

happen and thus turned out to be an erroneous 'motivation' for ethics, one might be tempted to ask how far do certain elements in the Pauline ethics remain valid when their condition is removed. Must their validation be sought elsewhere? or are they self-validating in spite of the eschatological illusion? (But then eschatology can be made to mean pretty well what one wants it to mean.)

The title of this valuable and scholarly contribution to Pauline studies is *Handeln aus Glauben* and is easier to paraphrase than to render succinctly: 'from faith into action'; for that is what this big book is about: namely, the grounding of the Christian ethic according to Paul in the postulates of faith and in the work of redemption as God's dealing with man in history.

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*A Ministry Renewed.* By GORDON E. HARRIS. S.C.M. Press, London, 1968. 9s. 6d.

'MINISTRY' is a confusing word. In English usage it can refer to a concept, a social institution, a body of people, and the personal exercise of an office. As this reviewer knows well, this ambiguity cannot be matched in any other European language. One may therefore legitimately ask, which meaning is predominant in this book?

The primary reference is clear. It is the ministry which Mr Harris himself has been exercising for over twelve years in the Presbyterian Church of England. As the dust-cover has already informed us, he was on the verge of resigning and of seeking other employment, when he suddenly came to see that he was 'required' to remain in the ordained ministry. In spite of the doubts and criticisms which he felt, and still feels, regarding the structure, image and practice of the Church, and of the ordained ministry in particular, he remains within it; as a 'rebel' and a 'radical' indeed—but a rebel 'within the institution', and a radical who 'though aware of and experiencing frustration, is possessed of an assurance which undergirds his attack upon the corruption of the institution'. In the light of Calvary and Easter, frustration and failure lead to acceptance and wholeness. It is this conviction which impels him to write this book, in the hope that others who are similarly placed may be directed to resources whereby their ministry can be renewed as well.

What are these resources? The Gospel of forgiveness?—Certainly. The Spirit, who continues to work through an imperfect Church?—Perhaps, though this is not stressed. An understanding of social change as it affects our society and the Church itself? That too is an important resource. But the one most emphasised is the liberation which comes through an understanding of group dynamics and of

psycho-therapy, as furnished, for instance, by the Clinical Theology movement. Once a minister regards the members of his congregation in the light of this understanding, and can see and interpret, at the same time, his own reactions to them, he can then perform, we are told, his proper 'prophetic' role, which is at the same time the role of a listener, a pastor, and a theologian. While accepting the value of such insights, and the very real part such training has to play in theological education, we may feel that Mr Harris here rather overplays his hand. God has used other means in the past for renewing a man's ministry, and may use other means today. Nor is this the only way by which the ministry as an institution, or as a doctrine, may be renewed.

The author certainly believes that the institution, and the doctrine too, need renewal. This is why, in the first place, he almost left the ministry. He had given up on the institution, and thought the doctrine was wrong—many ministers are in this position throughout the world today. In chapters 5 and 6, he outlines his view. As with others, what struck him was the need for the Church to be more missionary, to escape from the strait-jacket of traditional forms in order to confront modern men with the claims of the Gospel; and the related need to mobilise the whole Church, not to supplement the work of the ministry, but to do that work, with the professionals in the auxiliary role of theological 'resource-persons'. But if this is to happen, the doctrine of the ministry must be renewed as well, for it will be concerned with 'the task of the whole Church as the people of God in the world, and the part to be played by the clergy in the fulfilment of that task'.

How then renew the clergy? The title of chapter 1 is categorical: 'The Minister is a Man'. With Bonhoeffer, Kierkegaard, Daniel Jenkins and Monica Furlong as witnesses, Harris asserts, in Jenkin's phrase, that the vocation of the minister is to be 'a representative man'. He must learn the art of being rather than doing; only so can he set others free to be human themselves. In his view, this 'ministry of liberation' requires a professional expertise in human relations similar to, though distinct from, that of the other helping professions. There is, it seems to me, an inconsistency here. However necessary such an expertise may be in the service of the Church, to define the function of the minister in terms of a professional skill of this kind is to lay the emphasis on doing and not on being, and to introduce the danger of a new clericalism based not on orders, or on theological but on psychological training and on therapeutic skill. If the ministry of the whole Church is to be renewed, then perhaps renewal must start not with 'the ministry' but with ordinary Christians.

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