

in Exodus 15 can hardly date from the first quarter of the thirteenth century (p. 10), even if we are to accept the extraordinary argumentation for the date of the exodus as 1297, based on a sudden drop in delivery of wine jars to Egyptian Thebes (pp. 136-138—the Hebrews are supposed to form a significant proportion of the royal vintagers and vintners). The second chapter—the Patriarchal background of Israel's faith—contains a wealth of documentation which helps greatly to fill out the picture of those enigmatic people the Habiru-'Apiru-Hebrews before their sojourn in Egypt. One might have expected an acknowledgement of de Vaux's major contribution in this field (RB 1946, 1948, 1949, 1965) more generous than the fleeting reference in a footnote (p. 78). The third chapter, on Canaanite religion in the Bronze Age, in fact confines itself rather disappointingly to a discussion, most valuable of the various pantheons of Syria-Palestine. Here the author has his own erudite and authoritative contribution to make, but it is a pity that he refuses to fill out the picture by launching 'a frail boat of conjecture upon the treacherous seas of mythological plots and religious observance' (p. 131). The fourth chapter is similarly fragmentary (The struggle

between Yahweh and the gods of Canaan). It contains some very interesting work on the dietary and hygienic rules of the Pentateuch (pp. 152-158), showing how they incorporate proto-scientific observations on causes of disease. There is also some interesting documentation on the survival in the vocabulary of biblical Hebrew of the 'débris of a past religious culture' (p. 161) now shorn of any religious content. But here a fuller discussion of the struggle on the level of religious practice would have been welcome, and on the gradual degradation of the pagan pantheon into subservient spirits, especially e.g. in Psalms 82-89 (one sentence on p. 167). The relevance of the final chapter (Religious cultures of Israel and Phoenicia in periodic tension) to Israel is less than it is to Phoenicia; but there is a good treatment of Molok-sacrifice (pp. 203-211), and some fascinating hints on Phoenician influences on Israelite wisdom literature (pp. 227-228).

On the whole this is a scholar's book, full of points of great value, the conclusions of the researches of a lifetime. It will serve as an invaluable quarry for future students of the subject.

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THE CHURCH, by Hans Küng. *Burns & Oates, London, 1967. 515 pp. 84s.*

Here is an understanding of the Church which might well establish itself as a statement of the ecumenical consensus.

Surveying New Testament studies, Dr Küng achieves his aim of a 'short and systematic investigation of the beginnings of the Church, supported by the sound opinions of representative exegetes' (p. 77). It would be hard if names were omitted to know which citations were from Protestants and which from Catholics, unless guided by words of Roman Catholic coinage like 'salvific'!

The one Church, local and universal, is seen in pilgrimage through the interim period of the last days; it is not the Church but the consummated reign of God which is the goal of creation. Yet the Church is not a compromise solution to the problem raised by a non-fulfilment of Christian hopes; the Church is the herald of the Kingdom.

The crucial question is whether the Church shows itself to be the community of the Spirit. When, for all its faults, the Church does manifest the signs of the Spirit, this is not cause for pride or exclusiveness. The free Spirit of God 'can pass through all walls, even church

walls' (p. 176). The awareness of the Spirit's freedom must restrain all hasty judgement of others, Christians or non-Christians, and lead to a fresh awareness of the charismatic gifts which may appear in any member of the Church (the largest number of Scripture references in the book is from I Corinthians). The active presence of Christ in the Spirit is the ground of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper. The name 'the Lord's Supper' emphasizes that recognition of the active presence of the Lord is primary and the theological description of how it happens secondary. The truth that the Church is the body of Christ must not obscure the Church's encounter with the Lord. Christ has not 'abdicated in favour of a Church which has taken his place' (p. 239).

The dimensions of the Church, one, holy, Catholic and apostolic are presented in an eirenic and positive way. The fundamental schisms, East and West, Catholic and Protestant, 'can no longer be categorized by the concepts Church and heresy' (p. 276); 'to claim to be the whole . . . is to be guilty in a different way of perpetuating the division in

the Church' (p. 283), though Dr Küng has to admit that this claim is not unambiguously laid aside by Vatican II.

Catholicity is here expounded in terms of being one with the entire people of God. It is historically, not dogmatically, that Dr Küng speaks of a mother and daughter relationship between the Roman Catholic Church and others. Yet it is by no means clear that the Churches of the East are even in this sense daughters. Is not the Church of the West for them an errant and hitherto arrogant sister?

Those of other Churches will rejoice in the exposition of the Church's holiness as a setting apart for God's service and of its apostolicity as the following by the whole Church of the faith and confession of the apostles.

So Dr Küng comes to 'the source of infection' (his own phrase on p. 311) in ecumenical relations, the understanding of the external constitution of this one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, and of ecclesiastical office in it. Some very useful 'disinfecting' is done by a study of the New Testament conception of the high priesthood of Christ and the consequent priesthood of all believers, with an insistence on 'ministry' as the right descriptive word for all ecclesiastical office. It is the glorified Lord who creates and sustains pastoral ministries. The awareness of this action of the Lord makes it possible for Catholics to open up questions about the action of the Spirit in ordinations outside the chain of laying on of hands.

If such questions can be raised, what of the papacy? Fully aware of the exegetical and historical problems, Dr Küng urges that a Petrine primacy is at least not contrary to Scripture and that if it can be seen as a real service, a real ministry to the Church, then the historical problems become secondary. The popes of Vatican II show by 'an evangelical renunciation of spiritual power' (p. 472) a return to a primacy of service. This can be furthered under the principle of 'subsidiarity', namely that things which smaller and lower

bodies and authorities can do should not be taken over by higher bodies. This principle might even pave the way for a renewed fellowship with national Churches enjoying an autonomous order but recognizing a pastoral primacy of the Petrine ministry as the supreme court of appeal.

From all this there emerges the fact, the exciting fact, that there really is an ecumenical consensus on the Church, a consensus which Catholic readers may be assured underlies the various schemes of union now under discussion, and which Protestant readers should note is 'free from doctrinal or moral error' according to the *Nihil obstat* and *Imprimatur*. The consensus is strongest in the account of the Church's origins, most under strain is discussion of the Petrine ministry; yet even there a way forward can be glimpsed.

But when all has been so finely and constructively said, a Protestant reviewer is left with two major problems. The first can be put in words of Karl Barth about Dr Küng's earlier book, *Justification*—'the problem is whether what you have presented here really represents the teaching of your Church' and in particular the teaching accepted by conservatives and reformers together in the *De Ecclesia* of Vatican II. There is, for instance, no reference to the Mariology of Chapter VIII in the *De Ecclesia* and the index of this book does not mention the Virgin Mary at all.

Secondly, there is the assertion in the Epilogue that the new situation of the Church as it has to live in a secular world, though it challenges theology as a whole, 'does not primarily concern ecclesiology' (p. 483). Dr Küng bids the Church do everything 'with windows open to the street' (p. 487)—but the question the world is asking is why we are inside the building at all. This is a book, a fine book, for Christians; we must hope for another which addresses the *oekumene* in its widest sense, 'the whole inhabited earth'.

MARTIN H. CRESSEY

NEWMAN ON JUSTIFICATION, by Thomas L. Sheridan, S.J. *Alba House, New York, 1967*. 265 pp. 52s. 6d.

This book is the result of the author's doctoral studies at the Institut Catholique in Paris and research on Newman in the archives of the Oratory at Birmingham between 1962 and 1965. In it, Fr Sheridan gives us what he describes as a 'theological biography' of Newman which roughly spans the years 1816 to 1838 when Newman published his *Lectures*

on Justification. These years are of great importance for an understanding of Newman since they cover his conversion to Evangelicalism under the influence of men like Walter Mayers and Thomas Scott and his development from that position to a state of mind which, apart from *Tract 90*, is best represented by the *Lectures on Justification*. This was the period not