

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *The Baptist Quarterly* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_bq\\_01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bq_01.php)

## Reviews

*The Revolution of the Saints*, by Michael Walzer. London. Widenfeld & Nicolson. 1966. Pp. xii, 332. 45s.

This book is a stimulating, attractively-written and valuable contribution to the history and interpretation of English Puritanism 1550-1660. A preliminary chapter on Calvinism argues that whilst Calvin was, personally, extremely cautious his political teaching was potentially highly explosive and provided some major elements of later Puritan radicalism.

Although Dr. Walzer holds that the English Puritan movement, both in its precepts and its practice, was inevitably and inextricably involved in politics he nevertheless limits his treatment to "mainstream" Puritanism and omits the sectaries who, he justly asserts, were not (p. 21) "the crucial innovators in English political history". His central thesis is that the English Revolution (as distinct from the Civil War itself) can *only* be explained (p. 114) "in terms of the impact of the Puritan ministers and their ideology upon the gentry and the new merchant and professional classes". Whilst he has succeeded in showing that this impact played a very considerable part his claim that this in the "only" explanation is to go rather further than his own evidence allows. At one point Dr. Walzer underlines his "argument" with Christopher Hill, stating that whilst the latter treats Puritanism as the social religion of the "industrious sort" he (Walzer) treats it as the political religion (p. 326) "of intellectuals (ministers) and gentlemen". Yet it seems, to the present reviewer, that the two emphases are complementary rather than mutually exclusive. Indeed, it is probable that Dr. Walzer would have little difficulty in recognizing this were he to give more attention to the sectaries as one major consequence of mainstream preaching.

Whether, however, time and further research confirm Dr. Walzer's major insights or not there can be no doubt that this book, and a number of others like it, are required reading for anyone who seeks to understand the meaning of Puritanism and its importance in providing a setting for Baptist history. Indeed the time is long past when an attempt to tell a denominational story without regard to the wider backcloth of 17th century history invites anything but ridicule. In fact, to the cardboard of sectarian history must be added the additional dimensions provided by the political, social and economic historians. We do no honour to our forefathers by turning a blind eye to nine-tenths of the situation in which they had to work out their obedience to God.

In short, this is a book which, in its awareness of modern historical debate and for the contribution which it makes to that debate, ought to be on the shelf of any student of the period. Meanwhile perhaps many readers of the BAPTIST QUARTERLY will sympathise with Dr. Walzer's wry comment after a brief review of the calendar of Richard Baxter's pastoral activities at Kidderminster that "Puritanism, like Oscar Wilde's socialism, *took too many evenings*". It is evidently not only "status anxiety" which is still with us, but also overfull church programmes.

B. R. WHITE

*The Victorian Church, Part 1.* Owen Chadwick. London. Adam and Charles Black. 1966. Pp. x + 606. 63s.

*Religious Controversies of the Nineteenth Century: Selected Documents.* (Ed.) A. O. J. Cockshut. London. Methuen. 1966. Pp. 265. 35s.

Dr. Chadwick has already published specialist contributions on the Victorian era but this new work is on a larger canvas altogether. Moreover, its scope and importance are in every sense matched by the quality of the scholarship and the lively interest of the presentation. There is therefore no doubt that when the present work is completed (there is another volume to come) it will constitute a great standard treatment of the period. It will, of course, supply the need of those who seek a text-book on this era, yet it is so much more than that. The publishers have given the author space to use the detail at his command and the result is that men and movements come alive in a manner which makes the whole thing fascinating. So far as this reviewer is concerned, volume two cannot come out too soon, and unless the publishers have someone with similar gifts to take the story on into the 20th century, it is to be hoped that Dr. Chadwick gets that to do as well.

The present book takes us from 1829 to 1859 and the titles of the first and last chapters are some indication of the upheavals of the period. Chapter 1 on "The Church in Danger" begins with the Roman Catholic emancipation act, passed largely through fear of civil war in Ireland if Roman Catholic claims were refused. Chapter 8 on the "Unsettling of Faith" looks at the intellectual challenge of the time, with sections devoted to "neology" and the questions raised by natural science (perhaps deliberately omitting Darwin's *Origin of Species*, 1859, for attention in the next volume?); it also surveys attempts at restatement by such as Maurice and Jowett.

Some of the matters discussed affected all Christian communions and all will certainly find things to reflect upon in the chapter on

"Religion and the Labourer" which includes, *inter alia*, a valuable analysis of the famous 1851 census. Nevertheless, the greater part of the book is devoted to influences, from within and without, which were at work on the Anglican church and which were going to transform almost every aspect of its life, political, administrative, spiritual, pastoral and theological. Those who know Dr. Chadwick's *Mind of the Oxford Movement* will not be surprised at the excellence of the chapter on that subject. But nothing brings home more forcibly the revolution through which the Church of England has passed during the last 150 years than those sections which show how closely its life was interwoven with, and dependent upon, politics and politicians. The death of three bishops in the spring of 1836 called forth the comment, "How fortunate the ministers are to have such a mortality of bishops at such a crisis", a reference to the fact that Melbourne could now add three more Whigs to the Lords!

The story of "papal aggression", the re-establishment of a Roman Catholic hierarchy in this country is ably disentangled, disclosing once again that wide differences of policy within the Roman citadel are not a novelty of the 1960s. There were also disagreements on how to use limited resources to meet the rapidly growing pastoral responsibilities, and tensions in integrating the three very unlike elements in the re-emergent Roman church of the 19th century, the old Catholic families, the Irish immigrants, and the new English converts.

Dr. Chadwick devotes a fair-sized chapter to Nonconformists but, of course, this has to be shared out among them and the result, though still containing some fine insights and shrewd comparisons (one, for example, between Keble and Spurgeon), is rather patchy. Perhaps the author had not quite made up his mind whether to deal with the non-Anglican communions in their own right, or chiefly in their relations with the Church of England. For the former he needed much more room than he has had even in this generously proportioned volume. There are occasional errors, though not serious ones, and omissions which, though inevitable, result in a degree of imbalance.

An even greater concentration on Anglican thought falsifies the hopes created by the title of A. O. J. Cockshut's collection of source materials, *Religious Controversies of the Nineteenth Century*. It is not the balanced and comprehensive selection which one might have hoped for. Not only does it turn almost exclusively to Anglican sources, it gives main emphasis to documents connected with the problems raised for the church by science and biblical criticism. Some of the items were obvious choices (e.g. Colenso's *Preface to the "Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua Critically Examined"*) but one would have thought that Jowett's contribution

to *Essays and Reviews* was more worthy of citation than that of either C. W. Goodwin or R. Williams. But such points being made, this is still a useful collection of source materials so far as it goes. It does, however, need supplementing.

G. W. RUSLING

*Theological Investigations. Vol. V.* Karl Rahner. London. Darton, Longmann and Todd. 1966. Pp. 512. 55s.

Hans Küng may have caught the imagination of the English-speaking world. But on the continent, when eyes turn to Roman Catholic theological scholarship, it is names like Rahner and Schillebeeck that are likely to be conjured with. It is accordingly a matter of profound thanksgiving that, of recent years, the work of translation has been going on at speed. In 1961 there appeared the first volume of Karl Rahner's *Theological Investigations*. Volume II quickly followed. The third and fourth volumes will shortly be available. Meanwhile, here is volume V.

What we are offered is a collection of theological essays, a corpus of occasional dogmatic reflections. Some attempt has been made to order the material under the general headings of fundamental theology, theology of history, christology, ecclesiology, and the christian life, but anyone who is looking for systematic progression and coherence will surely be disappointed. The final impression is of an alert and probing mind, restless and ranging, yet ever returning to a few dogmatic centres that remain invulnerable and secure.

Rahner is a contemporary thinker. He knows he is living in a new world which sets unprecedented questions for theology, and that the answers cannot simply be culled from the text-books of the past. He has one eye on non-Roman christianity and the other on the non-christian world. He has opened himself to the impact of both, and grapples with the strains and tensions so produced with a sensitivity which reveals the full measure of his discernment. Yet he never forsakes his tried dogmatic base, and he deploys so formidable a philosophical and theological equipment that massive concentration and peak mental stamina are required for keeping pace with him.

To review adequately in brief space is an impossible task. The most that can be done is to refer specifically to a few of the essays, and to offer some quotations from him that may be of special interest. In dealing with non-christian religions he illustrates superbly the importance of proper theological criteria. In an essay about the possibilities of the recent Vatican Council, prepared soon after its announcement, he exemplifies wisdom before the event. Wrestling with the question of conversion and proselytising, he manifests the keenness of his pastoral sensitivity. Confronting

real issues raised for christology by modern understanding of man and the world, he displays to magnificent effect the precision and yet flexibility of Roman dogmatics. And if anyone is repelled by the title : "Dogmatic Notes on 'Ecclesiological Piety'" let him conquer his aversion. Herein is contained some of the best things in this book.

As for quotations—let us venture the following. "... the Church is not the communion of those who possess God's grace as opposed to those who lack it, but is the communion of those who can explicitly confess what they *and* the others hope to be." (p. 134) "... who has any clear experience of the difference between the Church and the looked for, yearned for, prayed for Kingdom, awaited with almost despairing patience, this kingdom of God which the Church simply does not yet constitute but for which she is the beginning, the genuine promise, the sacrament and not the clearly manifested reality itself?" (p. 338) "In Christ God not only gives the *possibility* of salvation, which in that case would still have to be effected by man himself, but the actual salvation itself, however much this includes also the right decision of human freedom which is itself a gift from God." (p. 124). To extract sentences from context is always dangerous. But these are things that Baptists ought to hear, and may be surprised to hear from such a quarter.

N. CLARK

*Friends of Humanity.* L. H. Doncaster. Dr. Williams's Trust. 1965. Pp. 35. 5s.

This is the 19th lecture of the Friends of Dr. Williams's Library. It highlights the interest which Quakers had in social concerns in the early 19th century, as exemplified in the life of William Allen. Slavery, poverty, education and penal reform are the main features in the survey, but of greatest interest is Allen himself. Monographs of this kind do a useful service in personalising developments that we are prone to call simply "movements". Behind the great reforms lie agony and compassion such as is here revealed. For such men and for memorials of this kind we are grateful.

DOUGLAS C. SPARKES