

topics of the nature of the papal monarch, and the relation of bishops, cardinals and council to him.

The main lines of the late medieval political thought, as they emerge from his research, are the struggle between the hierocratic view, or fully-developed and therefore extreme papalism allowing no limit to the virtually divine power of the pope, and the radical lay view, which gave political power to the community, able to order itself according to its natural needs and aims. Frequently this conflict was 'fought out . . . within the mind of one and the same author' (ix). In between the theocentric and the humanist stands a third phenomenon, the Thomist; who seeks to 'reconcile' them, maintaining the papal omnicompetence, to be limited however by the natural rights of the secular state, and monarchical government, to be balanced however by reason as expressed in the community and its communal organs. As Dr Wilks observes, the Thomist was trying to incorporate the diversity of political actuality into political theory; and, as he rightly deduces, this meant a rejection of single-principled political theory. Political Thomism, he claims, through its attempt to operate the principles of faith and reason on the same problem, involved 'intellectual schizophrenia' (528); it was a dubious half-way house between medieval God-centred hierocracy and modern man-centred rationalism; and it produced an 'Age of Confusion' (ix). However, the superior wisdom of a unitary approach to politics seems to be assumed rather than proved.

Among the many merits of this book, one may single out two. He succeeds in showing how complete was the notion of sovereignty in the fourteenth century writers on the papacy, and how little subsequent theorists needed but to transpose it into secular terms. Secondly, he achieves illuminating connexions between philosophy-theology and political thought. An example of this is the parallel between philosophical realism and the hierocratic conception of the Christian society as something more than its members (which gave a basis for papal absolutism), and the corresponding threat offered by Ockham's nominalism which opened the way for an individualist and voluntarist view of society. Generally speaking, the subjects dealt with are so various and so admirably knitted together that one may compare Dr Wilks' work with the *Summa* of Augustinus Triumphus, which formed the starting-point for it.

ANTONY BLACK

REGALIAN RIGHT IN MEDIEVAL ENGLAND, by Margaret Howell; The Athlone Press; 42s. od.

THE NORMAN MONASTERIES AND THEIR ENGLISH POSSESSIONS, by Donald Matthew; Oxford University Press; 27s. 6d.

The Angevin monarchs and their successors have been the subjects of several recent studies. Margaret Howell and Donald Matthew have here added to our knowledge of their attempts to augment their income at the expense of the Church. 'Regalian Right' was the Crown's claim to appropriate the revenues,

or part of them, of a vacant bishopric and to present to those ecclesiastical benefices which were, *sede plena*, the gift of the Bishop. Miss Howell's book can be divided into two parts. The first three chapters trace the growth of the 'right' and are the least satisfying. Lack of evidence makes her conclusions tentative. But there is a wealth of material for the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, and it is used well to describe the administration of the vacant bishoprics and the resulting profit for the Crown. These later chapters not only shed new light on the techniques of government employed and the men used to carry them out, but show at close range the King's often successful attempts to define spiritualia and temporalia to his own advantage. The book contains useful appendices, although it is a pity that the author did not include a full bibliography.

Donald Matthew has made a worthwhile study of the possessions of the Norman monasteries in England. He argues that the majority of gifts to them after the conquest were never intended as foundations for conventual priories, but were simply a means of enriching the monasteries 'back home'. He shows that between 1204 and the mid-fifteenth century, it was in the Crown's interest to keep these properties in the hands of those who were now its enemies, so that they could then be fully exploited. It was only when the Crown became weak that an avaricious laity was able to appropriate them.

J. RILEY-SMITH

A SENSE OF REALITY, by Graham Greene; The Bodley Head; 15s.

When Mr Graham Greene published his last volume of short stories, *Twenty One Stories* in 1954, he described it as a by-product of his activities as a novelist. Though the present volume is much more ambitious in scope the general description still holds true. At first sight, this must seem unlikely. Three out of the four stories, for instance, explore a vein of fantasy which we don't usually associate with Mr Greene's work and also all the stories give the impression of having been carefully worked over, of being given an independent artistic life of their own, which is hardly done justice to if we think of them in terms of by-products. Nevertheless, as the following notes try to suggest, three of the four stories, for all their self-contained air, are really footnotes to Mr Greene's major work.

The first story 'Under the Garden' is by far the most ambitious, occupying half the volume, and presumably, accounting for the title of the book as a whole. Though it offers a dominant impression of fantasy, it would be more accurate to think of this in terms of Mr Greene giving a free rein to an element which has always been present in his fiction, ever since he started writing over thirty years ago. I mean the use of the dream or nightmare, particularly as this is associated with recalling the past innocence of childhood. At the centre of the tale we have that familiar Greene figure, an ageing man, slightly bored, sceptical