

firm condemnations and the clear apologetic that threw off the attacks of the Lollards: and it is clear . . . that they were ubiquitous as effective preachers to the city folk, and as confessors and directors to those who strove for a more perfect following of Christ.' But the final verdict remains: 'No Englishman arose in the fifteenth century to show his countrymen the truth and the charity of Christ, which alone would have been able to make the dry bones live, or to see himself, and convey to others, the fullness of meaning of the First Commandment'.

HELENA M. CHEW

THE FOUNDATION OF CONCILIAR THEORY. By Brian Tierney. Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought; New Series, Vol. 4. (Cambridge University Press; 27s. 6d.)

The primary purpose of Dr Tierney's study is to trace the origins of conciliar theory on the writings of the canonists between 1140 and 1378. It is a radical criticism of Mgr Martin's conception of Conciliarism as a revolutionary development primarily due to the fact of the great schism and only heralded by Marsilius and Ockham, and of Arquillièrè's theory that the supremacy of the Council over the Pope was first affirmed explicitly by the Franciscan Spirituals in the early fourteenth century. For Dr Tierney Conciliarism is far older and more traditionally orthodox—the logical culmination of ideas embedded in the law and doctrine of the Church itself'. If his conclusions are accepted in entirety they must lead to a radical reassessment of medieval Church history.

No unbiased reader can doubt Dr Tierney's pure scholarship, worthy of his masters Dr Ullman and Dr Kuttner. Perhaps the most valuable section of his book is his sensitive analysis of the teaching of the Dominican John of Paris whose *De Potestate Regia et Papali* is a masterpiece of the new Thomist school. He was a conservatist conciliarist, and Dr Tierney is surely right in suggesting that his treatise is 'a turning point in ecclesiological theory', and in pointing out that his arguments could be more easily assimilated in the schools than those of Marsilius and Ockham since they were based upon generally accepted juristic principles. Besides, his orthodoxy was unquestioned and unquestionable. But his political background might well have been explored more thoroughly in the present volume. It is true that John is a moderate who accepted the resignation of Pope Celestine and wrote against the Colonna cardinals, but he was a Lector of the priory of St Jacques and the French Dominicans were solid in the support of Philip the Fair against Boniface VIII.

Conciliarism and 'Gallicanism' were integral elements in the medieval theory of the constitution of the Church, not fourteenth-

century innovations, but they were never the whole and they are most prominent during any defence of *regnum* against *sacerdotium*. Dr Tierney shows that extreme conciliarist theories are implied by Peter de Vinea as early as 1239 and were derived by him from Decretists under whom he had studied at Bologna. But Peter de Vinea was Chancellor to Frederick II and no attempt is made to divide the Decretists into those of Papalist and Imperialist sympathies: indeed the treatment of the twelfth-century Decretists is the most summary and least satisfactory section of the study. It contains one assertion that any student of twelfth-century theological thought must feel bound to query. He writes on page 45 that for the Decretists the promise of unfailing faith to the Church was not associated with the institution of an unfailing teaching authority; it meant only that the Church would never be totally polluted by heresy. He adds on the following page that the twelfth-century canonists conceived the indefectibility of the Church to consist in an inability of the Church to err simultaneously in all its parts.

It is probable that Dr Tierney has better authorities for these statements than any he gives in his notes, but in view of the common doctrine on the nature and object of faith and the weight given to Patristic teaching, it seems inconceivable that any body of canonists could have denied the indefectible magisterium of the Church and the conception of the *Ecclesia Docens*, however much they might have differed as to the function accorded to the Roman See in both. Of course Dr Tierney is correct in asserting that it was common form to hold that at one time the true faith had been maintained by the Mother of God alone—but that was held to have been before the Resurrection and *a fortiori* before Pentecost. Two quotations from the Palatine gloss seem to express both these points perfectly. '*Ecclesia enim nunquam deficit quia etiam in morte Domini fuit saltem in beata vergine*' (Gloss Pal. ad dist. 20 ante c.1.); then again, '*sed licet papa erraverit non tamen ecclesia romana sive apostolica erraverit quae collatio catholicorum intelligitur*.' (Gloss Pal. ad c.24 q. 1 c.9). Not individual Catholics but the *collatio catholicorum* were held to be immune from error.

But it would be a pity to end this review with a criticism, for Dr Tierney deserves the gratitude of all medievalists for his scholarly and original and very stimulating research.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.

THE WANING OF THE MIDDLE AGES. By J. Huizinga. (Penguin Books, Ltd.; 3s. 6d.)

Here indeed is a refreshing antidote to much romantic nonsense that is talked and written about the later Middle Ages. It will provide many