

in the western canonical collections. The permanent influence which the Sardican canons exerted in the West, is shown by references to at least nine passages in the *Corpus Iuris* due to Gratian and the Dominican canonist St Raymund of Penafort, and which are the sources of a number of canons in the present Code.

Canon 2 is examined in the light of Greek and Latin variants (pp. 79, 153). This canon is concerned with the unlawful occupation of desirable sees by means of fraudulent elections. And it orders that the offender should be deprived of viaticum even at the hour of death. This last clause, seemingly of Greek origin, was tempered in the Decretals by Raymund of Penafort, by adding the words, 'nisi hoc poenituerit' (c. 2, x, (I, 6)), which harmonizes the legislation with present discipline.

AMBROSE FARRELL, O.P.

LES INSTITUTIONS DE L'ANCIEN TESTAMENT—I. By Roland de Vaux, O.P. (Les Editions du Cerf; 990 fr.)

THE CHRISTIAN APPROACH TO THE BIBLE. By Celestin Charlier, O.S.B. Translated by Hubert J. Richards, L.S.S., and Brendan Peters, S.T.L. (Sands; 18s.)

Père de Vaux's book is the second¹ in a series of *Études Annexes* to the Jerusalem Bible. Those responsible for that magnificent Bible now wish to complete their work, and especially the invaluable special introductions to each book of the Bible, with this new enterprise which will amount to a general introduction of generous proportions to Scripture as a whole.

No better guide to the institutions of ancient Israel could be found than Père de Vaux. When he was in London recently lecturing and being acclaimed for his brilliant work at Qumran and other Palestinian sites, he was heard on one occasion to remark wryly to the effect that he was not only an archaeologist but a biblical scholar as well. The present volume bears ample witness to this. Archaeology has its contribution to make to the study of Old Testament institutions, but it is a restricted one compared with the main source which is the text of Scripture itself provided it is handled with a scholarly hand to yield up its secrets. This is what Père de Vaux does in this book with great skill and delicacy. With great clarity also. Those who remember the Greek and Roman 'antiquities' of their schooldays and the yawns and groans which seemed to be their invariable accompaniment, can be reassured. This 'Hebrew antiquities' is written with a French precision and lightness of touch, native qualities the writer has not forfeited despite a life-time so rewardingly given to penetrating the Hebrew

¹ The first is a translation of Professor W. F. Albright's *The Archaeology of Palestine*, already available in English as a Pelican.

mind. Others too have penetrated deeply into that mind, Pedersen for example. But one has only to enumerate such examples to be reminded that it is the peculiar mark of French scholarship at its best—and it is to that illustrious tradition that Père de Vaux belongs—to combine sympathetic penetration with a high degree of lucidity.

The present volume, the first of two, deals with 'institutions familiales and civiles'—since the second volume will be devoted to military and religious affairs, *civiles* may perhaps be understood in the sense both of 'civilian' and 'secular'. There is an introductory section dealing with the influence of the desert, both as an experienced fact and as an ideal, on the Hebrew social structure and imagination. Both Frenchmen and Englishmen have shown themselves to be prone to a certain romanticism of the desert, a tendency to see in the contemporary Bedouin a key to the understanding of the people of the Old Testament. Père de Vaux coolly and refreshingly shows that the truth is more complex. The desert as a social and economic fact in the pre-history of Israel did not mean for that people the Bedouin way of life. As far back as one can trace Israel's beginnings the process of sedentarization has set in. As for the ideal of the desert in Hebrew prophecy it was not the pure desert way of life as such that the prophets were appealing to, but rather the *magnalia Dei* which occurred on Israel's passage through the desert.

Les Institutions de l'Ancien Testament is clearly an introduction to the Bible. But it is an introduction—if the paradox be permitted—which will prove most useful once a reader has become fairly familiar with the text of the Old Testament, familiar enough, in fact, to be puzzled by the ubiquitous but scattered references to the social physiognomy of Israel and to wonder how they all fall into place. At this stage Père de Vaux will prove an invaluable guide, and his rich portrait of the human and social realities of the people of the Bible will prove a sound foundation for a deeper penetration into the Bible's religious meaning.

Dom Charlier's book is an introduction to the Bible in the more familiar sense, since it begins by dealing with the difficulty of those who wonder whether they personally should read the Bible at all. But rarely has the exhortation *tolle, lege* been so persuasively and powerfully given. After some remarkable summaries of the history of Israel and of Christian beginnings, of the gradual growth of Sacred Writ, and of its various *genres*, the book deals with such topics as the place of biblical inspiration in relation to revelation as a whole, interpretation, and the influence of the Bible on Christian art and culture. Dom Celestin, indeed, combines a gift for inspired exposition with boldness of theological synthesis. An English reader may from time to time feel somewhat startled at what appears to him a rather daring line of

thought; at the same time he cannot but be encouraged to enter into the universe of the Bible here so invitingly laid out to view before him. And *The Christian Approach to the Bible* is rare among introductions in that it can be re-read with profit again and again. The translators and publishers are to be thanked for this handsome, and modestly-priced, English version of a most useful book.

RONALD TORBET, O.P.

SPECULATION IN PRE-CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY. By Richard Kroner. (Longmans; 16s.)

This volume is the first part of a projected series on 'Speculation and Revelation in the History of Philosophy'. It is a history of ancient philosophy, and let it be said at once, a very readable, stimulating and, for its size, on the whole reliable, history. But it is history with a difference. Its approach to Greek philosophy is determined by the perspective of the larger work of which it is to form the first instalment.

It is refreshing to find the author begin his task with the insistence on the gulf between Greek philosophy and Christianity. Much of recent writing on this topic has been marred by a too ready acceptance of Greek thought as a *praeparatio evangelica*, and too much Greek philosophy has been pressed into a strait-jacket imposed by this concern. Speculation, Dr Kroner holds—and no Christian will wish to disagree with him here—can never be a substitute for revelation. But although revelation was absent from Greek speculation, this had within it 'a kind of substitute for revelation, namely, intuition as contrasted with analysis' (p. 57). Thus there was a gap within Greek speculation itself: on the one hand Greek thinkers were prompted to pass imaginatively beyond the reach of their philosophical insight, on the other their work provided a means for philosophic self-criticism. Thus the outstanding respect in which Dr Kroner concedes the claim of Greek speculation to having been a 'preparation of the Gospel' is by its critical approach to popular religion and mythology. 'From the perspective of the entire development of Western history the mission of Greek speculation was to bring about the destruction of the popular religion, thereby paving the way for the recognition of the Lord of the Bible' (pp. 53-54). This is probably true, with some reservations about the deep philosophic piety in much of Greek reflection.

The importance of such a reservation—and parallel ones could be made in relation to other, less central, topics—cannot be exaggerated. Its neglect may be, in part, responsible for the unsatisfactory treatment Dr Kroner gives to the central question raised by his essay. On the relation of speculation and revelation Dr Kroner makes some interest-