

when he published them were scripts put away for good. But in this series, as Fr Caraman remarks (p. vi), there is a remarkable 'uniqueness' about each sermon: every sermon is 'unlike any other in construction and content', and the centenary 'doublet' is included as an interesting exception.

But Fr Caraman also calls attention to another quality (p. vi): 'Frequently his hearers must have been surprised by the precise knowledge he showed of the history of the parish or countryside, of topographical features of the district or of the lives of the priests who had served the church in which he was preaching. His knowledge is always accurate and always has a bearing on his argument . . . In all cases of centenary or jubilee sermons he worked local history into the larger canvas of the story of the Church in England; and in that story he showed the development of God's Providence'.

Lastly one feels an astonishment at the way this man was at the beck and call of so many: a Cardinal's funeral or a bishop's enthronement—or a simple priest's ordination or a nun's profession; it might be a gathering of the British Association—or a local S.V.P.; to honour Westminster Cathedral or a provincial parish church; to societies aiding converts or prisoners; to university audiences or schoolboys.

But after all the preacher is the servant of the people, be they country parishioners of Ars or distinguished audiences gathered for the 'special sermon', and both these preachers served their people well, without counting the cost to themselves.

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH O.P.

THE GENERAL COUNCILS OF THE CHURCH, by F. Dvornik; Burns and Oates, 8s. 6d. A Faith and Fact Book.

THE CHURCH IN CRISIS, by Philip Hughes; Burns and Oates, 35s.

THE CHURCH IN COUNCIL, by E. I. Watkin; Darton, Longman and Todd, 18s. 6d. (paperback edition, 6s.).

The approaching General Council has naturally attracted a number of books designed to inform Catholics and anyone else who may be interested something about the previous Councils, what they did, and why they took place. The field is led by three well-known Catholic writers: doubtless there will be others to come.

Fr Dvornik's book has, naturally, a special authority. Its author is one of the most learned of all Church historians, and in his particular field of Byzantine studies, perhaps the greatest living authority. Since the forthcoming Council is intended to be, amongst other things, an aid to the reconciliation of the eastern churches, we turn to what he has to say with expectations which are not disappointed. Fr Dvornik has written his book round the questions of the relations between East and West. He recounts the sad history of the growing divisions, the sorry tale of misunderstanding exaggerated by criminal stupidity, with remarkable lucidity, considering the complexities of the theme. The reader

of this book will have all the essential data to enable him to follow something of this side of the new Council's work. Fr Dvornik makes all sorts of important points in passing. He draws attention to parallels between the relation of a Roman emperor to a Council and his relation to the Senate, which do much to destroy the greatly exaggerated accounts of 'byzantine caesaro-papism' current in many history books—including that by Mr Watkin, of which more in a moment. He also elucidates the mess over the patriarch of Constantinople's designation as 'oecumenical', which he argues convincingly was never intended to detract from the Roman primacy, as many Latins thought.

What there is, then, in Fr Dvornik's book is admirable. But there is not space for much more than the problem of the East and a lot of things get left out. Both Mgr Hughes and Mr Watkin are more comprehensive, even more balanced.

Mgr Hughes has written a clear, stylish history, which will not, however, add much to his reputation. His book lacks, for me, historical imagination. What is more he is much better on the politics behind the Councils than on the theology which came out of them: he also carries discretion too far on occasions. This is very much a history book with 'authority' as its hero. Mgr Hughes knows how the Church is run now and he rather sees her whole history in a similar light. On the tome of Leo he writes: 'It is not, in tone or form, a work of theology at all, but a judgment, a decision, an authoritative statement that "this is the Catholic faith".' Yes, but it is a work of theology, rather a good one, in substance. It seems to me absurd to make this kind of distinction. Nor is Mgr Hughes very happy in the medieval period. He is confused on fealty, homage and investiture; I cannot think a layman will grasp the great issues of the Investiture Contest from what he is given here. Nor are the accounts of Councils of this period—the first and second Lateran Councils—either adequate or accurate. The most important measure the First Lateran fathers dealt with was the decree regularizing papal elections. Mgr Hughes is mistaken in thinking it 'restricted the election to the cardinals'. Nor does the decree say that 'a majority of their votes is essential and sufficient'—the notion of a majority decision is anathema to medievals in any case; in spite of Mgr Hughes the decree does require the emperor's approval and confirmation of a papal election. In his account of the Second Lateran Council, we are told nothing about the canon on reordinations: it is surely important to know that a General Council can err on an important matter of doctrine. Outside the medieval field the book gets better: I must admit that I personally find Mgr Hughes' views on the reformation and the early history of protestantism too hard to swallow.

This leaves us with Mr Watkin's book, which I think the best of the lot. Mr Watkin writes as an amateur in the best sense. Not himself a specialist in Church history, he relies on the work of others but is prodigiously well-read. What is more his affection for the Church informs the whole book. This gives him a splendid sense of relevance—it enables him to get more of what mattered into his book than Mgr Hughes does with more space at his disposal. There are points of disagreement, of course. Mr Watkin overdoes the usual line about

'Byzantine caesaro-papism', and he is inclined to think that the latest thing he has read on a subject is gospel truth. But for the most part the book is careful, accurate and scholarly. Apart from occasional signs of haste when sentences fail to work, the book is admirably written with many felicitous digressions and *personalia*. A conciliar condemnation of the use of the catapult is made the occasion of a few important remarks on the desirability of a condemnation of nuclear weapons: I do not agree with Mr Watkin's conclusions myself but his point on the futility of such condemnations has to be taken seriously. There are nice pen-portraits from time to time, judiciously acidulated accounts of Sylvester I and Urban VI balanced by a positively touching defence of Alexander VI. Altogether Mr Watkin is the man to go for: at six shillings the paperback version of his book is a bargain.

ERIC JOHN

MISSION ET UNITÉ, by M. J. Le Guillou; Editions du Cerf, 2 vols, 27 NF.

These two volumes offer between them something like six hundred pages of text and a hundred pages of notes. The text is a formidable array of information and reflection, while the notes, being largely bibliographical, make a useful guide to further research in the field of ecumenical relations. Much of the raw material, as the notes make plain, is of German provenance, but of course it is assimilated and reformulated in the lambent style of most French theological writing. It is the kind of thing, in fact, which French Dominicans do particularly well, and if Fr Le Guillou never quite achieves the penetration and vigour of such a distinguished *confrère* as Fr Congar, none the less his book is an honourable contribution to the same genre, and to the same cause. Fr Le Guillou works at the *Istina* study-centre, near Paris. It was originally founded, like the review of the same name, to serve the cause of Christian Russia, but its activities are now extended to work for Christian unity throughout the world. It is in the connection between reunion and mission that Fr Le Guillou finds the practical and theoretical centre of all current Christian activity. The first volume is a historical analysis of Protestantism and Orthodoxy, slanted to bring out the very different interpretations of Christian mission to the world which these two great traditions stand for. The second volume continues the analysis into the history of the Church's attitude towards them, and this finally leads to a theory of the Church, an ecclesiology, which is polarized by the concepts of mission and communion. Fr Le Guillou compares it with various non-Catholic ecclesiologies, and concludes that the idea of communion is the best bridgehead for discussion and negotiation in the ecumenical sphere.

Fr Le Guillou writes out of a deep sense of how vulnerable and precarious it is to be a Christian at all—of how isolated and marginal the faith already is, and how much more so it will be soon. The headlong eruption of the retarded nations is entirely reshaping the political and moral structures of the world. It is desperately urgent that Christians should try to pull together. There may be one or two