

is now a consensus of scholars, it seems, who agree 'that 1 Enoch 37–71 is Jewish, Palestinian and probably predates the burning of Jerusalem in 70' (p. 89). That may indeed be true, though the evidence for it is not provided in this book. The complete text of 1 Enoch is found only in Ethiopic manuscripts of variable worth. The document is not uniform and may be divided into five sections. For sections I and III–V there is Aramaic evidence from the first or second century BCE; for sections I, IV and V there is evidence in Greek, stretching from the New Testament to c. 800 CE. For section V there is Latin evidence from the eighth century CE. For section II, the Parables, there is nothing in Aramaic, Greek, or Latin—nothing till the earliest Ethiopic text in the fifteenth century. Where were the parables all that time, and who can take them very seriously for interpreting the Gospels?

The main part of the book ends with a valuable list of suggestions for future work (p. 91). There are copious notes for the learned, a glossary of terms presumably for students, and a select bibliography.

K. GRAYSTON

HOW TO READ CHURCH HISTORY, FROM THE BEGINNINGS TO THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY, Jean Comby, Vol I, SCM Press 1985. £6.50. Pp. 195.

The *How to Read the* series of SCM is already well known for its *How to Read the Old Testament* and *How to Read the New Testament* (Etienne Charpentier) and *How to Read the World* (C. Montenat, L. Plateaux, P. Roux). To these vast enterprises it has now added *How to Read Church History*, a more modest project, in a translation by John Bowden and Margaret Lydamore from the French of Jean Comby. It provides material for someone wanting to find a way into church history, starting from nothing at all, and is set out for easy reading, with clear type on large pages, with line drawings, maps, charts and other impedimenta of the class room. There are ten chapters of equal length, and a consecutive narrative runs through them, giving an outline of church history with a strong emphasis on the West, interspersed with translations of selected passages from original sources relating to the narrative. There is a brief and general bibliography at the beginning and each section has some further general books to recommend.

Clearly this is not a book for the scholar or the specialist. Nor is it a safe book for the undergraduate preparing for examinations in church history. It presents a broad and enticing view of the history of the Western church, relating it at points to contemporary problems in a brisk and lively way, and its use of original texts gives the reader at least the idea that there *are* texts behind the narrative. The specialist may find something to quarrel with on almost every page, and this is not a book which aims to push forward the frontiers of learning; it is an introduction to a method, and while its details will be faulted it will meet a need.

Criticism of the book as it stands from the point of view of teaching would be that the translation into English could have gone one step further and become fully idiomatic. Also, the bibliographies which have been given for the English reader are restricted to general studies and rarely if ever direct the reader to primary sources in translation. The charts given at the end would be of more use if the miniturized type could have been avoided so that they could be read; since they are followed by seven blank pages, this would seem to have been possible to remedy. Learning could be described as a process of unillusionment; what this book offers is the necessary primary illusion from which to begin.

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