

"In general the presentation lives from the courage for what is fragmentary". (p. 11) But I often found it simply incoherent. I gave up after three chapters. Here is a sentence introducing a new section of a chapter: "The publication dates of theology immediately produce a relationship of tension, in addition to the problems characterised by the catchwords 'ecclesiastical character' and 'scholarly character'." (p. 5) What could that possibly mean?

Sometimes the translation is merely quaint, for example: "Nevertheless, for the theologian complicating conditions are added that generate nervousness about the churchly practice that awaits" (p. 2), or this terrible image of an intellectual Hoover: "The suction towards what is endless,

which belongs to the strength of scholarly methods, and the mass of scholarly over-production, which can never be worked through, should never hinder a person from turning to limited tasks and concentrating on particular things with inner peace and good conscience" (p. 5) One might be forgiven for wondering whether this translation was not an elaborate practical joke. The translator's name, after all, is an anagram of 'i.e. u are bad pen'.

One must conclude that it is sad that many people may spend so much money for such a bad translation of what might actually be an important book. As the text says: "If one includes this fact, then a discomforting impression arises" (p. 8).

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LONGFORD, A BIOGRAPHICAL PORTRAIT by Mary Craig. Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1978. pp. 220 £5.95.

"The nursery-maids at North Aston, local girls of sixteen or so, were supposed to keep the children in order, but in reality were more like older sisters to them all. One in particular, Winnie, was a great favourite of Frank's. When his first daughter came to be born, he wanted to call her Winnie but, as his wife demurred, they called her Antonia instead and bestowed the name Winnie on a new bitch puppy." This tasteless anecdote is typical of the concatenation of trivial rubbish that makes up Mrs Craig's dreadful book. The mind boggles under the weight of it all. Was Winnie the girl or Antonia the bitch? What does it matter? Not really very much except that an untalented and unscrupulous publicity hunter could, by the mere fact of being born into an aristocratic family, play a senior role in the nearest thing to a democratic socialist government that has existed anywhere. He was a 'brilliant' don at Christ Church in spite of a tendency to fall asleep whilst students read their essays to him. In 1939 he joined the Territorial Army in a blaze of publicity, having himself photographed in the *Oxford Mail* offering a fellow private a light. "The fact that he neither smoked nor possessed a lighter was of no consequence." Not at any rate to Mrs Craig. But soon after there was a real war and the territorial private became a second lieutenant in the real army. However he found

the lack of privacy intolerable and training gave him gastric flu', so a friendly medical board invalidated him out and released him for antics with the Home Guard. It does not seem to occur to Mrs Craig, or perhaps Lord Longford, that many men found themselves misfits in the army and put up with it— as did Evelyn Waugh—some even got shot, but only the well-connected got out quite so easily. According to Mrs Craig he expiated his wartime failure by becoming First Lord of the Admiralty in the Attlee government. But publicity rather than politics was his real aim and his growing concern with prison reform—that is securing the premature release of notorious prisoners— was paralleled by his ludicrous antics in his anti-porn campaign. The latter is given much the most space in this biography. He has now given up socialism apparently and devotes his time to forgiving Myra Hindley and whitewashing Richard Nixon. The best comment on his career comes from Richard Ingrams: "His political achievements are minimal, his writings are piffle and his pronouncements on matters of religion and pornography are entirely worthless." There is a book to be written about the deadly snobbery of the English left and its appalling consequences. In that book the careers of Lord Longford, along with those of Richard Crossman, Patrick Gordon-Walker and Bertrand Russell, would serve very well as case-histories.

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