

from anyone else. They were largely middle class, in all probability, with little interest in overthrowing the state or in very drastic reformation of society.

My major regret is that Dr Grant makes only occasional passing references to the more world-renouncing versions of Christianity and, in particular, to encratism. There is, after all, reason to believe that in some places, at least, encratite tendencies were widespread; and they evidently represent something far more radically opposed to the existing social order than most of the material used by Dr Grant. Think of the Acts of Thomas, for example.

It is unfortunate that a book on early Christianity and society should contain no discussion of celibacy. In spite of the natural modern instinct to approach celibacy from the point of view of sexuality and psychology, it is actually more helpful to see it, in at least some of its manifestations, as being primarily due to a view of the socio-economic implications of the gospel. People embraced celibacy in order to avoid getting imprisoned in the social and economic responsibilities inherent in marriage, so that they would be unimpeded in their service of God. Their renunciation of marriage goes hand in hand with their repudiation of property. And I should want to argue that this constitutes at least part of the context for their repudiation of work, too. Dr Grant does touch on this; but he does not do justice to the people who were not happy with the Pauline "no work, no food". It was not an invention of the Messalians to suggest that there could be a kind of service of the Lord which

made any other kind of work inappropriate. St Paul himself knows of this as part of the current theory of apostolate. The itinerant preachers mentioned in the Didache seem to be an early evidence of a way of life which later comes into focus more sharply and controversially in monasticism, especially in Syria, and in Messalianism. (It re-appears in the medieval controversy over the Mendicants and within Waldensianism). The anti-work position of some gnostics probably needs to be taken more seriously than Dr Grant does as evidence of something to be found in early Christianity as a whole. It belongs with the anti-property attitude found, for instance, in the Gospel of Thomas, where it is expounded in terms closely akin to those used in the Shepherd of Hermas.

If this side of the picture had been brought in, Dr Grant's account would look less like a Christian bourgeois manifesto. And that would, I think, make much more telling his rejection of the revolutionary reading of primitive Christianity which is current in some circles. There was, in my opinion, a revolutionary kind of Christianity, even if not really of a kind to appeal to modern revolutionaries; if it had prevailed, it would have resulted in a serious disruption of society. Monasticism did in fact, on occasion, prove riotous and disruptive. But by and large, as Dr Grant shows us, the church does seem to have settled down fairly comfortably in the existing social and political order.

SIMON TUGWELL O. P.

THE PEOPLE'S POPE by James Oram. *Bay Books, Sydney and London, 1979 pp. 224 £2.95.*

This is the fourth pope-book that has fallen into my hands, and there will be many more. Some outstanding quality must be present if a book is not to be jostled aside in the great publishing scramble. James Oram has clearly worked hard. He has a good selection of photographs, some interesting letters written from France in 1948, the penetrating remarks of a Polish writer on Wojtyla's poetry, and the fullest account so far of the wartime activities of the Rhapsodic Theatre. Those are the new features. Otherwise the outline of the story is the now familiar tramp through those brilliant

schooldays in Wadowice, work in the stone quarry and the Solvay chemical works, ordination and philosophical studies and a portrait of a friendly, hard-working pastor who knew his people and stood up to the communists.

There is hardly any attempt at assessment or interpretation, no suggestions on how his 'Polishness' affects his thinking or whether his studies or phenomenology have marked him and how. It is very much a journalist's book, written on the principle that any reporter worth his salt can get up a topic at speed and cover the gaps in his knowledge with stylistic devices. To

say that Cardinal Wojtyla went 'into the crucible of the conclave' is striking but meaningless. Krakow is described as 'the heartbeat of dissent', a good phrase, but we need some evidence for it. I like 'his ski-strong arms'. There is a constant reliance on what 'an official' or 'a close friend' or 'an experienced Vatican observer' are reputed to have said.

These shadowy figures provide most of what could be called interpretation. One of them remarked that 'there is a spirit of vitality, of youthful energy blowing through the centuries-old apostolic palace'. Most of the evidence for this judgment consists of anecdotes, welcome enough in their way, about 'the battle of wits with tradition-bound Vatican officials'. These starched shirts don't like the pope touch-

ing people and tossing small boys up in the air. But this is hardly *aggiornamento*. The serious question concerns the ends to which this unaccustomed energy—and the pope's undoubted popularity with crowds—will be put. On this theme the book is disappointing. True, the manuscript seems to have been delivered at about Christmas time—there is no mention of Puebla or of the encyclical *Redemptor Hominis*, and Cardinal Villot is still alive and well. If we are to trust 'one observer', the outlook is grim: 'Let there be no mistake, his whole past shows that he will be prepared to swing those Keys of Peter to devastating effect should he deem it necessary'. Prepare to duck.

PETER HEBBLETHWAITE

CATHOLIC EDUCATION: THE UNOBTRUSIVE PARTNER by Michael Hornsby-Smith, *Sheed & Ward*, London 1978. pp. 150 £7.50

Dr Hornsby-Smith offers his book, as he tells us in the preface, for two different audiences. He hopes it will be of interest to students who are studying the sociology of education, and to those people who are interested in Catholic education; parents, teachers, priests etc. As someone who is not a sociologist, I fit into the latter group. I find the first part of the book rather limited but in fairness to the author he admits its limitations. This first section deals with various aspects of Catholic education such as the growth of Catholic education during the post-war years. He goes on to deal with arguments for and against Catholic schools, the attitudes of Catholic adolescents to religion, surveyed in a few Catholic and State schools in the South of England (this is the part I find particularly limited), he then goes on to view Higher Education and the Catholic systems in Australia and the United States.

From here onwards I find the book particularly interesting (p. 111). Here the author is concerned with education as a continuing process. He looks at "... the different needs of Catholics at the various stages in their life-cycles" (p. 113). The great need for adult education is stressed and though there is a great need, up to the present little has been done in this field. In places where the problem is being tackled it can be costly and so limited to a few. To help cope with this problem the author rightly points out, "It is important

to consider the contribution which Catholic teachers can play in areas outside the school and for adult age groups as well as their contribution within Catholic Schools for school children" (p. 113). Surely adult Catholic education could be carried out at parish level by teachers so that the gospel can be preached to the poor.

Dr Hornsby-Smith continues to raise many more important points too numerous to deal with here because of lack of space. But I would like to mention one of them. It is a problem the author of the book has been concerned with for many years; the non-attendance at Mass of young people. He believes that it is "an area of major importance where research needs to be undertaken" (p. 120). He tells us that half of the children who attend Catholic schools cease to go to Mass and that we do not know why this happens. I think we do know one short sharp answer: they find it boring. It does not make any sense in their lives. As far as they are concerned 'it is a repeat of the same old stuff' to quote one teenager, and this reflects the attitude of most. The question which needs to be raised here is about the content of religious education and not only in the classroom but in every place where Catholic education takes place. Christianity is about freedom, the freedom to become a mature person in Christ. It is not about being a heteronomous person and sadly the Church has left and seems con-