

be prepared, first of all, to take off our shoes.

Unfortunately the book is marred for the reader by a printer's gimmick which is anything but ecumenical. The adjectives 'christian' and 'islamic' are printed throughout without capitals, in non-alignment with 'Hindu', 'Buddhist', 'Hebrew', 'Jewish', 'Greek', so that one comes on such visual discrepancies as 'Jewish-christian thought'. And in a chapter where the words

'incarnation' and 'trinity' are used in the unique Christian sense they are also treated to small letters, which is suggestive of the way in which a Hindu would regard them. Where the thought of the author is so clear and so deeply Christian, the symbolism of print overlays it with an irresponsible confusion.

AGNES YENDELL

ROME AND REFORMATION – A stubborn problem re-examined, by James Atkinson, Christian Foundation Series. *Hodder and Stoughton*, 1966, 3s 6d net.

THE EPISCOPATE AND CHRISTIAN UNITY. Edit. Titus Cranny, *Chair of Unity Apostolat*, Greymoor

The usefulness of these two small books will be considerable in the present inchoate ecumenical situation, for they both pin-point, from their different points of view, the real crux of the problem of Christian unity. *Rome and Reformation* is a re-examination of the stubborn problem of the Reformation from an Anglican evangelical view-point. It is brief and succinct, as a preliminary study book should be. It is scholarly too, with the limitations that are inevitable in an attempt of such a kind to get to the heart of the matter. It is no harder on the abuses, in doctrine and practice, of the medieval Church which contributed so greatly to the religious revolution of the sixteenth century than are many contemporary catholic scholars, and its attitude to Rome and the ecumenical movement, especially since the Vatican Council, is sincerely appreciative and hopeful.

But it quite simply ignores the most fundamental question of all ecumenical encounter viz has episcopacy, as it developed historically within Christianity in historic Christendom, any vital role to play, by God's ordinance, in the constitution of the Church as Christ willed it to be. This leads immediately to a complementary and equally fundamental question. Either episcopacy is implicit in the apostolate established by Christ and therefore implicit in the Scriptures as of divine origin and essential to the life of the Church, or it is not. The first verdict is that of Historic Christendom in East and West, the second is that of the Reformation. The place of the Papacy in the Church is an episcopal problem, to be settled first of all between East and West, and then only when in the wider Christian context, the basic question of the necessity of episcopacy as an essential element in the Church's structure, and its function of interpreting the Scriptures under divine guidance, has been resolved.

These are the two polarities of world ecumenism to be found at work in its many local evolutions. The frank recognition of this is essential to all true ecumenical encounter. The view of Historic Christendom in East and West that there can be but *one* Church, organic and visible, and the Reformation view, taking various forms, that Christ's Church, though united in its inner life, is in fact organically a divided entity, and that reunion will be the bringing together into unity of its divided parts. These two views must have, what they do not yet enjoy in the ecumenical encounter, an equal recognition, as being the ultimate root of Christian disunity, since they spring from divergences, real or misconceived, concerning the nature of Christian faith and the Christian revelation and the means of its mediation to mankind. Apart from this recognition, work for unity is doomed to be fruitless.

It is because *The Episcopate and Christian Unity* has for its theme the vital importance of the apostolic episcopate as an essential structural basis of the Church's unity, that this small book, is useful, more perhaps in the direction to which it points than for its actual achievement. It consists of the six or seven papers read at a symposium conducted by the Greymoor Friars of Unity, in the U.S.A. Obviously such papers must have their limitations in both scope and content. They succeed however in making the main point that the crux of the ecumenical problem is episcopacy as a divinely ordained institution and as a necessary element in the Church of Christ.

The paper on the Anglican Concept of Episcopacy, while hardly clear as to how far much Anglican conception falls short of the Catholic view, emphasises as universal and of great importance Anglican insistence on the framework of the institution, even without clear

acknowledgement of its divine origin or inner content. In the event of unity in doctrine being attained at a later stage this framework could easily then be given its full meaning and recognition. The symposium was held before the

close of the Vatican Council and is consequently incomplete, though there are useful discussions of collegiality and its relation to papal authority.

HENRY ST JOHN O.P.

THE CHURCH IS DIFFERENT, by Robert Adolfs, *Burns Oates* (Compass Books) 11s. 6d.

The church has always been very reluctant to grant her members the right to exercise 'the glorious liberty of the children of God'. Instead of being encouraged to let the life of Christ develop in us a mature involvement in his work in the world, the raising up of all men to the Father, we have been hedged about with petty regulations and rules and given stern warnings about straying too far outside the walls of the fold. These rules and regulations are very pointed and strict when dealing with matters of personal sexual conduct and lax to a frightening degree, when faced with the evil things men do to other men in society. Why is this so? The reason seems to me to be that if the church did ever come to grips with the problems of war or the bomb or world poverty or political morality she would find it extremely embarrassing to have to try and enforce her teaching on communities and states, especially those who were rich and friendly towards her more institutional aspirations (e.g. some speeches at the council by some American bishops on the problems of nuclear war). Whereas she still deludes herself that she can enforce her rules on individuals. Yet, is this still true? Rules are obeyed because they seem self evidently right and just or because they carry sanctions against those who disobey. Suppose the rules are seen to be stupid or wrong and the sanctions carry no weight, what happens to those who know nothing more about the church or christianity? They depart waving their fingers at what they regard as authoritarianism and superstition, and who can blame them? And those of us who stay within the orbit of some of the rules? We leave it to the wierdies and the queers, and those dirty little girls in long boots and black jackets to worry about Vietnam and Rhodesia and the poor while we devote ourselves to raising money, not for OXFAM, but for building schools or new churches – for ourselves. Bricks and mortar are obviously more important than human misery or rampant injustice or persecution (though if that persecution is turned against the church then it is an entirely different question).

But, thank God, the Church is different (I had almost begun to doubt it after a long diet of parish, *Tablet* and *Catholic Herald*). Robert Adolfs has written a timely call to reform and renewal in the best spirit of the council and those few, so very few, of our ecclesiastical superiors who see the need for mature, free and responsible members of 'a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people', proclaiming the Gospel to the world, not by apologetic but by their lives and actions and social involvement

The starting point of the book is that the church is catholic, open, dynamic, universal in space time and depth – involved in the world, in man, in everything which makes man more true to himself. The conflict between this concept of the church and integralism and legalism is analysed in accounts of the modernist crisis (it still goes on), German non-conformism – a curious title used to describe the attempt to establish freedom of moral and political judgement among catholics in Germany<sup>1</sup>, conflict over the freedom of theological investigation, catholicity and morals with special reference to the problems surrounding the use of contraceptives, and ecumenism. In each case the point is driven home that to exercise our full calling as christians we must have interiorised our faith. It must be part of us, not just a set of rules.

The last chapter, on the dialogue with communism, is in some ways the most important. We are given a critique of the church's past villification of communism, including a number of very illuminating insights such as the suggestion that the church might have been guilty of some of the offences which she attributes to the communists, and its failure to evolve a just social ethic of its own. Fr Adolfs points out, very rightly, that the much vaunted social encyclicals were long overdue attempts to ameliorate the worst excesses of capitalism rather than an

<sup>1</sup>See also Charles Boxer O.P. 'How Progressive is the German Church' *New Blackfriars* Jan. 1966 and 'German Christians and Germany's Boundaries' *New Blackfriars* Nov. 1966.