

Here, he writes a little hurriedly, making some odd slips in remarks about Augustine, Bunyan, and Newman, but, in another book, he might usefully, and more cheerfully, elucidate those moments when Augustine obeyed a 'Tolle. lege', when Bunyan started from a dream of a man with a book in his hand, and when Newman, refusing to take the Bible as 'a magazine of texts on behalf of our own opinions', accepted that he must change often. Dr Carroll might write, too, of the analytic Aquinas discerning each patriarchal narrative to be revealing a human turn towards the unchanging God, of the revisionist Handel reading the male, militarist, tribal, story of Jephtha as the divine offer of a virgin sign of grace, and, if he still require an example of what we ordinary folk mean by our talk of 'biblical christianity', he might reconsider the works of Jowett, that most interesting of all nineteenth-century theologians, and meditate upon his arrangements for the Long Vacation Term at Balliol: 'like the first Christians we take all our meals in common and in hall. It is very pleasant and sociable, and a novelty in Oxford'.

HAMISH F.G.SWANSTON

THE EARTH BENEATH—A CRITICAL GUIDE TO GREEN THEOLOGY
edited by Ian Ball, Margaret Goodall, Clare Palmer and John Reader.
SPCK, 1992. pp.216 £15

ETHICS AND THE ENVIRONMENT edited by CGW Taylor. *Corpus Christi College, Oxford* 1992. pp. 97. £5.

Both of these books are the product of the rich humus of conference talk. The first is an expanded collection from Ripon College, Cuddesdon, the second a home produced desk top publication from Corpus Christi College, Oxford.

The Earth Beneath claims to be a critical guide to green theology but, as the introduction presages, 'Beneath the surface (of the environment debate) is a question about the identity of humanity itself. What are we meant to be and become? Where does humanity fit into the total picture of creation?' As a result most of the articles are of a sociological nature, with one or two interesting ideas, borrowed from Habermas or psychotherapy and allied to the usual assaults on the consumerist and industrial mentality.

What theology there is in the book is rightly critical of Matthew Fox ('Why he fails to change the world'), insufficiently critical of Teilhard de Chardin and persuasively critical of stewardship, which is likened to management (although without mention of Genesis 1:26). However the seemingly inevitable self questioning which pervades this book and maybe the Anglican church, means that we are left hanging without a doctrine of God at all—and the worry that like Matthew Fox we are all entertainers.

This book is a superb example of the modern (Reformed) attempts to rediscover traditional Christianity in the name of radicalism: there are

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chapters on pilgrimage, community drama and art and symbolism. As a whole the book convinced me that much of the necessary work on green 'theology' will in fact be in the realm of political ethics and jurisprudence and of a more substantial nature than is offered.

Ethics and the Environment on the other hand raises more questions but almost entirely fails to deliver any answers. An impressive battery of the great and the good in a variety of disciplines seems to have produced a collective akrasia which may be the very problem besetting governments and corporations who are indeed represented here. The opening essay, a typically impressive contextual historical survey by Sir Keith Thomas, states that 'many of the key issues are not so much technical as political and ethical'. Neither the chairman of British Nuclear Fuels nor Professor Hodgson seem to have heard him; John Haldane's comment to 'festina lente' may be sensible but it is quite insubstantial. The politicians are ably represented by Brian Gould on a (presumably futile) pre-election platform; the civil servants by a thoughtful F.A. Osborn who wants more from the philosophers than they give him. At times there are occasional lapses into fiction, scientific or otherwise: can it really be true that one good reason for nuclear power is that it will outlast the sun (p 82) or that crime might admit of a technical solution (p 58)? Professor Hare, who has in fact written some of the most sensible things on the environment by any interested philosopher (few and far between), here does nothing to illuminate the question of our desiring which is clearly one of the major questions thrown up by the book *en passant*. There is an important discussion of interests by Bernard Williams and Robin Attfield, but again more needs to be said, particularly about the conflict of interests. The book avoids religion like the plague. Pollution is in fact religious in origin: Leviticus is crucial for understanding our concerns for the environment, as indeed original sin is for our failed attempts to preserve it.

Intergenerational justice, the nature of human desire (which Marxism stifled to its cost), the questions of market economics and ecology raised by Sir Leo Pliatzky and F.A. Osborn, 'green faith': all these deserve more time. As a whole the book reflected aspects of current debate rather than contributing much to it. Although it is nicely produced and sold at a bargain price, I probably learnt more from the humus on our allotment.

HUGH WALTERS

FROM NEWMAN TO CONGAR: THE IDEA OF DOCTRINAL DEVELOPMENT FROM THE VICTORIANS TO THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL by Aidan Nichols OP, *T&T Clark*, Edinburgh, 1990, 290 pp.

The theme of the development of Christian doctrine lies at the intersection of a number of key theological issues: the relationship between faith and history; the question of the cultural relativism of theological expression; the nature of revelation and its expression in doctrinal formulation; the