

Hampden was consecrated Bishop in 1848. On his death, after 20 years as a diocesan Bishop we are told that his obituary in the *Church Times* read that he 'did only one thing after his promotion . . . he remembered the Apostolic saying that the man who fails to provide for his own household is worse than an infidel, and consequently he bestowed the best living in his diocese on a gentleman unknown save as his son'.

Palmer makes no claim to produce a textbook. He has, however, given us a splendidly digestible trip through the appointment of bishops during one of the most interesting periods of our Church's history. The reader is left gratified that generally so much trouble was taken to ensure the appointment of the best candidate. It was said of Asquith that no branch of the premiership interested him more than episcopal appointments. The author leaves his subject with a tantalising taste of the Thatcher years. No doubt that Prime Minister's appointments will interest the historian in years to come.

Lo Castro, Gaetano: Les Prélatures Personelles Aperçus Juridiques
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A review by Hughie Jones

To review for an English journal the French translation of an Italian original, should argue for the importance of the work reviewed. It cannot in truth be asserted that this book will have a wide appeal to Anglican ELJ readers, though its subject was, of course, made more familiar by the early moves of former bishop Graham Leonard towards Rome.

Some eleven canons of the 1983 Revised Roman Catholic Code refer to the concept of personal prelature, while a short essay by Thomas H. Green in the *Coriden*, Green, Heinschel text and commentary (pp. 240-242) surveys the field.

It was Vatican II which opened the possibility of a structure for non-territorial groupings, primarily of clergy, but with room for laity, responsible to a prelate for their organisation and administration, always in obedience to the Holy See and in consultation with affected bishops. The device was intended to express the ability of Rome to add new structures to its hierarchical organisation for the better serving of peculiar needs.

Professor Lo Castro, a distinguished Italian jurist and canonist, brings to this study both his twenty-five years of expertise and a typically Continental approach. An introductory chapter on methodology is followed by one on norms and conciliar directives, while the remaining chapters attempt a theoretical reconstruction, freed from earlier criticisms and a final survey of residual problems. The roles – sometimes conflicting – of clergy and laity in accepting new institutions are freely and frankly discussed; for example, the difficulty of accepting that a *coetus fidelium* can constitute a prelature.

A good read for polyglots wishing to increase their familiarity with the thought forms and procedural intricacies attaching to new institutions within the Church of Rome.