the remainder of Ephesians. This last leaves us ill at ease with the notion of 5, 21-33 as a key or nodal text. Surely no portion of a Haustafel can fulfil this role. The so-called dogmatic sections of the Epistle would furnish great texts about the supereminence of Christ, or of God, the mystery of whose will is 'a plan for the fullness of time'. Such sections would more convincingly provide texts which relate to the overall design of the Epistle. Though no doubt where there is consistent density of thought, any part can be illustrated by reference to any other.

So much for the plan and content which is worked out with considerable erudition, yet sometimes at the cost of surprisingly poor English, and some redundancies.

More important is the part played by references to the homologoumena (pp. 36 and 77-81) in the text of Ephesians. We can agree to a common tradition behind the homologoumena texts and those of Ephesians. We can equally well argue that both stem from St Paul's writing, in which there was no arrested development but a constant living progression which faced up to new ideas and contacts. Thus when our author speaks of something without parallel in the homologoumena (p. 92), e.g. the specification of the *content* of the 'mystery' or how the Gentiles are to be fellow-heirs, etc., we are more inclined to see there a farther stage in Paul's thinking. He has spoken enough about 'mystery' in general (six times in 1 Corinthians); now in Ephesians we have a further precision about the *content* of the 'mystery', simply an explicitation in the same line of thought.

Returning to the hypothesis that Ephesians is 'a mosaic of traditions current in the early Church', we ask first how a syncretistic amalgam of tradition could result in a sublime piece of writing which has animated Christian thinking through the centuries. Certainly the traditions are there, and they must be investigated. Yet more important is the work of a consummate author who has woven all together with his ardent faith and creative mind. Synoptic studies have passed from form-criticism to redaction criticism with its emphasis on authors. Pauline studies are seemingly still anchored at a stage corresponding to form-criticism—or so the present work would seem to suggest. We could invoke Pascal's *esprit de géométrie* and *esprit de finesse*. Scholarly and detailed investigation of traditions there must always be. But they correspond to the *esprit de géométrie*: they are not the be-all and end-all of the study of Ephesians. There remains a more essential grasp of the Epistle seen as a unity issuing from a mind who could see the gospel of Christ gradually transforming a 'world twisted out of its true pattern'.

ROLAND POTTER, O.P.

HISTORICAL THEOLOGY, by Jaroslav Pelikan, *Hutchinson*, London, 1971 xxiii + 228 pp. £4.00.

This is rather a fine book. It is an attempt to resolve the methodological difficulties involved in writing a full-scale history of Christian doctrine at the present time. The key problem, among many others, in this project is that of reconciling doctrinal change with the continuity of Christian teaching, and Professor Pelikan examines the solutions proposed to this problem by Origen, Peter Abelard, St Thomas and Luther up to the nineteenth-century writers of dogmatic histories, notably Harnack, to see whether their solutions are adequate for the task today. Pelikan identifies the continuity of doctrine with the ecclesial context in which historical theology is carried out, recognizing that doctrine can no more be separated from the Church than the New Testament can be separated from the Christian community which produced it. The author insists that a provisional Catholic ecclesiology is necessary for doing historical theology so that past doctrinal developments can be judged by the community which continues at the present time that historical tradition which links us with the original Gospel, but Professor Pelikan, as a Lutheran, does not identify this ecclesiology with that of the Roman Catholic Church. By insisting on this ecclesial context for doing historical theology, Pelikan is seeking to avoid the historical relativism of Schleiermacher and Troeltsch who accepted all past theologies as collections of ideological data with no relevance for contemporary theology: all those theologies —heresy and orthodoxy alike—were examined, labelled and consigned to the archives. All past theologies were judged worthy of equal relevance—or irrelevance: Justin and Marcion, Athanasius and Arius, Augustine and Pelagius. On the other hand, Pelikan wants to avoid the dogmatic prejudices of some nineteenth-century histories of theology, where the facts of history were put into a strait-jacket by doctrinal presuppositions, a tendency best illustrated by that frivolous remark from Cardinal Manning:

'One must overcome history with dogma'.

The recognition of the problem of doctrinal development within what claims to be a tradition of consistent evangelical truth is not new, of course. It was examined explicitly by Peter Abelard in the twelfth century, and it has been a major theme in theology for more than a century since the work of Möhler and Newman. Newman approached the problem in the polemical context of discovering which of the Christian churches was in direct continuity with the apostolic church. Pelikan's reason for examining the presuppositions and methodology of historical theology is less contentious but perhaps no less difficult; he has begun to write a projected five-part history of Christian doctrine. Here lies the chief purpose of this book; it is not the self-contained work it pretends to be, but a theological introduction to this enormous task. Not surprisingly, the book is very well documented; the 172 pages of text contain 1,116 footnotes.

Harnack is the figure lying behind this work and it is against him that the author continually orients himself. But Pelikan refuses to limit himself to a small number of key dogmas and their development in a given period as Harnack did, for he sees the necessity of inter-relating the whole range of doctrine in order to understand any one dogma at any given moment, so that, for example, Luther's view of the eucharist can only be understood when it is related to his theology of justification, of *sola scriptura*, of church authority, and so on. It must be doubted, however, whether Pelikan, or any other single historian of theology, can remain true to all the methodological requirements which are discussed in this book while covering the whole of nineteen centuries of doctrinal development. What is required of any new history of doctrine, on the basis of Pelikan's redefinition of the task of historical theology, is not only the historiography of *one* theological motif through nineteen centuries (a method advocated by Nygren and others at the University of Lund), not only the historiography of *all* theological motifs through nineteen centuries, not only the *inter-relation* of all motifs at any given time, but a combination of all these. The task is daunting, but the author quotes Stephen Runciman in support of such an undertaking: 'A single author . . . may succeed in giving to his work an integrated and even epical quality that no composite volume can achieve. I believe that the supreme duty of the historian is . . . to attempt to record in one sweeping sequence the greater events and movements that have swayed the destinies of man. The writer rash enough to make the attempt should not be criticized for his ambition, however much he may deserve censure for the inadequacy of his equipment or the inanity of his results.' In the light of the book under review I cannot help feeling that the resultant history of doctrine will be both a considerable achievement and a disappointment. At any rate anyone who intends reading even a part of the as yet incomplete history had better first read this methodological discussion.

GEOFFREY TURNER

WHY PRIESTS?, by Hans Kung. *Fontana*, 1972. 35p. (PRETRE, POUR QUOI FAIRE?, *Cerf*, Paris, 1971.)

In his foreword, Father Küng looked forward with apprehension to last year's Synod, doubting its ability to deal with what he saw as a catastrophic crisis in the Catholic priesthood. The book is dedicated to his fellow-priests; his wish is that it should be seen primarily as a work of construction, not destruction, even though traditional features of the priesthood are found useless and thrown away. The positive, biblical picture will be generally acceptable: the Christian minister is an officially and sacramentally (though Küng has more to say about sacraments, an effective gesture and prayer of the Church is involved) appointed leader of the community, preacher of God's word and celebrant of the sacraments. The list of obsolete cargo for jettisoning is more questionable: not only does a sacral and ritual priesthood go but also a sacrificing priesthood, for the eucharist is not itself a sacrifice and possibly not instituted by Christ. Priesthood as *sacerdotium* goes out, and with it sacramental character, sacramental grace and any grace of state.

Most, if not all, of this could have been predicted out of Küng's work on the ministry in his book *The Church* taken with his later work on infallibility. It is just as well that this is so, in that this latest book is strong in assertion but weak in evidences, full of sweeping conclusions but empty of the detailed arguments and citations necessary to sustain them. It is a 'popular' book with few references to Scripture and no precise references to contemporary exegesis. Küng's reports on exegetical work have often tended to abstraction and rigidity;