in the sixteenth century under Sulaiman the Magnificent when the discovery of the sea route had abolished the economic function of Constantinople, and its suburbs Galata and Pera as the entrepôt of the far-eastern trade passing from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. In 1453 an Indian Ocean trade in spices and pepper was flowing to the head of the Persian Gulf and then over-land to Trebizond, while a main trade route to the far east led from Caffa in the Crimea. The ships from Caffa and from Trebizond had to pass through the Bosphoros and the Turks might have been content to gather toll from them from the new castle at Rumeli Hissar.

If Constantine XI had prolonged the history of the Empire for a generation only, the effect might have been momentous. The fall of Constantinople had very little influence on the development of the Italian renaissance but its survival might have transformed it. The intellectual prestige of Byzantium had never been higher in the west than in

1453 and its intellectual activity had seldom been so high. It had also for the first time become receptive towards the west; Gennadios, who led the party of the anti-unionists, had been deeply influenced by Thomism, and a fifteenth-century broken wall painting uncovered at the Chara

reflects Italian experiments in perspective. If, however uneasily and superficially, the Union of Florence had lasted for a generation the schism would never have reached its present form.

*Gervase Mathew, O.P.*

DOGMATIC VERSUS BIBLICAL THEOLOGY by Karl Rahner and others. Edited by Herbert Vorgrimmler. Translated by Kevin Smyth. *Burns and Oates, 30s.*

These 'essays in two disciplines' should be read by all who would profit from our contemporary biblical renewal, and by all who have at heart a sound and living theology.

There are nine articles from the pens of eight distinguished theologians and exegetes. They are at one in wanting to resolve the antinomies of exegesis and dogmatic theology. The considerable development of Catholic biblical exegesis since *Divino Afflante* now makes possible the confrontation of the two disciplines. That the attempt is made at all shows the difficulties are in part resolved. Gone, we hope, are the days when exegetes would cultivate their little patch, heedless of theologians, and perhaps a little deaf about the Church's teaching. Gone too, we hope, are the days when dogmatic theologians would ignore scriptural findings and go on their way a little blind to the historical and incarnational character of our religion.

Both disciplines are exercised by Catholic thinkers for whom faith is a light and a guide, and who perform all their work within the Church. Significantly, it is an exegete, R. Schnackenburg, who writes that 'the dogmatic theologian seems to be called to wider fields of endeavour because he has to keep in view centuries of theological development, formation of concepts, and doctrinal progress' (p. 157). No word could be more true. But the ideal dogmatic theologian is probably rare.

Among the many good things in these essays,

we might single out E. Schillebeeckx's treatment of exegesis and the development of dogma. His method makes for a reinstatement of the *sensus plenior*, particularly when the development of a doctrine is to be traced from the Old Testament, through the LXX, and so to the New Testament. This would be a most usual process in present-day exegesis, basing itself on the literal sense at every stage. This contrasts with the medieval and sometimes patristic predilection for typology.

Heinrich Gross writes on the 'transposition of motifs', and provides a sound basis for the method of 'themes'. His principal example is that of the Covenant. 'What happened to Abraham was a sort of signpost' (p. 186) . . . to the Covenant of Sinai, and then on from these to an essentially higher level in the progress of revelation in Jeremiah 31 and 32, and then supremely to the New and Eternal Covenant of the New Testament. H. Gross distinguishes his method from that of the *re-lectures bibliques* of French scholars (Gelin, Cazelles), as e.g. the re-reading of the LXX in Genesis 3:15 or Isaiah 7:14. The transposition of motifs 'implies that a certain theme is taken over from a given passage in the Bible, that under certain circumstances, its limits in time and space are removed, that it is inserted into a later passage, and that in this process it receives and expresses a fuller content. The sameness of the motif points therefore to the inner dynamism and direction of revelation'.

*Roland Potter, O.P.*