

confronted the translator with problems which he has skilfully surmounted. As he himself remarks, this treatise, if taken out of its context, is a work of philosophy not of theology, and seems to be an *ad hoc* composition which 'modestly pretends to be more Aristotelian than it really is'. While maintaining that its philosophical conclusions are of more than antiquarian interest, he recognizes that these are not easy to disentangle from their 'antique apparatus'; he therefore writes his introduction from a thoroughly modern standpoint, provides thirteen appendices explaining various technicalities of the Thomist metaphysics and psychology and gives a large number of footnotes dealing with incidental points of terminology and theory. Like Fr Hill in Volume 13 he admits the inadequacy of St Thomas's scientific knowledge (here, of course, in the realm of psychology), and when he thinks that the Angelic Doctor misses the point he does not hesitate to say so. All the time he has the fashionable linguistic philosophers clearly in mind and against

their background he makes the fundamental soundness of St Thomas's teaching stand out plainly. While making one passing reference to Professor Gilbert Ryle, he leaves us to infer for ourselves the contrast between the doctrine of dispositions in *The Concept of Mind* and that in the *Prima Secundae*. By a skilful examination of the various contexts he concludes that the most adequate English equivalent of *habitus* is not 'habit' but 'disposition' and that the most adequate English equivalent of *dispositio* is not 'disposition' but 'state'. It is perhaps an indication of the special difficulties that are presented by this treatise that the reader is warned in an editorial note that Dr Kenny's views are in some cases not shared by the editorial board and other collaborators.

As with the earlier volumes, paper, printing and binding are of the highest quality, and the price, judged by present-day standards, is by no means excessive.

E. L. Mascall

THE THEOLOGY OF THE SACRAMENTS AND OTHER PAPERS, by D. M. Baillie; *Faber Paper Covered Editions*, 9s. 6d.

WHAT IS A SACRAMENT? by Bernard Piault, translated by A. Manson; A Faith and Fact Book, *Burns and Oates*, 9s. 6d.

BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION, by Burkhard Neunheuser, O.S.B., translated by John Jay Hughes; Herder History of Dogma, *Burns and Oates*, 42s.

TERTULLIAN'S HOMILY ON BAPTISM, text edited with an introduction, translation and commentary by Ernest Evans; *S.P.C.K.*, 35s.

BAPTISM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, a symposium by A. George, S.M., and others, translated by David Askew; *Geoffrey Chapman*, 25s.

The Theology of the Sacraments is a series of talks delivered by the late Professor D. M. Baillie in 1952. They are an attempt by a Presbyterian theologian to rethink some of the traditional positions of reformed theology in the light of

modern research and of such ideas as the sacramental nature of the universe, the place of the sacraments in sacred history and their eschatological dimension. Even by those who do not share his tradition Dr Baillie's book will be found

both enlightening and stimulating.

The same cannot be said, unfortunately, of Bernard Piault's popular exposition of Catholic sacramental theology. The familiar and well used concepts and distinctions of scholastic theology are dressed up with the aid of modern ideas and many quotations from the Fathers, but they are presented for their own sake rather than as aids to the deeper understanding of the Gospel message, and in a way that informs, but does not stimulate the reader to think for himself. Distortions also are present: it is insisted that the religion of Christ is embedded in ritual worship, but nothing is said of the remarkably unritualistic character of the New Testament and the early Church; the Godward aspect of the sacraments as the worship of Christ and his Church so strongly stressed by the Second Vatican Council is hardly mentioned.

Father Neunheuser's contribution to the Herder History of Dogma is a useful and readable book which has been well translated, but since it is likely to become a standard text-book for English-speaking Catholics we must turn our attention rather to its faults than to its virtues. It was written in 1934 and, in spite of attempts to bring them up to date, the bibliographies are very deficient. In the last twenty years a great deal of important work has been done on baptism and confirmation, but the author, who relies chiefly on the great fundamental studies of the first two decades of the century, makes too little use of it. Perhaps the most serious result of this is his failure to point out that in the East there seems to have been no postbaptismal anointing or laying on of hands until the end of the fourth century – a fact of importance for the theology of Confirmation.

Dr Ernest Evans' edition of the *De Baptismo* is a work of meticulous scholarship which no student of the subject can afford to ignore. The

introduction contains valuable essays on the history of Baptism before Tertullian, the baptismal service as he knew it and his theology of Baptism, in which all the evidence is summed up with great care and cool judgement.

Baptism in the New Testament contains nine essays on various aspects of the subject by leading French exegetes translated from two issues of *Lumière et Vie* for 1956. Many will be grateful to have this excellent symposium in English. Two of the contributions deserve special mention: J. Delorme's essay on the practice of Baptism in Judaism at the beginning of the Christian era still remains one of the best presentations of this very complicated subject; of J. Duplacy's remarkable contribution on salvation by faith and Baptism we shall have more to say later.

There is perhaps no field of theology in which the ecumenical dialogue has proved more fruitful than the study of the sacraments. Here not only the criteria of New Testament exegesis, but also the historical study of the practice and teaching of the early Church provide objective standards on which all can agree. In recent years theologians have travelled considerable distances from the *a priori* positions which characterized the age of theological deadlock; it is now possible to envisage a point in which their different courses might meet. Nevertheless, along with increasing agreement on matters of fact, the fundamental disagreement in theology tends to stand out in greater relief.

The problem of infant Baptism, on which four of the above books touch, provides an illustration of this. 'It would probably be difficult to find in the New Testament even the practice of infant Baptism', writes Fr Neunheuser. 'We might well feel obliged to agree here with the conclusions which are found in numerous Protestant studies of this question . . . This, however, implies nothing contrary to the legitimacy of infant Baptism and

its compatibility with Holy Scripture.' But in 1943 it was the contention of Karl Barth that since the New Testament looked on Baptism as the sacrament of faith, the Church should not baptize human beings incapable of faith. J. Duplacy, whose essay is one of the most important Catholic contributions to the debate, presents the facts as follows. 'It is possible that the early Church baptized some adults without making any very detailed enquiries into their personal faith, when chance or social circumstances meant that they shared in some collective entry into Christianity. As far as children are concerned it is very probable, if not certain, that the early Church baptized them all, and if it did not . . . baptize them all, it was . . . because it considered their salvation to be ensured by the simple fact of their having Christian parents.' In the light of these facts Professor Baillie points out that 'it is not infant Baptism but the postponement to adult life of the Baptism of those who are born of Christian parents that seems to be inconsistent with New Testament thought'.

Agreement on the facts of history and the meaning of biblical passages, however, is one thing: agreement on their theological significance is another. Dr Baillie spends several pages trying to answer the question, 'What difference does Baptism make to the child incapable of faith?' After talking about the advantages of growing up in a Christian atmosphere and the place of children in the Church the best he can suggest is that God's saving power working through the sacrament produces faith in the infant in a way analogous to that in which a mother teaches her new-born baby to love by fondling it. He is silent both about original sin and an objective sanctification independent of the child's personal response. One of the best chapters in Fr Neunheuser's book describes how St Augustine was led from an early position, not so very different

from that of Dr Baillie, to work out a theology of original sin and elaborate the notion of the *forma sacramenti*, the effect of God which is independent of the personal response, a living source of strength and grace. But Dr Baillie rejects this theological development, which St Augustine began, by which 'grace came to be conceived in a much more mechanical way as a mysterious substance or force that could be injected (infused) into the soul through the sacraments, enabling man to achieve what by nature he could not achieve'. It is scarcely possible that he has taken the trouble to follow out the course of this development and study the arguments by which Augustine and the great scholastics after him refine the ideas of grace, faith and the causality of the sacraments precisely by honestly facing the problem for which he can find no solution.

Nevertheless, technical terms and nice distinctions become a debased currency on the lips of those who have never taken seriously the problems they were invented to solve. It is unfortunate that, in spite of all his efforts, the idea of grace which most readers will derive from Father Piault's book is so close to what Dr Baillie ridicules, and that the sacramental system presented looks so like what he caricatures: 'the Church with its sacraments becomes a kind of supernatural installation constructed by God for the purpose of transmitting to all future time the grace that came into the world with the incarnation. Such a theory forgets that grace is not a transmissible substance but a living personal relationship'. Father Duplacy does much greater service by giving us an objective study of the concepts of grace, faith and sacrament as they appear in the New Testament. As he points out, 'the return to scripture examined attentively and humbly in common can do much to help our return to unity in faith'. We shall never be able to dispense with precise concepts of the type that the great theo-

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logians have worked out, but it seems certain that until the faith of ordinary Catholics is conceived and expressed in biblical terms rather

than in an ill-understood residue of abstract theology, no union will be possible.

Paulinus Milner, O.P.

THE DYNAMIC ELEMENT IN THE CHURCH, by Karl Rahner; Herder/Burns and Oates, 18s.

The present ferment in the Church springs, in the end, from the tension between two complementary – if at times conflicting – attitudes of mind. On the one hand are those who see the Church as a more or less complete structure, the lines of which were laid down in the early decades of her history, subsequent elaborations being little more than the addition of decorative elements, in the shape of new doctrines defined, new devotions developed, new laws laid down. Over against these stand those who think of the life of the Church as a continuing growth, an ever-richer fulfilment of her members through a deeper understanding of Christ's unfolding revelation.

In this book – the latest in the series of *Quaestiones Disputatae* – Fr Rahner has collected three articles which have already appeared as separate units, though bearing directly on one common theme. In the first of these – 'Principles and Prescriptions' – he wrestles with the difficult problem of the relationship existing between individual duties in concrete situations and the general principles enunciated by the Church. He is well aware of the danger of developing a 'situation-ethic' but argues that, since the Church cannot possibly, in the nature of things, legislate for every case – 'the Church does not administer all reality' – the individual must make up his own mind about his duty in a very large number of political, social and other practical matters.

Moving on from this position, Fr Rahner next

discusses the 'charismatic element in the Church', reminding us that 'Ultimately only one thing can give unity in the Church on the human level: the love which allows another to be different, even when it does not understand him . . . Patience, tolerance, leaving another to do as he pleases, so long as the error of his action is not established . . . are therefore specifically ecclesiastical virtues, springing from the very nature of the Church'.

Finally, in a chapter on 'The Logic of Concrete Individual Knowledge in Ignatius Loyola', Fr Rahner invokes the teaching of that great Counter-Reformation figure to support his general thesis about the importance and authenticity of the individual's contribution to the Church's growth. He recalls to our notice the undoubted fact that, for all his insistence on the need of absolute loyalty to the teaching of the Church, St Ignatius was not less emphatic about the need to allow the individual full liberty in his personal relations with God.

The relevance of all this to the contemporary debate in the Church is manifest. Whilst we are grateful to the translator for having made this work accessible in English, we may perhaps be allowed to plead that many readers would have been helped by a bolder recasting of the structure of the lengthier sentences. But those who are ready to give close attention to this book will find the reading of it a most rewarding experience.

T. Corbishley, S.J.