

examination of three very important Biblical theologians, Dodd, Cullman and Wright, the last of whom is the least well-known but whose insistence on the value of the Old in understanding the New Testament is worth attention. The two final chapters are concerned with the difficulties to be encountered in our 'banaisic civilization' in the face of the poetic language of the Bible, and show that the scriptures are being continually fulfilled, that the biblical history is *our* history. The book is well annotated and indexed.

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OUR LADY AND THE CHURCH, by Hugo Rahner, S.J.; Darton, Longman and Todd, 13s. 6d.

It is difficult to say enough in praise of this glorious book. It is the re-discovery, in and through the Fathers, of devotion to Mary as devotion to the Church, and *vice versa*. The introductory chapter sets the theme: 'Mary essentially a symbol of the Church'. This is not just a new way (or old way) of looking at our Lady, that may happen to appeal. It is *the* way of looking at her. The next chapters, 'Immaculate' and 'Ever Virgin', show us these two Marian doctrines as finding their true significance in what the Church is: she who is redeemed, made immaculate; and she who is the faithful bride, uncorrupted by heresy. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 develop the pattern Mother Mary—Mother Church: Mary, because Mother of Christ, therefore our mother; the Church, because our mother, therefore mother of Christ. Then in 'Growth in Holiness' and 'Mulier Fortis' Fr Rahner outlines a devotion to our Lady relevant to daily living which makes sense. It has nothing to do with that superficial theme of direct, ultimately quite artificial 'imitation' (I remember a devotional book telling me, for an example to me, that 'her blue veil was uncrumpled'; and the story of the Irishwoman, mother of ten, bursting out after a typical Holy Family sermon, 'Her *one!*'). Here, the important text is 'Who is my mother, and who are my brethren?'. We turn from realising that the Church is the mother of Christ as being our mother, to realising that we ourselves are the Church, and hence must be the mother of Christ. But, as St Ambrose says:

Not all have brought to birth, not all are perfect, not all are 'Mary': for even though they have conceived Christ by the Holy Ghost, they have not all brought him to birth. There are those who thrust out the word of God, as it were miscarrying. See to it therefore that you do the will of the Father, so that you may be the mother of Christ.

As Fr Rahner comments, 'When we come to look upon sin after baptism and the threat of the loss of everlasting life in this context of the Marian mystery of the Church, we begin to see the problem of striving after spiritual perfection in a new light'. There is indeed all the difference in the world between an artificial exhortation to be *like* Mary and a real summons to be Mary.

With the ninth chapter, 'The Pledge of the Spirit in our Hearts', we even begin to see devotion to the Immaculate Heart in a new light. Finally, 'The Woman of the Apocalypse' and 'Queen Assumed into Heaven' draw the pattern together in an eschatological setting. Mary, 'being herself a symbol of the Church struggling towards her final glory, has shown the way by having fulfilled in her own body what for the Church is still in promise'.

But to recognise the excellence of this book, and the necessity of re-shaping and re-animating our Marian devotion in the kind of pattern which it presents, does not make everything easy and straightforward. On the contrary, the very fact that we need it so much makes it in some ways difficult. I do not think I would be the only one who finds it hard to pass from similitude and parallel, which are easy to see, to something more like identity, which seems to be required. For instance, it is hard to move from the idea that the Church's preservation of untarnished faith is well expressed by the image of virginity to the necessity for consecrated virgins always to exist in the Church. The whole theme of the parallel between Mary and the Church, the *likeness* between them, leading us to something more, a 'mutual transparency', such that love for one simply is love for the other, leaves one still, to some extent, groping. Nevertheless, hopefully groping. But there are real difficulties. So far, I think, the recovery of the Church as a living reality has been, for ordinary Catholics, entirely in terms of personal relationship to Christ: the voice of authority as the voice of Christ, our fellow-members as Christ, Christ in the sacraments. I think it was fairly easy to see the identification; it was not in terms of type and symbol. To recover the sense of the Church our mother as a Marian mystery is going to be more difficult; but it must be done. One thing that makes it hard is that Marian devotion as it actually exists will not by any means always be help. The one point at which I would definitely wish to argue with Fr Rahner is where, in his opening chapter, after pointing to the liturgical development of re-discovery of the Church on the one hand, and to actual Marian devotion in its current form on the other, he says, 'But there cannot be any contradictions'. I fear there can: some cultivations of feeling have to be eradicated for the sake of a new growth. But it is hard to imagine any more helpful way to start on the necessary work than this book.

CECILY HASTINGS

ROBERT BELLARMINI, Saint and Scholar, by James Brodrick, S.J.; Burns Oates, 35s.

In his Introduction Fr Brodrick amusingly refers to his two-volume work on Cardinal Bellarmine published in 1928 as 'too exuberant for his present taste', adding 'Unless a man is a genius or a fool, what he wrote in his thirties will make him shake his grey head in his seventies'. The happy result of this little