

Mr Denholm-Young's book is an austere and specialist narrative which very properly owes nothing to the artifices of the popular biographer. It is not easy reading but when the reader has forced his way to the conclusion he has the certainty, as distinct from the feeling, that he really has got to grips with his subject.

Two criticisms must be made, neither of which touches the main contents of the book. Appendix Five, on the Holy Blood of Hailes needs to be rewritten. As it stands, an unwary reader might be pardoned for supposing that the author equates the cult of this relic with the worship paid to the Blessed Sacrament, and that St. Thomas's office for the feast of Corpus Christi was in some way connected with the relic at Hailes. Such a relic, granting its authenticity, could not theologically be accorded the worship due to the Blessed Sacrament (vide St. Thomas. *Summa Theologica*, III. 54. 2 ad 3). The commonly received account is, if I remember rightly, that the relic was one of many which were brought to Germany after the sack of Constantinople in 1204, and that it is probably to be identified with the relic of the Holy Blood which had long been preserved in Santa Sophia. A suitably magnificent gift for a princely magnate, it was acquired by Richard and Edmund for their great foundations at Hailes and Ashridge.

Mr Denholm-Young should also allow his readers the support of adequate genealogical tables. It is impossible for anyone, unless he is a specialist, to carry in his head all the ramifications of kinship on which a proper appreciation of the situation so frequently depends. The reader should be allowed a full table of the Marshalls and Bigods, and another of the descendants of John and Isabella. He might even be similarly indulged over the less intricate relations of the houses of Provence and Savoy.

The book, it should be added, is pleasantly printed. There is an admirable map, and the illustrations are first-rate. The lovely photograph of Corfe Castle provides the frontispiece and Richard's fine coat of arms which faces page 10 is very suitably repeated on the dust cover.

T. CHARLES EDWARDS.

THE ANGLICAN TRADITION IN THE LIFE OF ENGLAND. By A. P. T. Williams, Bishop of Durham. (S.C.M.; 6s.)

Despite its small compass this book gives an excellent summary of the internal history of the Church of England. It is smoothly written, easy to follow and, despite its conciseness, full of useful information. It hardly succeeds in fulfilling the promise of its title, for the cultural influence of Anglicanism has been very great in a country poor in cultural forms and to trace this influence would be an immense task, and though of absorbing interest, one which a busy diocesan bishop could hardly undertake. Dr Williams is frank about some of the difficulties inherent in the structure of the Church of England, but his remarks on the Report of the Doctrinal Com-

mission which published its conclusions in 1938 are scarcely ingenuous. It is distressing to find the phrase 'a rich variety of method and interpretation' used again to describe the Commission's declarations. A body is not spiritually 'rich' which holds contrary opinions on fundamental doctrines. This is not riches; it is destitution. It is like labelling the constitution of Bulgaria 'democratic'. None the less, the book is an impressive record of many fine lives devoted to the service of Christ and of a body which has had to struggle with unparalleled difficulties.

PAUL U. FOSTER, O.P.

EPISCOPI VAGANTES AND THE ANGLICAN CHURCH. By Henry R. T. Brandreth. (S.P.C.K.; 6s. 6d.)

The *Episcopi Vagantes* treated of in this book are a curious by-product of the Anglo-Catholic Movement. They may be defined as bishops who have obtained, or claim to have obtained, valid ordination and consecration from a historic Church whose apostolic succession is not open to question, and who have proceeded to confer episcopal and priestly orders on others. These are either Anglican clergymen doubtful of the validity of their own orders or at least anxious to have orders which are universally recognised as valid, or persons, some sincere but unbalanced, some psychopathic and some just rogues, engaged in founding reunion movements or new sects for the propagation of their own peculiar versions of religion; some of these latter orthodox but fantastic in their pretensions, others wildly heretical.

What will astonish the reader, hitherto unaware of the existence of such things, is the number of these *episcopi* and the variety and extent of their activities. In this book, those who are interested in such things will find a most thoroughly documented enquiry which must have involved much research. It has been prepared by the Rev. H. R. T. Brandreth for the use of the coming Lambeth Conference, which no doubt will have to deal with various problems connected with these strange activities.

The author in his first chapter discusses the theological question of validity and regularity and how Western theologians differ from Eastern in their view of the relation between them. To what extent Anglican clergymen have sought for reordination at the hands of these *Episcopi vagantes* is most obscure. The practice dates back to the Order of Corporate Reunion of which Dr F. G. Lee was one of the founders in the latter half of the last century. The activities of that organisation and subsequent revivals of it on similar lines have always been wrapped in mystery. It does not seem likely, however, that their influence ever extended very far or that Anglican clergymen in any great numbers received ordination in this way. The book is chiefly interesting to Catholics as affording material for study in the psychology of religious megalomania.

HENRY ST. JOHN, O.P.