

lution than such cities in the interior of Germany as Nuremberg and Augsburg. Preserved Smith in his highly influential book entitled *The Age of the Reformation* led the way toward misunderstanding when he proclaimed that Erfurt and its university surpassed in size Cologne with its mighty institutions. For too long a time, the majority of German scholars have shown an inclination to minimize the contributions of the Low Countries in favor of those by Italy. That can be seen most clearly in the article published in the *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte* dated 1965 and devoted to *Frömmigkeit* at the end of the Middle Ages. It actually went so far as to state that the book by P. Mestwerdt entitled *Die Anfänge des Erasmus* (1917) still contained the best account of the *Devotio Moderna*! And so the influence of this movement was said to have been exaggerated by all the experts on the Renaissance and the Reformation.

Such is not the case with Strand nor with his learned colleague, William M. Landeen. They both are well aware of the influence exerted upon Luther and Erasmus by the Brethren of the Common Life. The latter, in their house at Cologne, issued in 1434 the first German translation of *The Imitation of Christ*. During the academic year 1397-98 their order was strongly defended by several distinguished professors in the University of Cologne. Consequently, it was perfectly natural for their house in Rostock to publish a German translation of the NT, a performance to which Strand devoted his doctoral dissertation and later published a book entitled *A Reformation Paradox: The Condemned New Testament of the Rostock Brethren of the Common Life* (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1960). Strand's present study is again marked by great acumen and industry. The plates are again most beautiful and illuminating, and his meticulous scholarship once more of the highest order. The present reviewer confidently predicts that before long a much larger edition will appear to meet the increasing demand for such publications.

University of Michigan

ALBERT HYMA

Wiles, Maurice, *The Christian Fathers*. "Knowing Christianity." Philadelphia & New York: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1966. 190 pp. \$ 3.95.

In reviewing an earlier volume in this series (W. H. C. Frend's *The Early Church*), Robert M. Grant has pointed to the difficulty in providing "students of early church history with enough (but not too much) information, clearly organized for assimilation and at the same time pointing beyond itself to encourage further study"; and he has rendered a favorable judgment on that volume (see *CH*, XXXVI [1967], 85). What he has said could well be said also of Wiles' publication, which covers essentially the same time period (to A.D. 451), but treats the doctrinal aspects rather than the general history. It may

be *apropos* to call attention to the fact that these two volumes belong to a series described on the page facing the title-page as having as its purpose "to provide for thinking laymen a solid but non-technical presentation of what the Christian religion is and what it has to say." It would be a mistake, however, to think that the two volumes on the Early Church are useful only for "thinking laymen." Certainly both the student and teacher in the field may find these works profitable.

*The Christian Fathers* has seven chapters, entitled "The Image of God," "The Divine Christ," "The Incarnation," "Sin and Salvation," "The Sacraments," "The Church," and "Ethics." All vital items have been touched, there is a logical sequence, and the style is stimulating. Stylistically there is, in fact, a touch of the dialectical as the basic doctrines are thrown into clear relief in their historical context and in contrast to the alternatives which Christianity rejected.

The attempt to be non-technical may be somewhat overdone. In some cases, for example, one misses the use of terms normally employed to describe certain views: The discussion of monarchianism (pp. 31-33) and of docetism (p. 56) fails to employ these names—names which need not have been omitted inasmuch as they are an integral part of the jargon of early church history and could very properly be added to the vocabulary of the "thinking laymen" for whom the "Knowing Christianity" series is primarily intended.

The competence with which the author handles the views of the Church Fathers themselves is outstanding, but a few of his personal judgments and "editorial comments" will undoubtedly arouse debate. For instance, the value of a statement such as the following may be questioned: "But when the same Augustine externalises and rationalises those insights [certain insights regarding sin and salvation] in terms of an original guilt handed on through the presence of concupiscence in the act of intercourse and of a divine predestination whose justice is hidden in the inscrutable will of God, then we are being offered an account which the Christian conscience can only reject with all the force at its command" (p. 108). The intent here is undoubtedly not that of branding Augustine as lacking Christian conscience; but in effect is not this what is being done to Augustine himself and also to John Calvin and numerous other Christians whose views are in some respects akin to Augustine's? Though on this subject the reviewer's own convictions apparently lie closer to the author's than to Augustine's, he cannot help but protest what appears to him as an unfortunate indictment of the Christian conscience of many sincere Christians. Indeed, in a book of this sort, is the author's comment really in place—is it not superfluous and irrelevant? Fortunately, it is an exception to what we find generally throughout the book, although the author's own viewpoints do shine through frequently enough (and at times quite refreshingly so).

Question may be raised as to whether Wiles' reference to Origen's "thought about the resurrection" (p. 94) and "understanding of the nature of man's eventual resurrection life" (p. 96) employs the most

desirable terminology. As Wiles himself makes clear in his discussion of Origen's view on this subject (p. 94), Origen did not believe in a *resurrection* in the traditional Christian sense. Also, the suggestion that by Augustine's time amillennialism rather than premillennialism had become "the dominant faith of men throughout the known world" (p. 92) is, at best, debatable. After Augustine, of course, the picture becomes precisely that.

Mechanically, the book suffers (in this reviewer's opinion) from its lack of running heads. A few typesetting errors occur, such as "Hw" for "How" on p. 58, line 27, and "Guilts was" for "Guilt was" on p. 98, line 33. Occasionally (but rarely) there are awkward or ambiguous sentences, such as the following: "I Peter 3.20 had likened the flood to baptism and I Corinthians 10.2 the Red Sea" (p. 112).

The book contains an Appendix (pp. 181-185), which lists some 32 personalities of early church history. Brief biographical information concerning these individuals is given. The book also includes a bibliography (pp. 186, 187) and an index (pp. 189, 190). The bibliography is particularly disappointing, even when considering the fact that the book is intended primarily for laymen. A total of only eight titles (books or sets) is listed under five subdivisions: "Biographical," "Doctrinal," "Historical," "Reference," and "Translations." The choices of titles are good, but they are inadequate—and all the more so in light of the fact that throughout the book footnote references to the original sources are lacking. That J. N. D. Kelly's *Early Christian Doctrines* is listed is especially fortunate inasmuch as it is the only entry (!) in the "Doctrinal" section. The only title mentioned under the "Translations" is the "Library of Christian Classics" series, whose first eight volumes are appropriately listed. The reviewer concurs heartily with the statement that this is an "excellent selection well translated" (p. 186). But would it not have been well to include notice also of one or two *more complete* sets of the Fathers? And might not Bettenson's small volume entitled *The Early Christian Fathers* (published by Oxford University Press) have been very appropriately included inasmuch as it is a compilation which especially emphasizes doctrinal items?

A further comment should be made, as well, regarding the lack of footnotes, mentioned above. A wealth of material from the Fathers has been treated throughout this book, but the lack of an adequate tool for locating the specific items in the originals is disappointing (what a task it can become for the non-specialist or beginner—and even for the specialist—to endeavor to locate some specific item in Tertullian or Augustine, or even in Church Fathers whose extant writings are much less extensive!). Perhaps it is for the sake of the general reader that footnotes have been omitted, but in this case a section of notes at the end of the volume would have been a most helpful addition.

In closing, it must be emphasized that in spite of certain deficiencies, this book provides a truly excellent introduction to the teachings of

the Church Fathers. Both "thinking laymen" and beginning students in the field will indeed find it most useful. But even mature students and seasoned scholars can profit by reading it.

Andrews University

KENNETH A. STRAND