

The above gigantic account, as already published, stands adjourned for consideration by Mr. Edwards, the official assignee, until the next sitting, fixed to be held before the Senior Commissioner of Bankruptcy, Edwd Holroyd, Esq., in November next.

It is time for a new assessment of the life and work of Peto to be made. To any willing to undertake the task it promises to be absorbing and rewarding.

DOUGLAS C. SPARKES.

Reviews

Augustus to Constantine, Robert M. Grant, Collins, 415 pp. £3.15.

Students of early Church history will certainly welcome the appearance of a new book by Robert M. Grant, who has placed us greatly in his debt by his earlier studies in second century Christianity, Gnosticism, the work of the Apologists, and so on. His new work is a careful study of what he describes as "the thrust of the Christian movement into the Roman world." Professor Grant gives us 400 pages of superbly documented Church history and his work will surely become an important text-book for serious students of this period. His twenty-one chapters lead us through the various crises and opportunities which faced the early Christian people and we are brought to the place where we can see the triumph of the Christian movement in the reign of Constantine.

The author divides his book into five parts. The five chapters which form Part One provide us with a brilliant portrait of the Roman world and here is information of a kind which rarely finds its way into the more popular accounts of early Church history, probably because of the normal limitations on space. It is important, however, for the student of the period to know about Roman cities and their social structure, about education, cultural and military life as well as religious ideas. It is obviously necessary to be informed about the relationship between Rome and the Jewish people at this time and this is given careful treatment, so that the reader can understand the Palestinian scene before going on to a survey of Christian origins with special attention to the teaching and impact of Jesus and Paul. The organisation of Christian groups forms a further chapter in which the author outlines the beginnings of the doctrine of the Ministry. Part Two begins by tracing the Church's periods of testing under persecution, after which Professor Grant summarizes the teaching of the Apologists. Two crises in second century Church life, Gnosticism and Montanism, the author believes to be due to the problems raised by

eschatology. The Gnostics in some sense re-interpreted popular apocalyptic eschatology by their highly speculative ethereal escapism. The Montanists sought to heighten the apocalyptic expectation, not by escaping from the world but by anticipating a dramatic divine intervention into it. The book goes on to present the unfolding story with helpful detail and interpretative comment which one will not find in every other text book, helpful as they may be. In Part Three attention is paid to the developments and influence of the various Christian centres, Rome, Africa, Alexandria, Antioch and elsewhere, and the student of the period will be particularly grateful for the penetrating surveys of Christian teaching which emanated from these centres; his treatment of Tertullian as a teacher in his pre-Montanist period and later is but one example of this literary and historical precision.

Part Four deals with the triumph of the Christian movement and concentrates interest on the persecution under Diocletian and the Constantinian settlement. Professor Grant devotes Part Five to what he describes as "the continuity of the Christian movement," a group of helpful chapters on Christian ways of life and moral teaching, credal formulations (in which the author maintains there is "a lessening of the eschatological emphasis") and early Christian worship.

Among other merits, this book is particularly helpful for three important reasons: although it is a study of *Church* history its author knows that the subject must always be studied against the background of changing political pressures and social conditions. Further, it gives excellent coverage to the theological problems of the period and summarizes the leading ideas of the great teachers in the pre-Nicene period. Finally, this book's value is increased beyond measure because of its excellent documentation. The author supports his facts with clear references to his sources and there are over 1,400 references to early Christian writers. Teachers and students will welcome this book. Dare we hope that Professor Grant will eventually take us on to Chalcedon?

RAYMOND BROWN.

New England Dissent, 1630-1833: The Baptists and the Separation of Church and State. By William G. McLoughlin. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts. Two volumes, pp. xxiii, 1324. £17.50.

When John Rippon began *The Baptist Register* over 180 years ago, it was because Baptists had "not been, at all times, sufficiently acquainted with their own history—a history which demonstrates them to have been a body of the worthiest of men, and the best of citizens". Doubtless this book on the efforts of Baptists in New England to achieve religious freedom and full political rights would have drawn high praise from Rippon for both its intention and achievement.

The subject of the separation of church and state is of much more than antiquarian or academic interest in the United States for it is a

matter that continues to evoke widespread controversy. Dr. McLoughlin has critically examined the development of the practical arrangements and rationalisations that accompanied the replacement of a Calvinistic Congregational establishment with a much wider based, but still restrictive, Protestant establishment. The Puritans, who became the Congregationalist establishment, came to New England to create a pietistic-perfectionist society, and the Particular Baptists that developed in its context disagreed not so much on the ideal as upon the actual operation of that society. McLoughlin describes in great detail, not only the way in which Baptists contributed to the doctrine of the separation of church and state, but "the way in which they took advantage of the flexibility and opportunity of the New World experience to make their dissent respectable. In seeking Christian liberty for themselves, they helped (almost in spite of themselves) to expand the concepts of freedom and equality for everyone" (pp. 1281f). Nonetheless, this book finally lays to rest any idea that the separation of church and state as advocated by the early Baptists was related to the Supreme Court's recent interpretations of this ideal, embedded as it is in the Constitution of the United States (written in 1787, it denied the establishment of any religion). Today, for example, it is used to exclude all religious activities from the state school system, protecting the non-believer, whether atheist or Jew, from the discrimination that came from non-participation in morning religious exercises or even Christmas carols around the school's inevitable tree. McLoughlin also convincingly demonstrates that by British standards, New England's Baptists were not even consistent voluntarists. Rather theirs was to be a nation of Calvinistic Protestantism that was not prepared to grant toleration to other Christian varieties. The struggle for the separation of church and state in New England is aptly described by the author as a domestic squabble or intramural quarrel.

In what one might justifiably feel to be an overlong effort, we march along with the Baptists through the great events of the colonial period and the traumatic early years of nationhood until that time in 1833 — two years before a deputation of the Baptist Union arrived to view the apparently brilliant success of the Voluntary Principal in the New World — when New England's Baptists became part of the establishment! They contributed to the mainstream which emerged as an evangelical Protestantism which was to dominate the nation's morality, direct and rationalise the nation's destiny, and preserve its culture, in part through control of its educational system (eventually precipitating the formation of a separate system of Roman Catholic education). New England Baptists, unlike their English Victorian counterparts, set out not to destroy the religious establishment, but to join it, and this they did in part through the vigorous political support of first, Jeffersonian ideas and later, those of Jacksonian democracy.

This is not so much a book (as the author readily admits) as a series of monographic essays on disestablishment in the various New England states, a process largely unaffected by national law as set out by the

Constitution. The price and structure of the book cannot help but deter most from reading it except at libraries and then only in bits and pieces as a reference work. It is well written and meticulously documented and researched. Generally free from errors, it does, however, place Regents Park College back into its London haunts! (p. 1287). It would indeed be welcomed if the next book from this prolific and perceptive historian was to be a national study of the disestablishment theme for the general reader; that is, a reasonably priced single volume.

K. R. M. SHORT.

Decade in Dagenham by Frank Lee, 1972. Obtainable from: Mr. F. Lee, 30 Sycamore Avenue, Upminster, Essex (20p).

It was appropriate that this account of the first ten years of the Dagenham scheme of team ministry should be published at the time when the senior minister, the Rev. J. J. Brown, was being inducted as President of the Baptist Union. The book makes plain how much is owed to Jack Brown's vision and initiative and patient leadership.

The chapter headings are metaphors taken from the setting of Dagenham on the Thames estuary. The first three certainly fit their content — "The Ebbing Tide", "The Turn of the Tide", and "The Flowing Tide". A number of points emerge from these chapters, which Baptist churches in other parts of Britain could study with profit.

The first is the importance of the sociological factor in the situation of any local church or group of churches. Frank Lee, who is treasurer of the Dagenham Advisory Committee, shows clearly the problems of "estate" churches, due to the artificial beginnings of the community by creation from outside rather than by natural growth, the shortage of local leadership and the housing policy which forces young people to move away when they get married, just at the point when they are starting to exercise leadership.

The remedy adopted at Dagenham is surely of relevance elsewhere — such churches cannot be allowed to stand (and fall) by themselves, they need support from the wider fellowship. An Advisory Committee was established, consisting not merely of the ministerial team and of two representatives from each of the three churches (now four), but also of two from the Baptist Union and two from the Essex Baptist Association. The Home Work (now Mission) Fund has made a considerable grant, rising from £646 in 1962 to £1,626 in 1971 (it should be pointed out that contributions from the churches themselves have risen in the same period from £870 to £2,083).

The chief lesson however to be learned from Dagenham is the advantage of team ministry. Each church has had pastoral care from one or other members of the team for the past 10 years, whereas in the preceding decade each of the three original churches had had four changes of leadership. The book describes in detail the discipline of the team — based upon a weekly meeting on Monday morning

consisting of reports, Bible study, discussion of pastoral situations, administration, prayer and future planning. The third chapter shows how the team have been able to lead the churches forward into mission.

The titles of the last two chapters "On the Crest of the Wave" and "Towards High Water Mark?" do not seem quite so appropriate. Certain questions remain in my mind after reading the book.

Four churches have been helped to maintain their witness for another decade. Are they all needed? The map in the centre pages unfortunately has no scale attached to it. A new church was built at Becontree Avenue in 1964 at a cost of £17,500. Chaplin Road and Wood Lane have done extensive renovation work, and we are told that "large scale alterations are now planned" at Oxlow Lane. Yet the total membership of the four churches in 1971 was only 221. Is this the best use of money, time and talents? Are the institutions and structures of the 1930s relevant to the 1970s? It is interesting to read the Guidelines of the "Dagenham Baptist Church" and to see how the four churches are beginning to think of themselves as one fellowship. Yet they still have separate ministers, separate finances and separate officers. Shouldn't this nettle have been grasped more firmly by the end of ten years?

This leads to questions concerning the pattern of team ministry. Does not the continuation of the idea of one minister per church make it harder for the churches to come together more closely? There does not appear to have been much, if any, specialisation amongst members of the team. Instead of a team of four ministers, each in pastoral charge of an average of 55 people, would not a team, say, of a minister, a deaconess, a youth leader and an industrial chaplain be more effective in furthering the mission of the church? The book mentions the difficulty of youth work—few ordained ministers are sufficient experts in this field. Dagenham to the outsider means "Fords". Yet the only mention of this comes in the historical summary at the beginning and the nearest approach to industrial mission appears to be the annual Industrial Sunday.

In a situation like Dagenham can four Baptist churches possibly play the part they should be playing in the mission of the Christian Church today without a far deeper involvement ecumenically? Mention is made of the Council of Churches, but membership of that doesn't necessarily mean much. Dagenham Baptists have an approach to mission which needs to be stressed, but there are other approaches. One of the opportunities of team ministry is to hold together in fruitful tension those with different but complementary attitudes to mission.

J. F. V. NICHOLSON.