

order to pass his stringent tests as to what is influenced by Dan. 7, Casey demands more than the occurrence of the phrase "the Son of man". This means that it is really only the "eschatological" sayings that are even in the running – though clearly some of these, at least, do betray the influence of Dan. 7.13, notably the sayings about the future coming of the Son of man. Casey concludes: "Dan. 7 was not an exceptionally important chapter for the early Church, and it was not an important formative influence on the thought of Jesus" (p 202). Inevitably, this leads to the further conclusion that Dan. 7 is not the origin of the use of the phrase "the Son of man" in the gospels.

Granted the criteria which Casey uses, his conclusions are not surprising. In his view, scholars have read Dan. 7 into the Son of man sayings in much the same way as they have read Isa. 53 into the sayings about suffering. Yet there is one significant difference which Casey does not note, and that is the fact that in the former case we have a clear verbal link between Dan. 7.13 and the gospel tradition in the phrase "the Son of man". Finally, however, Casey considers the view that the phrase itself does derive from Dan. 7, and that Jesus then used it "as a self-reference without continually referring to the text with which he began" (p 207). This, too, he rejects, for familiar enough reasons. He concludes that the sayings which do clearly reflect Dan. 7.13 have their *Sitz im Leben* in the early Church, and that we must look elsewhere for the origin of the phrase in the mouth of Jesus.

But where? Casey's answer is an adaptation of Vermes' well-known theory. The original Aramaic phrase means simply "man" in general, but the context makes it plain that the speaker is referring to himself. The nucleus of authentic sayings consists of twelve passages; the rest are later developments.

It is impossible in a review to do justice to Casey's analysis, or to enter into detailed

discussion. We must be content with raising just three questions about his "complete solution".

(i) In analysing Daniel, he insists that the man-like figure is "pure symbol", but in the gospels he refuses to allow that the phrase can be derived from Daniel and still used in a symbolic way: it has become a title, and must be taken literally. Perhaps this is true for the gospel writers – but what of Jesus? Is it not possible that in the pre-literary tradition, the phrase still functioned, not as a title, but as a symbol of the future triumph of God's holy one?

(ii) Casey's "complete solution" still leaves us with a large gap between Jesus and the early Church, who interpreted the phrase as a title. If the meaning of the phrase was so clear in Aramaic, why was it translated as "I"? Did the creation of inappropriate Son of man sayings begin only in the Greek-speaking Church?

(iii) Casey refuses to allow that the phrase "the Son of man" can owe anything to Dan. 7 in the first stage of the gospel tradition. This is strangely inconsistent with his interpretation of I Enoch, where he argues that the phrase "the Son of man", though meaning "man", was chosen deliberately as a reference to Dan. 7; yet none of the Son of man sayings in I Enoch satisfies the criteria which he lays down for deciding which sayings in the gospels can reflect Dan. 7! Can the use of the phrase in I Enoch perhaps supply, after all, the key to the gospel sayings – not, indeed, as the source of the term "the Son of man", but as an example of a parallel-development?

Such questions lead us to wonder whether Casey has indeed produced a "complete solution". Certainly it must be said that he has produced a work of fine scholarship and a persuasive argumentation of his case. For that, everyone who is concerned with the debate about the Son of man will be grateful to him, even though they will all need to rethink their own pet theories, and some may need to revise them.

MORNA D. HOOKER

**CENTRED ON CHRIST. An Introduction to Monastic Profession by A. Roberts.**  
*Still River, 1979.*

This is a guide book for aspirants to monastic life. It grew out of conferences given by the author in his capacity as nov-

ice msater in a Cistercian monastery in South America. It betrays its origins. The subject matter is arranged around the three

traditional vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. The conversion of life and stability required by the Rule of St Benedict, and the spirituality and challenge of the vows are dealt with in other chapters. The style is a novice master's shorthand. Some central points have to be made clearly and often, and tangents avoided. The complexities of monastic life are broken down by headings and numerous sub-divisions to manageable proportions for the beginner. Questions and lively quotations from desert Fathers preserve the reader from distractions. There are some confusing diagrams and lengthy bibliographies to each chapter.

The mood is one of confidence. Although the book was a long time coming from its oral stage, it bears the atmosphere of its time. Some anxieties at the period of the Council have been overcome and there is a feeling of having weathered a storm. Hence the book gives an unruffled presentation of traditional values and practices. No probes or radical suggestions are provided. Perhaps they were felt not to concern the novice at this stage. Instead

there is a faint nostalgia in the fastidious tone adopted in discussing chastity. There are familiar rationalisations in the chapter on poverty. The author's comments are everywhere lucid and sensible, but the general teaching is unremarkable.

There is a curiously impersonal tone which may be explained by the unfortunate passage from spoken word to printed page. But the author appears to have had an interesting life. He was born of American parents in China, underwent a conversion in early manhood and has now become an Argentinian citizen in the Cistercian foundation in Azul. One might have expected some expression of this experience to light up the discussion. There is none. This is particularly a pity in the subject of poverty. There are so many platitudes available, that the reader feels disappointed that an obviously spiritual and perceptive writer living by choice in South America has not something more to say.

AELRD BAKER O.S.B.

**RICH MAN, POOR MAN – AND THE BIBLE** by Conrad Boerma. *SCM* 1979. pp 106. £2.25

**POVERTY AND EXPECTATION IN THE GOSPELS** by David L. Mealand. *SPCK* 1980 pp vi + 136 £3.95.

Both these books are about biblical attitudes to poverty, and both, I think, are written out of a conviction that poverty is still a pressing problem, and that what was written and spoken in biblical times offers certain clues to a sound attitude to that problem. 'Offers certain clues', because both are also aware that the Bible is not simply a textbook on social ethics which can be read and applied to our situation without more ado. "It may not be a simple matter to found a modern social and political theory directly on the gospels, but the New Testament gives no comfort to those who think that religion or morality can turn a blind eye to oppression, injustice or flagrant inequalities." (Mealand p 98). "The Bible does not give us a blueprint. From within their own social situation its authors described how God changed their world, how he took the side of the poor and championed their cause. From within this tradition, we, too, can try to do the

same thing in our world we can look for the will of the same God; seek possible parallels; and join the same resistance movement against poverty and its causes." (Boerma, p 29). The two extracts characterise well two different approaches to the problem: that represented by Boerma, the pastor and missionary to Latin America, and that of Mealand, the careful and judicious academic. For the latter, the double negative: it is not irrelevant to look at the modern world in the light of the Gospels; for the former, praxis is the key to understanding what would otherwise be a closed book.

Boerma sees the biblical tradition as offering a 'strategy for change', since it too grew during a period when such factors as private ownership and the development of a military establishment had broken down the older tribal solidarity and caused an ever-widening gulf between the rich and powerful and the poor and oppressed. The