

**ANTI-CATHOLICISM IN VICTORIAN ENGLAND**, by E. R. Norman. *George Allen and Unwin*, London, 1968. 240 pp. 35s. (Paper 18s.).

This selection of documents illustrating anti-Catholic prejudice in nineteenth-century England is limited in both extent and interest by the restricted area within which the Editor has decided to work. Dr Norman uses four different controversies which were more coherent or even intellectual than mere popular prejudice—the Maynooth Grant of 1845, Papal Aggression in 1851, Gladstone's attack on the *Vatican Decrees*, and the trial (before the Archbishop of Canterbury) of the High Church Bishop of Lincoln in 1890. There are extracts from sermons, speeches, letters or reports on Catholic Emancipation and the Maynooth Question, the Restoration of the Hierarchy and the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, the political and spiritual role of the papacy, the Convent Inquiry (1870-1) and the development of Ritualism. Although one might well suspect that examples of mere popular prejudice would have been more entertaining, the extracts used, sometimes difficult to obtain, are more fundamental to the basic point at issue and are certainly not without interest.

The Editor's introduction, which won the Thirlwall Essay Prize for 1967, is equal in length to the selections and discusses the tradition of anti-Catholicism which was important at the time as a result of its long history and the fact that it was widely accepted. The most influential agents spreading this prejudice were the ordinary clergy and travelling preachers who sometimes included former priests. But far more important was the fact that ignorant prejudice could unite with educated hostility because all men considered that with the advance of reason such an irrational religion as Roman Catholicism could not survive. Catholics were not only thought to be superstitious,

idolatrous or morally corrupt, but since they were unenlightened bigots they were also intolerant and politically suspect because of their dual allegiance to Pope and Crown. Catholicism, therefore, was opposed to sound political development and economic progress. Against this background, the occasions for demonstrations of anti-Catholicism often resulted from the economic situation and the immigration of cheap Irish labour, or political suspicions and the constant irritation of the Irish question.

Even during the Victorian period, however, anti-Catholicism was essentially dated since it was based on social or political patterns which were rapidly changing. Some manifestations of anti-Catholicism were significant political or religious events precisely because they revealed, for example, important changes in the religious role of the State and therefore involved constitutional as well as historical issues. Political concessions to Roman Catholics in particular occasioned anti-Catholic demonstrations, although only the Orange Order proved to be a permanent institution. Nevertheless, anti-Catholic sentiment certainly survived, in spite of its decline, especially among educated sections of the community; a decline which was to some extent in proportion to the decline of religious belief.

As the Editor himself recognizes, he has given examples which help to illustrate the problem rather than attempted a full treatment of the history of Victorian anti-Catholicism. To this extent, but only to this extent, the work is disappointing. The Editor has successfully achieved the task he set himself, though one might regret that he did not try to do more.

J. DEREK HOLMES

**SAINT PATRICK, HIS ORIGINS AND CAREER**, by R. P. C. Hanson. *The Clarendon Press*, Oxford, 1968. 248 pp. 30s.

This book is a logical continuation of Professor Hanson's *Tradition in the Early Church* (1962) and *St Patrick, a British Missionary Bishop* (1965). It is an impressively solid and sensible piece of work, which will at long last completely supersede J. B. Bury's *The Life of St Patrick* (1905).

Professor Hanson's central postulate is that the later Patrician documents—for instance, the *Lives* by Muirchu and Tirechan and the entries in the Irish Annals—have no demonstrable and little probable authority, and that

as a consequence the investigation of his career must be based on the *Confession* and the *Epistula ad Coroticum*, which bear self-evident traces of being Patrick's own work. There are four main consequences. (1) None of the dates usually assigned to the saint is reliable without external confirmation. (It is partly as a result that Professor Hanson dismisses any theory which involves the existence of two Patricks.) (2) Patrick was himself a monk, or at least in active sympathy with monastic ideals. (3)

Patrick's contacts outside Ireland were with mainland Britain, and not with Gaul, Italy or 'the islands of the Tyrrhenian Sea'. (4) The record should be interpreted in terms of events in Britain and the British Church during the late Roman and sub-Roman period.

Professor Hanson begins with a chapter on 'Britain in the Fifth Century'. Here the only weakness which need be noted (and it is one which recurs in later parts of the book) is an almost complete omission of the Anglo-Saxon, as opposed to the Celtic and Continental, evidence. It is not, for instance, quite accurate to say, as Professor Hanson does on pp. 14-15, that Gildas's *De Excidio* and Nennius's *Historia Brittonum* are our two main sources for the Saxon intervention in Britain. Significantly, Sir Frank Stenton's *Anglo-Saxon England* does not appear in the bibliography.

The second chapter deals with 'The British Church in the Fifth Century' and lays particular emphasis on Pelagius, Germanus, Palladius, Ninian, Faustus of Riez and the Paschal Cycle used in the British Church. These two chapters provide the background for five others, 'Assessment of the Sources', 'St Patrick's Career', 'St Patrick's Background', 'St Patrick's Date' (born c. 390, kidnapped c. 406, escaped 412, went to Ireland as bishop at some point between 425 and 435, died about 460), and 'St Patrick', a final assessment, which includes a sympathetic treatment of Patrick's literary achievement. There are two appendices, 'Mention of St Patrick in the Irish Annals' and 'The "High-King" of Ireland' (Professor Hanson does not believe that in the fifth century this last office existed or that Patrick had anything to do with a high-king Loeghaire). The book is completed by a useful bibliography, an index of names, and another of ancient texts.

Mr Hanson's portrayal of the period and the man is convincing, even in most of the fine detail, and it is only in fine details that one is occasionally compelled to disagree with him. Thus, in his discussion of *Ad Candidam Casam*, Bede's name for Whithorn, he mistakenly

supposes that the preposition *Ad* is an instance of Vulgar Latin usage, whereas it renders an Anglo-Saxon idiom for which many parallels exist in Bede and elsewhere (cf. Plummer, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, Oxford, 1896, II, pp. 103-4). There is nothing, in fact, to suggest that the name is Vulgar Latin: *casa* came to mean 'house', presumably by way of a colloquial use of the original sense 'hut', in Spanish and Italian Vulgar Latin, but not Gaulish and not presumably in British usage. Almost the reverse mistake occurs on pp. 114-15, where Mr Hanson confidently assumes that *villula* in Patrick's Vulgar Latin may be equated with the classical *villa*, almost in the sense in which the word is used by Cicero or the younger Pliny. Both in itself and in terms of later developments of the word, this is surely very unlikely? On p. 114, he quotes from the *Epistula ad Coroticum* the phrase *non dico civibus meis neque civibus sanctorum Romanorum sed civibus daemoniorum*, and comments that this should not be taken to mean that Patrick's village was in Strathclyde or Rheged because 'there is no reason to suppose that Patrick confined the word *cives* to the inhabitants of the part of Britain from which he came'. The observation is true but irrelevant; the natural way to understand the passage is 'not fellow citizens of mine (as subjects of Coroticus), nor fellow citizens of the Romans, as Christians, but fellow citizens of demons'. I find it difficult to avoid the conclusion that Patrick's original home was in Strathclyde or its immediate neighbourhood (whether or not that was ever called Rheged). Finally, on pp. 157-8 Professor Hanson comments, 'the facts decisively incline to the view that Patrick was a monk, perhaps in the tradition of Martin, and that he had lived in a monastery in Britain, and had there learnt his knowledge of the Latin Bible, before he arrived in Ireland as a bishop'. In a footnote he tentatively suggests that the monastery might be Glastonbury, but Whithorn is obviously a more likely, as well as a better documented, possibility.

JOHN MACQUEEN

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