

point to the kind of Erastianism that had flourished on the English mainland less than a century before. His victim for this occasion was William Warburton (1698-1779) who in 1759 became Bishop of Gloucester. He must have been an easy target: the entry about him in the *Oxford Companion to English Literature* ends with the round statement that 'He was a bad scholar, a literary bully, and a man of untrustworthy character'.

Not only Pusey and Newman himself but also Wilson and Warburton make their entrances and exits in this marvellously meticulous and altogether necessary study by Peter Benedict Nockles.

Dr Nockles lets the reader know early that he is a Catholic and always has been. It is all the more remarkable therefore that he should have found so interesting, and devoted so many years to the study of, the seemingly innumerable divines whose words, whether in print or in letters, reveal the beliefs and practices of the several principal and numerous subdivisions in the 18th and 19th century Church of England and even in the Episcopal Church in Scotland. It would take a Sykes or a Chadwick brother or an E.R. Norman or a C.H. Sisson to write a review of this work, which all members of (for instance) the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission will need read, if they have not done so already.

The writer of these remarks, one of those ordinary readers, whom many a publisher tries to woo, became a Catholic early in 1955, on the 65th anniversary of his baptism. During the past two years he has read those beautiful Twelve Lectures and the *Development* and other works of Newman. At just the right moment, Peter Nockles' work was literally put into his hands by the Dominicans. It confirmed him in his recent great change and it often amused him. Also, it corroborated what Newman said, in various ways, in those Twelve Lectures, most notably in the ninth, where he points to the misguided or misplaced use by Anglicans, and by Protestants generally, of personal opinion: 'Nothing is so irritating to others as my own private judgement'. Page after page of Dr Nockles' encyclopaedic study allows the reader to see the terrible consequences that follow when Christian pastors regard even the most central matters of faith and sacrament as being perpetually an object of discussion and contention.

M.R. RICHARDS

Book Notes

Daniel W. Hardy belongs to a generation of theologians who did not have to publish revised doctoral theses and the like in order to secure their first academic post. On the contrary, it is only now that he has retired as Director of the Center of Theological Inquiry at Princeton that he has brought out his first book, *God's Ways with the World: Thinking and Practising Christian Faith* (T&T Clark, 1996, £24.95, pp. 421), surely the theological bargain of the decade, a rich collection of papers written mostly in the last ten years (only one dates back to the 1970s). The fruit of worship, teaching and reflection, over twenty years at Birmingham and four at the University of Durham, this is systematic theology of an uncommonly demanding quality. Moreover, these essays have not been

much edited because that would have encroached on the 'further work' which the author now proposes to undertake 'in many of these fields' (p.2). *Ad multos annos!*

The essays are grouped in four sections. The first group deals with worship, the Resurrection, and the Trinity; the second with the doctrine of creation in relation to theological anthropology, Christology, cosmology and eschatology; the third with ecclesiology and public issues; and the fourth with the practice of theology. The book concludes with a baker's dozen homilies. If that seems a fairly conventional agenda for a volume of systematic theology, Hardy's insistence on 'following the truth and vitality of Christian faith by tracing the ways of God with the world' — in 'the exploration of the vitalities of present-day life and thought' — generates an idiosyncratic, disconcertingly *sui generis* style of writing that, again and again, places the traditional topics in a provocatively strange light.

One standard way of getting into a theologian's mind is through looking up what he has to say about his predecessors. Indeed, one way of writing systematic theology, perhaps the commonest, is by interweaving paraphrase and critique of previous texts. One begins by reading the end notes. Dan Hardy takes it for granted that nobody can do theology without being able to recall the disputes involving Athanasius and Augustine, or to identify the characteristics of Calvin, Luther, Schleiermacher or Barth (page 272, his examples). But his own work deliberately moves beyond the reliance on past thinkers which settles in advance, often without our seeing it, the questions and the patterns of thought that we develop. Quite unlike the books of other theologians, then, it is hard to find a single page in Hardy's book where he expounds or wrestles with any canonical or fashionable text. He never mentions any patristic, medieval or Reformation text in a way that seriously affects his argument. Thomas Aquinas, for example, is quoted only once, or, rather, a remark by Richard Sorabji to the effect that Aquinas, no more than Aristotle, ever overcame Platonic suspicions of materiality — the Hebrew tradition has a far more satisfactory understanding of bodiliness and history (page 245). Twice Hardy quotes a remark which (he thinks, surely not incontestably) means that, for Hans Urs von Balthasar, God has withdrawn from the 'theo-drama' leaving us to get on with it (pages 48 and 372). He refers to Schleiermacher more often than to any other standard theologian, to Coleridge just as often, but twice as often again to a handful (two hands full, actually) of wonderful poems by Micheal O' Siadhail, and this time, unmistakably, some of the phrases — 'fierce vigil of contingency, love's congruence', 'lattice of memory and meaning', and others — actually advance the argument.

There are many incidental surprises. We are assured that the Celtic Christianity which 'was nearly lost under the weight of law-based Christianity, and the formalistic theology and practice that goes with it', is 'very much alive, not least in Durham Cathedral' (pp. 36-7)! Even if Don Cupitt, Maurice Wiles and John Hick are fairly taken as 'characteristic examples of current English theology' (in 1984), do T.F. Torrance and Donald MacKinnon fit comfortably into a paragraph on 'major English theologians' who have been 'pressed back into the domain of what is

most personal'? — something that seems to Hardy 'a peculiarly significant move for a race as reserved as the English', accounting for 'the strangely opaque character of much English theological writing' (page 284)! Unpacking the contentious assumptions in such remarks would take us well beyond theology.

Arguably, 'opaque' would be the term to characterize Hardy's own writing — but only because it is so innovative. In some ways the best introduction to his book is *Essentials of Christian Community: Essays for Daniel W. Hardy* edited by David F. Ford and Dennis L. Stamps (T&T Clark, 1996, pp. 370), particularly his 50-page response. Opting for a post at Birmingham in 1965, after 'years of research in the use of language in theology in the wasteland left in Oxford by positivistic influences', rather than returning home to the United States, he found himself having to develop a course in post-Enlightenment theology which was simultaneously his response, in practical terms, to the question of the place of theology, and of Christianity at all, in a secular university. He seeks a way between the practice of non-confessional religious studies that has taken over in many university theology departments and confessional theology as installed in the ancient universities. The latter (Anglican or otherwise) tends to have 'a past-oriented attitude to theological truth' (page 6). It becomes 'repetitive'; it inclines to regard 'the intellectual habits of the past' as 'normative' — which means that 'faith is discussed and affirmed in ways that are marginal to modern life'. Seeking to keep questions of truth more central than they often are in religious studies programmes, on the other hand, Hardy wants to open theology to new possibilities, to collaboration with and learning from all the other educational practices that are formative for human society — 'yet find[ing] the nature of the dynamism of the Triune God operative in them for the salvation of humanity' (page 355). At one level, the issue is how to bring the Book of Nature and the Book of Scripture together in the knowing of God (page 348). 'There is no way of prescribing in advance how this may occur ... As yet, we are only at the brink of this task ... But it is clear that it will integrate inquiry into the divine life in relation to worldly being and events, and thus integrate theological with other forms of inquiry, *unfolding* the former into the latter and *enfolding* the latter into the former'. At another level, Hardy reconceives the orthodox Christian faith in God as Trinity in radically non-traditional language.

The divine life is that of God as Trinity, as in traditional Christianity, but, as regards God in himself, as Hardy wants to put it, 'his own unity is that of a dynamic consistency of his self-structuring in self-sameness'. In other words, there is 'an energetic (Spirit-driven) unity in the Godhead which is yet true to its own initial conditions (what we designate by the word 'Father') and ordered in its interactions (that which we call 'the Son' or the 'Logos')'. The reconstitution of the doctrine of God in the earliest centuries of Christianity as a result of the new relationship to God through Jesus Christ in the power of the Spirit needs to be continued, in particular, as Stephen Pickard insists in his essay in *Essentials*, in the direction of 'questions to do with the dynamics of belief that is self-consciously trinitarian in form' (page 64). Congruent with this emphasis, Jeremy Begbie offers an essay on John Tavener's music and its

theologically motivated attempt to 'stifle goal-orientation', while Stanley Hauerwas outlines a course in Christian ethics shaped round worship. Picking up Diogenes Allen's essay, Hardy returns to the need to 'develop possibilities for incorporating into theology forms of inquiry which follow the dynamic of worship of God' (page 349). Liturgical worship of God as Trinity has to enable believing Christians to place everything 'within the dynamic whereby we reach toward the future of humanity with God'.

All of the essays in *Essentials* would repay careful attention, whether on Scripture (James D.G. Dunn, Dennis L. Stamps, Robert Morgan), or church (Hugh McLeod, Richard H. Roberts, Peter Sedgwick, Brian Russell) or theological education (Frances Young, John M. Hull, Diogenes Allen, Colin Gunton). Together with *God's Ways with the World*, they bring to the attention of a wider readership the originality and depth of a major theologian from whom much more is to be expected.

The specifically Christian conception of God as Trinity is expounded much more traditionally by T.F. Torrance. In *Trinitarian Perspectives: Toward Doctrinal Agreement* (T&T Clark, 1994, pp. 149) he argues that the 'revolutionary implications' of the doctrine have been lost from sight: 'people have worked for so long in the West with a notion of God who is somehow detached from this world, exalted inaccessibly above it, remote from our creaturely cries and prayers'. The trouble lies, allegedly, with the traditional separation of the doctrine of the one God from the doctrine of the Triune God. In our own day, however, above all in the work of Karl Barth and Karl Rahner, this 'radically schizoid approach' has finally been challenged, opening the way to retrieval of 'the classical Greek patristic understanding of the Triune God grounded in God's incarnate self-revelation and self-impartation to mankind'. In *The Christian Doctrine of God, One Being Three Persons* (T&T Clark, 1996, pp. 260), Professor Torrance offers a magnificent account of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, drawing on the rich patristic documentation assembled in his earlier book *The Trinitarian Faith* (1988), but now advancing a more systematic account of the inter-relatedness of the three Persons and their dynamic communion in the triune divine being. His presentation is, however, as he says, 'open-structured', because he is convinced that 'the truth of the Holy Trinity is more to be adored than expressed'. He again polemicizes against 'the old Western habit', entrenched in Thomas Aquinas and continued in modern Protestant as well as Catholic theology, of splitting the doctrine of the unity of the divine nature from that of the trinity of the divine persons. Though not explicitly ascribed to Thomas, this representation of God as 'a remote, inertial and impassible Deity' is pretty clearly supposed to be found in his work. In Dan Hardy's terminology, of course, T.F. Torrance remains thoroughly 'past-oriented'; by the time he reaches the final pages of this book, however, insisting on the 'evangelical relevance to us in our daily life of faith' of the doctrine of the economic and ontological Holy Trinity, the exposition, for all its familiar scholastic language, breaks into prayer and preaching, as he concludes with the reminder that the liturgy of the Church 'was aboriginally and intrinsically trinitarian'. (Did Thomas Aquinas think otherwise?)

FERGUS KERR OP