

The precision imported by later distinctions and qualifications is never anticipated. Dr Kelly's sensitiveness to the qualities of a theological language in the course of growth rarely deserts him. His presentation of often diverging views is, in consequence, almost invariably deeply sympathetic and catholic in its approach. Settled doctrine is portrayed as growing out of more or less inarticulate approaches, groping and mutual misunderstandings. Outstandingly successful in this respect are his chapters (the bulk of the book) devoted to the development of trinitarian theology and of Christology. His treatment of the complexities of the trinitarian debates between Nicaea and Constantinople will be a valuable guide to supplement his earlier discussion of the same theme in *Early Christian Creeds*.

There are, inevitably, in a book of this scope, a number of points at which Dr Kelly's judgment will be questioned from one side or another. While his sympathetic treatment of Theodore of Mopsuestia and of Nestorius are very welcome, his account of Athanasius's christological teaching seems to make this almost indistinguishable from that of Apollinarius. In Chapter VIII some mention of the importance of the Bishop in the thought of Ignatius would seem to be required. The only inadequate parts of the book are some of the notes on books appended to each chapter. While not claiming completeness, these sometimes fail to mention works of central importance for the topic in question. Even with such very minor blemishes, Dr Kelly has written a book which theological students will require as an essential tool, their teachers as a valuable guide and the general lay reader will welcome as a clear and useful summary. For once the reviewer may confidently omit the usual qualification 'in English' when recommending the book as 'the best in its field'.

R. A. MARKUS

THE GNOSTIC PROBLEM. By R. McL. Wilson. (Mowbrays; 35s.)

Few questions in the field of early Christian doctrine have been more controversial than that concerning the nature and origins of the religious movement culminating in the multifarious sects of the second century which we nowadays group together under the heading of gnosticism. The lack of sufficient first-hand evidence has made the hope of well-grounded but nevertheless confident judgment remote, until the discovery in 1946 of a large quantity of gnostic texts.¹ Dr Wilson's study is not, however, intended to solve 'the gnostic problem'. His concern is limited to the study of antecedents to gnostic types of speculation in Judaism.

Much recent work has suggested that even before achieving the

1. Cf. 'New Evidence on Gnosticism', in *BLACKFRIARS*, vol. xxxvi, 1955, pp. 209-216.

status of a Christian heresy, gnosticism of a kind had already existed in a pre-Christian Jewish milieu, particularly among Jewish communities of the Dispersion. Dr Wilson gives an admirable summary of the conclusions which emerge from this work. His own contribution to this hunt for sources lies mainly in stressing the role that Philo, the Alexandrian Jew, played in supplying precedents for some of the gnostic methods of procedure. In an important chapter he suggests that many things which have often been attributed to pagan sources may have found their way into gnostic speculation via Judaism. Gnostic sects could have found many of these ideas, though ultimately—often, at any rate—pagan in origin, already embedded in Jewish thought. For them, Judaism may thus have been a direct source of ideas which had found a way from outside into Jewish speculation in hellenistic times. Dr Wilson's conclusions are as tentative as is fitting in view of the fact that publication of the newly discovered material has only just begun. His book will have helped to pave the way for a more complete solution of 'the gnostic problem' when the time is ripe to attempt one.

R. A. MARKUS

THE LORD OF HISTORY. By Jean Daniélou, S.J. Translated by Nigel Abercrombie. (Longmans; 30s.)

Père Daniélou has done a good deal of distinguished work on the Fathers' approach to the Scriptures, and particularly on their figurative interpretations of the Old Testament. He has studied the imagery of the Old Testament as this is applied to Christ in the New, and the various ways in which Old Testament persons and events foreshadow their New Testament counterparts. Such studies have inevitably given rise to reflections on history, and on the history of our redemption as recorded by the Bible in particular. A scrutiny of the way in which the Old Testament points forward to the New and the New fulfils the Old has brought Père Daniélou—as it had brought the Fathers from Justin and Irenaeus onwards—to the point of reflecting on the mystery of history as the medium of God's dealings with men.

In the present volume a number of separate studies centred around this topic are brought together. They are grouped into three parts, the first of which is concerned with what we might call the theological understanding of history, the second with particular themes of biblical history and imagery, the third with the place of the contemporary Christian in the divine economy. There is inevitably much repetition in such a loosely-organized collection of more or less independent essays. The air of rambling informality is stressed, indeed over-stressed, by quotations being constantly made from modern authors without