

understand and use the Fourth Gospel today. After a brief consideration of Origen's and Augustine's interpretations, Professor Hanson expounds a series of rules for the contemporary church's handling of the Fourth Gospel. First, the church should 'not treat it as a reliable historical record' (p. 364). Second, the church must recognise that the Johannine Christ is Monophysite, by which Professor Hanson means that 'he is a mixture of human and divine in which the divine element predominates' (p. 365). But Professor Hanson thinks that the church can accept the Johannine portrait as long as it sees it as a portrait of the risen Christ rather than of the historical Jesus (p. 367). In spite of highlighting the gospel's Monophysite Christology, and on pp. 370–71 regretting that 'John, it is true, has largely omitted one vital element in the doctrine of Jesus as the image of God, the element of kenosis, of humiliation, of suffering', which interprets the gospel as a denial of the Chalcedonian Definition, Professor Hanson suggests on p. 268 that 'the Chalcedonian formula, which was designed to fit the Johannine Jesus, is no longer our necessary starting point for our doctrine of the incarnation'.

Clearly, the study raises important questions about the nature of the Fourth Gospel and how it is to be understood. Professor Hanson's interpretations develop a long tradition according to which *doxa* means Divine glory and 'Son of God' refers to Jesus' divinity. The study assumes and builds upon these interpretations of the expressions without arguing for them, and these interpretations lead inevitably to the recognition that Johannine christology is Monophysite or Docetist.

MEG DAVIES

ROBERT RUNCIE by Adrian Hastings. *Mowbray* 1991. Pp. xv + 221. £15.95.

In the 1950s a summer school student at Westcott House, Cambridge, was cheered up by the vice-principal, Bob Runcie: 'He thought all priests should have a secular side to them, and that a false or intense piety was an obstacle to real religion. . . He had intelligence, wit and style.' This summing up came from Gary Bennett who had, as Hastings shrewdly notes, 'a sharp clear, irritable mind.'

Thirty years later Bennett's irritation spilled over into *Crockford's* Preface. Hastings leaves us in no doubt that he finds Bennett's judgement sounder in 1957 than in 1987. The idea of Runcie conspiring to appoint liberal bishops did not hurt because it was so demonstrably false.

What really stung was the attack on Runcie's moral character—'nailing his colours to the fence'—and the suggestion that he was no more than an intelligent pragmatic wobbler who invariably followed the line of least resistance. By some divine irony Bennett's last Holy Communion was at the hands of the Archbishop of Canterbury. For Runcie, Bennett's public challenge was insignificant, though the private

grief was intolerable—paralleled only by the loss of his free-lance envoy, Terry Waite, now happily restored. Hastings, a Catholic who took over as theology professor in Leeds when David Jenkins went to Durham, was chosen by Runcie himself for this valedictory sketch. That showed his gifts as a talent-spotter, an essential attribute of a Church leader. (He also had the late John Harriott work on his speeches.) Hastings, from a long line of Anglican clergymen, is not involved in the factionalism that can make the C. of E. such a bore.

It was an excellent choice which almost persuades me that an honest biography of a living person is possible. It was a farewell, not an obituary, as Runcie hung up his mitre after the Thatcher years with which his term of office almost exactly coincided. The lady and the Archbishop had in common that they both came from non-Anglican, lower-middle class families, and both won scholarships to Oxford.

But there the resemblances ended, for Runcie unlike the lady readily absorbed the Oxbridge spirit, 'infinitely confident, enthusiastic, critical, amused,' and Hastings lays great stress on his skill as a mimic. It was not that he lacked convictions, merely that he remained always aware of 'the agnostic don lower down the table.' Hence Runcie's caution about grand theological schemes. A favourite Runcie quote is from T.S. Eliot who was 'continent in affirmation.'

Runcie's life slots easily into decades: Cambridge in the 1950s; Principal of Cuddesdon throughout the turbulent 1960s; Bishop of St Alban's in the 1970s. He was ready for Canterbury, thinks Hastings, because he had already shown himself a leader, not of a faction or a cause, but as someone who could create and run a happy ship.

And so to Canterbury. Hastings' main interest is in how the office of Archbishop changed in the 1980s. Runcie was the first Archbishop to be genuinely chosen by the Church. So he rightly saw the office in terms of ministry to the Church and the world. In his time the job-description had to be re-invented, and priorities re-established.

Runcie restored importance to the diocese of Canterbury. Eighteenth century bishops barely went near the place. Just as the Pope owes all his grander titles to the fact that he is Bishop of Rome, so Runcie's international role as President of the Anglican Communion depended on his historic link with the see of Canterbury. Of course, in practice he had to entrust the day-to-day administration of the diocese to the Bishop of Dover.

But he did everything he could to reinforce the symbolic role of Canterbury. The 'Lambeth' Conference of 1988, like that of 1978, was held at Canterbury. Runcie would ideally like the Synod to hold a second annual residential session at Canterbury. In 1982 he welcomed Pope John Paul to Canterbury.

This shift of emphasis from Lambeth to Canterbury matters on two levels—downwards and upwards. It says the Church of England wants to stress the pastoral and spiritual side of its of ministry. The good minister, said Runcie, is someone who can convey 'a sense of being involved in a

serious and costly endeavour' and who does this essentially by 'harnessing, directing and consecrating our natural gifts.' That results in a different sort of 'spirituality' from that of the arm-waving charismatics or intense evangelicals.

But it is also through Canterbury that Runcie entered upon the international ecumenical scene. As Archbishop he presided over the twenty-seven provinces of Anglican Communion. His duties now involve extensive travel. He is not an Anglican 'Pope', but according to Hastings 'secretly believes a Canterbury patriarchate is needed.' When he walked side by side with the Pope up the aisle of Canterbury Cathedral, it was hard not to see them as two brother patriarchs representing sister churches. This does not mean that Runcie neglected the 'traditional' role of the Archbishop of Canterbury as leader of the national Church uttering on the moral and political issues of the day. But as a pastoral bishop and an ecumenical leader he sat more lightly to the Establishment than his predecessors. Politically he was natural SDP material. His 'left-wing' reputation sprang from his concern to speak on behalf of 'the vulnerable, the inarticulate, those who are weak in bargaining power.' Typically he marshalled the bishops and led them in the House of Lords on the 1981 Nationality Bill, and he will be flaying the ambiguities of the 'Asylum' bill today.

This approach to ministry explains *Faith in the City*. We now know that the cabinet minister who rubbished it as 'pure Marxist theology' was an invention of Bernard Ingham. Most of its recommendations were addressed to the Church, and the government was exhorted to action on worthy causes such as job creation, child benefit and housing.

Faith in the City illustrates Runcie's characteristic style. He recognised a neglected problem at a time when royal commissions were out of favour. He ensured that it was tackled in a professional way. And he saw to it that it was followed up within his own area of responsibility. This clarity about means and ends suggests that something remained of Major Runcie's military training. His first ever visit to Canterbury Cathedral was on the eve of D-Day when he heard William Temple preach. It was appropriate that Runcie's last words as Archbishop should be about how to fight hard without hating the enemy.

The Washington Post presented Runcie's appointment to Canterbury thus: 'Easy moving, over six feet tall, husky, pig-keeping war veteran gets top job.' It was as accurate as any newspaper report can be expected to be. But he could still be described in the same way as he relinquished the top job at 70. Most Catholic bishops are considered in their prime at the age Anglican bishops are obliged to retire. If we operated the same rule, Pope John Paul would have retired to the Carmelite monastery of Wadowice in 1990. Would that have been good for the Church? God knows.

Roman rumour says Pope John Paul has considered resignation at 75, when diocesan bishops are supposed to tender their resignation to him. Paul VI felt this dilemma acutely: the bishop of Rome is the only

bishop in the Church who can stay in office beyond that age. It would be interesting to have the views of Robert Runcie and George Carey on this question. As Runcie said in his Heenan lecture after seeing the Pope, there are no longer problems 'internal' to one particular church. If one hurts, we are all hurt.

PETER HEBBLETHWAITE

THE WORD AND THE CHRIST: AN ESSAY IN ANALYTIC CHRISTOLOGY, by Richard Sturch, Oxford: *Clarendon Press*, 1991. pp. 291. £35.00.

Richard Sturch, rector of Islip, offers in this volume a spirited defence and, for the most part, a well argued analysis of the traditional understanding of the Incarnation: that the eternal Son of God came to exist as a man. He specifies that his work is analytic rather than proclamatory or revisionist. Whereas proclamatory Christologies 'seek to move forward' from some starting point and to search out new truths based upon their accepted data, and whereas revisionist Christologies argue that the traditional perception of the Incarnation must be abandoned and a new understanding set in place, analytic Christologies, patterned after the Fathers, accept some basic data of faith and then seek 'to work out what sort of states of affairs must hold, what propositions about Jesus Himself, about God, and about the human race must be true, if their "basis" is to make sense. They are setting out to analyse the implications of their own starting-points' (p. 2). Sturch accepts as his starting point the classical understanding of the Incarnation as defined by Chalcedon and received within the Christian tradition. However, is such an understanding tenable? To answer this question Sturch divides his presentation into three sections. Sturch, in successive chapters, first presents a rousing account of all the arguments against an incarnationalist Christology. So convincing is his presentation that at times the reader may wonder whether Sturch himself is in agreement.

This gives credit to his objectivity and thoroughness. The arguments are summarised as follows. The traditional view of the Incarnation is obsolescent and logically incoherent. It gives rise to insoluble and irrational theological conundrums. Moreover, it is ultimately impossible and lacks solid biblical evidence. Such arguments are found in Wiles, Kung, Cupitt, Hick, and a host of other revisionists.

In the third part of his study Sturch retraces his steps and presents some very telling and even devastating evidence against such revisionist views. Sturch is adamant that arguments which assert that a traditional understanding of the Incarnation is incompatible with the secular scientific mind (Bultmann), is parochial and elitist in light of other religions (Hick), and is onerous for contemporary men and women to believe (Wiles) do not bear upon its truth or falsity. To Sturch's mind, if