

lated genius? How significant is he in the history of his own period, or of ours? In the history of *ideas* he obviously ranks high. But in the history of the Church's development, or that of the world? I am not sure, and here Dr Coulson has not helped me much.

Two other questions remain in my mind. The first is this. Given that (unlike Maurice and Coleridge) Newman's first concern was always with, How do we know that the Christian case is true?, and that all his books were attempts to answer that basic question in contemporary terms, is it not necessary for the student of Newman to face the question of how far Newman's own answers are still valid today? Isn't this the question Newman himself would have wished theological scholars to put first? In what sense is his appeal to conscience as indicative, if not exactly probative, of God's existence an answer to modern scepticism? How far is his theory of language as 'fiduciary' an adequate reply to twentieth-century, as distinct from nineteenth-century, rationalism? What exactly is the cash value of his work? (The chapters on Newman in H. H. Price's *Gifford Lectures on Belief* are relevant here, but they are not discussed in this book.)

But there is an even bigger question to ask of an argument which 'is chiefly of value if it can be shown to have significance for the present day' (p. 225). This is how far Newman's preoccupation with the theology of the Church is useful or even interesting to us. The trouble is that, even if we grant everything that Dr Coulson wants to establish about the Christian value of the open pluralistic society, about the importance of the university as a

community of balanced, autonomous disciplines that provides a model for the Church itself, and about the difference between acting from conscience and acting from 'social motives' (and to grant all this is to grant much), the *whole* of that discussion seems now to be rather provincial, almost a storm in a teacup. What does Newman's theology of the Church say to Vorster or Castro, Nixon or the Greek Colonels, Helder Camara or the Berrigans? What relevance has the *Idea of a University* to a society tempted to think of the Open University as the answer to its educational problems? How does the justification of theology as a focal, but not domineering, discipline help us over the Snow-Leavis controversy, let alone over the California Board of Regents or the 'Atkinson affair' at Birmingham? What does Newman's vision do to solve the questions raised by the sacking of the editor of this very journal?

Let it be clear that I am not being a philistine in raising these crude questions. I do not dispute the intrinsic value of historical scholarship, or its long-term relevance in practical affairs. It is simply that this book, which is devoted to the thesis of Newman's contemporary relevance, does not itself make clear exactly what the relevance of Newman is to the central questions today—questions which are less of ecclesiastical organization or historical enquiry than of life and death for Christianity itself. I do not question that what Newman says is important: I just want to know more clearly in what this importance consists. Having laid the foundations of a 'common tradition' I hope Dr Coulson will be able to go on to show us where it leads us.

BRIAN WICKER

THE VICTORIAN CHURCH IN DECLINE, by P. T. Marsh. *Routledge and Kegan Paul*, London, 1966. 344 pp. £2.80 (56s.).

In spite of the sometimes threatening situation during the first half of the century, the Anglican Church remained comparatively strong and secure as a result of such factors as the administrative reforms of the Ecclesiastical Commission and the religious revival associated with the Oxford Movement. In 1868, the establishment and many of its privileges still survived, but by the 1880s, the Church had lost several of these privileges especially in the field of education, the importance of religion was declining among the educated and public opinion was again critical if not contemptuous.

Parliament not only ignored the fact of establishment but even the Church itself and refused to adopt legislation which its leaders considered necessary while denying them the authority to govern themselves.

Yet between 1868 and 1882, the Archbishop of Canterbury was probably the most powerful since the seventeenth century. The present work is an excellent attempt to give an account of this paradoxical situation and to describe Tait's public career. As archbishop, he was involved with ecclesiastical reform under Gladstone and Disraeli, especially the dis-

establishment of the Irish Church and the Public Worship Act of 1874, theological and ritualistic controversies including subsequent legal battles, and other questions such as the rôle of the Church in education.

Tait had not been a 'safe' candidate and the 'layman's archbishop' was more attracted by his national or 'secular' responsibilities than his exclusively ecclesiastical duties. He tended to follow liberal, erastian and Protestant policies in an effort to secure the establishment, popular support and national influence. Thus in spite of his behaviour over *Essays and Reviews*, he usually tried to prevent the influential 'orthodox' party from alienating educated opinion. Such policies inevitably involved a degree of compromise as well as conciliation and his opposition to High Churchmen, for instance, who often consciously defied public opinion, eventually resulted in an uneasy truce. When they adopted a policy of civil disobedience, Tait was forced to concentrate on the unity of the Church rather than its national influence.

As archbishop, Tait supported the concept of a religious State and a national or established Church. In this context, it is perhaps significant that his last speech to the Lords was opposing an Affirmation Bill in the Bradlaugh case, whereas more liberal or more conservative

ecclesiastics both supported Bradlaugh. The fact that the Lords ignored him for the first time in twenty years was also symbolic. Parliament as a whole was ignoring ecclesiastical claims and the needs for ecclesiastical legislation. Tait's own attempts to secure this illustrated Parliament's unwillingness to 'waste' time debating ecclesiastical affairs. Largely as a result of a decline in the influence and importance of the Church, parliamentary indifference was becoming the practical alternative to disestablishment. Ecclesiastical leaders were no longer automatically figures of national importance and the last effort to make the Church of England the Church of the English had failed.

Such being the general situation, Tait could hardly have been 'successful' but he deserves more credit than Marsh sometimes seems to suggest. The function of an established Church in a voluntarist situation cannot be a simple one, and it is still by no means obvious what policy the Anglican Church should adopt on the question of establishment. One of the great merits of Marsh's work, however, is that it contributes towards an understanding of the historical background which cannot be ignored when this question is to be decided.

J. DEREK HOLMES

**EPHESIANS, BAPTISM AND PENTECOST**, by J. C. Kirby. *S.P.C.K.*, London, 1968. 207 pp. £1.75 (35s.).

Discussion on the authorship of Ephesians and the purpose for which it was written has gone on inconclusively for over 150 years. Professor Kirby in this book sets out to resolve the debated points, but first he surveys all the recent work on Ephesians (pp. 1-56), devoting special attention to Dr Ernst Percy's work which represents the most thorough defence of the Pauline authorship. This is all the more necessary as our author opts wholeheartedly for the opposite thesis. Having thus cleared the ground, he proceeds to examine Jewish religious tradition. This is undoubtedly the most interesting part of this work, even if a great deal of the content smacks rather of the *déjà vu*. But there is no doubt that the *berakah* of the Old Testament and Jewish religious tradition forms the background and is in a sense responsible for the *berakah* of Ephesians. Thus to take one example from many fascinating pages, it is useful to set side by side the basic parts of Ephesians 1-3 and a whole series of Synagogue

prayers (as is done on p. 133). Ephesians is thus seen both to echo and 'correct' the Synagogue prayers in the light of Christian revelation, e.g. in the *Shemoneh Esre* the reference to giving life to the dead is to physical death: but in Ephesians it is to spiritual death (cf. Ephes. 2, 1, 5).

In the last section of his work our author becomes convinced that Ephesians was written by someone with a knowledge of rabbinical exegetical works, that the Ephesian area was the place of origin of Ephesians (p. 165)—or in other words the letter long styled 'to the Ephesians' was really *from* Ephesus, and that the main part of Ephesians 1-3 is a *berakah* for use in public worship, possibly at the Eucharist (p. 138). Modestly Professor Kirby avers, 'all that we have attempted to do is to take seriously the judgment of competent scholars that Ephesians is written in a liturgical style, and to give an answer to the problem that the style itself raises' (p. 172).