

THE MEANING OF THE CHURCH edited by Donal Flanagan. *Gill and Son* 18s.

The Catholic Church in this country has for so long, and in so many ways been dependent upon the missionary generosity of the Irish that any expression of gratitude might seem no longer necessary. However, the publication of the latest in the series of collected papers from the Maynooth Union Summer Schools makes it clear that this is not the case.

Anyone who has neither time nor inclination to read the whole book would derive considerable profit from Donal Flanagan's editorial introduction, with its excellent summaries of the papers. At a time when, as the vision of the Council begins to 'bite', a mood of suspicion and mutual recrimination prevails in this country, it is well to advert to the distance we have all travelled in the past few years. It is a measure of this distance that, whereas Hans Küng's calm and moderate book 'The Council and Reunion' set up a shock-wave of joy and anger, few readers today are likely even to notice Fr Flanagan's opening paragraph: 'The Church is by her very nature with its fallible human elements the *ecclesia semper reformanda*. Today, as at all times, the Church stands in need of reform – reform of men and reform of structures, the inward reform of the heart, the outward reform of doctrinal expression, juridical norm, cult arrangement' (p. vii).

One need not be a specialist in Orthodox theology to appreciate that progress might be made in many of the bitter and often apparently fruitless debates about 'institutionalism' in Christianity if our ecclesiology were not so defective in its fundamental doctrinal dimension: that of the doctrine of the Spirit of God. If it is true that an 'over-pneumatological' ecclesiology tends to lack the necessary cutting-edge, it is also true that neglect of the Spirit, in theory and in practice, leads to legalism, rigidity and ecclesiastical sclerosis. As Fr Kevin McNamara says, in his fine essay on 'The Holy Spirit in the Church': '... the activity of the Spirit is too

inward and too various, too flexible and too subtle to thrive in an over-organized and over-governed community' (p. 32).

Fr Mackey's essay on 'Tradition and Change' is friendly in tone and helpful in the overall picture it presents, but somewhat lacking in precision. It is surely questionable to say that the 'teaching authority . . . has real authority over the faith of the Church' (p. 39, my stress), and in the following passage, what exactly is meant by 'secularism': 'The world is secular today in a way it never was before and the secularism is creeping into the fold' (p. 47)?

While the principle of 'returning to the sources' has long been widely accepted as indispensable in ecumenical enquiry, there is still considerable ignorance, so far as Catholics are concerned, in the doctrine, for example, of the great Reformers. For this reason, and for its serenity of tone, one welcomes Fr Hurley's magnificent commentary on the fourth book of Calvin's *Institutes* ('The Church in Protestant Theology').

Not all the essays in this collection set out to be original contributions in theology (and there is no reason why they should). One which does, and which deserves the closest study, is Fr Herbert McCabe's discussion of 'The Church and the World'. The approach will be familiar to those who have studied his earlier writing: 'I want, then, to explore the possibility of comparing the Church to a culture, an area of communication or, using the word in a broad sense, the use of a certain language' (pp. 57–58). If I find his treatment of baptismal priesthood unnecessarily cautious, this may be due to the compression of his argument. So slight a criticism, however, does not diminish the importance of an essay which is rich in insights and clearly the work of a man steeped in the tradition and utterly dedicated to pastoral needs: 'If he is to fulfil his mission in the world, the mission for which he was baptized, the Christian must not

The Purification of the Church

edited by
IAN HISLOP

The interest shown in the Editorship of *New Blackfriars* has led to a great deal of possible discussion. In order to put the affair as it affects the English Province of the Dominicans in its proper perspective the Provincial—the Very Rev Father Ian Hislop—asked the SCM Press to publish the editorial comment that caused the controversy, together with the reply of the Archbishop of Birmingham and other essays. The sole purpose of this publication is to put on record the articles which appeared in *New Blackfriars* in a form readily available to the many concerned in the discussions.

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Dr Loen examines all the main academic disciplines – contemporary astrophysics, biology, psychology, history and philosophy before turning to secularization in theology itself. The last chapter assesses, in turn, the work of Barth, Buttman, Bonhoeffer, Tillich, and John Robinson's *Honest to God*.

Dr Loen formerly a civil engineer is now a lecturer in the philosophy of religion in the University of Utrecht. 30s net

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build his own imitation world out of Catholic material and take refuge in it, he must manifest the kind of adult concern for the quality of life

that is characteristic of the intelligent humanist' (p. 71).

NICHOLAS LASH

SWEETER THAN HONEY, by Peter Schneider, *SCM Press Ltd.* 18s.

STUDIES IN RATIONALISM, JUDAISM AND UNIVERSALISM. Ed. Raphael Loewe, *Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd.* 50s.

To resolve a crisis in the life of an individual it is necessary to make a reassessment of the past, to acknowledge one's mistakes and to refashion one's entire outlook. The same attitude obtains in the crisis of a community such as the Church is facing today. Of the many problems that have to be met the relationship of Christians and Jews is by no means the least urgent since it involves not only guilt, reparation and reassessment, but strikes at the very roots of most contemporary questions, be they religious, philosophical, sociological or educational. It is only, as is the argument of a book recently reviewed in these pages (*Christians and Jews – Encounter and Mission* by Jakob Jocz), when the Church faces the Synagogue that her true nature and mission can be revealed. The general ignorance of Christians regarding the Synagogue and the *Torah* as the God-ordained Jewish way of life is dispelled by Peter Schneider in his book published in the Christian Presence Series. The author is known as the leader in the studies of Judaism sponsored by the Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem. The first three chapters which deal with the deplorable facts of past persecutions clear the ground for the message of Judaism itself. It is essential, as James Parkes has pointed out before, 'to recognize that the whole pattern of rabbinic religion is not only a true development of an essential aspect of Old Testament religion (which insists, in the words of Claude Montefiore, that 'feeling alone will not suffice; we need also will; and will alone will not suffice, it must be translated into deed'), but that in its totality it is a massive demonstration of a whole people's experience and commitment to God' (p. 140). On both sides a task must be faced: Christians must rid themselves of misconceptions about Judaism, while Jews are bound to reassess their evaluation of Jesus. Both tasks are complicated after the establishment of the State of Israel, whose problems the author with his first-hand knowledge describes with much insight and sympathy. The lesson of this valuable contribution to Jewish-Christian understanding lies in its appeal for a 'humble listening to Judaism'.

For such 'humble listening' the reader has more than ample opportunity in the volume edited by Raphael Loewe in memory of Leon Roth. The three themes: rationalism, Judaism, universalism, various aspects of which are treated by distinguished scholars from England, U.S.A., France and Israel, are essential to the thought of one who not only made notable contributions to the study of Descartes and Spinoza, but was the first *Ahad Ha'am* Professor of philosophy and later rector of the University of Jerusalem and a stimulating lecturer to wider audiences. The subjects of the fifteen essays, which cannot all be quoted though they deserve it, for lack of space, include philosophical ones such as Maimonides on Modes and Universals (Harry A. Wolfson), Rationalism in Hobbes's Political Philosophy (David D. Raphael) and strictly Jewish ones such as Knowest Thou . . . ? Notes on the Book of Job (Nahum N. Glatzer) and Rabbinic Adumbrations of Non-Violence: Israel and Canaan (André Neher), the latter already pointing to the universal implications of the Jewish theme. Titles such as Israel and the Oikoumene (Samuel Hugo Bergman), Torah and Nomos in Medieval Jewish philosophy (Erwin I. J. Rosenthal), and The Idea of Humanity in Judaism (The late Kurt Wilhelm) show that problems are being tackled which are ours as well and in the solution of which the Jewish contribution dare not be neglected. Peter Schneider points out in the former book, that any Christian theologian concerned with the problem of the Unity and Trinity of God might well consult the people who are essentially monotheistic.

At every turn the careful reader meets, as it were, with new light shed on a beloved face with each trait of which he has believed himself to be familiar. It is true, that light may at times be blinding, when we read that even Maimonides was preoccupied with the elimination of 'gentile idolatry'; but it is more often illuminating, when Professor Bergman defines 'ecumenism' as 'the realm in which the expectation of God obtains' (*Aufbruch dem Herrn entgegen*), or when we are assured by Professor Edward Ullendorff that