

Nichols suggests that the probable reason for this limitation is Congar's lack of a systematic philosophy. If Congar has failed to create an original systematic theology, he has nonetheless compiled dossiers of documentation which will serve the work of younger theologians who are bold enough to strive for a new theological synthesis.

Nichols' study admirably fulfills its task of offering the reader a lucid overview of the main themes of one of the twentieth-century's major theologians. The exposition is clear, the judgments balanced. A useful bibliography is provided at the outset. If I had any criticism to offer, it would be the desideratum that Nichols' presentation have a bit more of the *élan* which would not only explain his author but stir his reader to discover Congar for himself.

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YOUNG DOCTOR PUSEY by David Forrester. *Moybray, 1989. Pp. xviii + 271. £30.00.*

The news that a thesis is to be published is not usually an occasion for applause. This case is different, partly because, as a doctoral thesis, it was completed more than twenty years ago, but more seriously because it responds to the need—often expressed—for works to offset the concentration upon Newman in nineteenth century studies. Accordingly, Dr David Forrester's investigation into the intellectual development of the young Pusey is particularly welcome. It sheds fresh light on its subject, and that remark is not the truism it may seem at first glance.

Pusey was a formidable personality and those who approach him may easily be deterred. There is, first of all, the sheer quantity of his writings, his sometimes impenetrable style, and his encyclopedic approach. For example, at a later stage of his life, he suggested to Newman that reunion might be achieved between Catholics and Anglicans if the Roman Church would specify definitively what would have to be believed *de fide*. Newman, of course, replied that it would not be possible to dictate to the future in that way. Few exchanges illustrate so well the encyclopedic expectations of Pusey's cast of mind. But it is not only Pusey himself who may deter the aspiring scholar.

His biography was written by his devoted disciple, H.P. Liddon. It was published in four large volumes between 1893 and 1897. Its detail appears to be exhaustive and its pattern has had a great influence in shaping scholars' views of Pusey: the Preparation, the Movement, the Struggle, the Victory. Whatever validity that pattern may have for Pusey's later life, Dr Forrester makes it clear that it is a total misconception of what had gone before. Pusey's development was much more complex, much less even. Forrester tackles it with *élan*. In relaxed prose, he uncovers new material, opens up perspectives, and thereby deepens our knowledge.

His attention to the psychological aspect will probably attract most interest. Liddon's account gives Pusey a magisterial status. Forrester has underlined the extent to which he was dominated by his father and the way that domination left him in danger of being excessively dependent on others. There was also the matter of his love for Maria Barker, which was overwhelming, but upon which his father for years set an absolute ban. He

finally relented and they were married, but the story of their marriage is a poignant one. Pusey's growing asceticism quenched Maria's natural vivacity, as she strove to follow his austere example. She died of tuberculosis in 1839; her death did not cause his gloom, as Liddon suggested, but intensified it.

A second valuable feature of this study is its account of the young Pusey's visits to Germany and the favourable impression first made on him by the higher criticism which he met there. Further, it was characteristic of him that he devoted himself to the learning of Oriental languages and returned to England an accomplished semitic scholar. His 'innate conscientiousness and admiration of German thoroughness', as Forrester remarks, had enabled him to 'fulfil tasks which would have daunted an average person' (p. 45). All the same, this enthusiasm for German theology did not last, for he came to fear that its method would encourage unbelief.

Thirdly, Forrester brings out instructively Pusey's emerging place within the Oxford movement. The irony of the Tractarians being called Puseyites is well-known: Pusey had initialled his Tract to distinguish himself from others. Moreover, his background helped him sympathise with the old conservative High Church party, of whom Keble and Newman were critical, in spite of his emotional and intellectual attachment to their dynamic Anglicanism. It should be remembered as well that he had Evangelical convictions that the experience in Germany, although later denied, had been formative. So it was this very instinct for comprehensiveness which marked him out as leader by 1850.

It is not possible to do justice to this book by fastening on these points alone. Its strength lies in the rounded portrait it displays of a warm, if ascetic, personality with wide-ranging interests, social, political, and missionary, as well as ecclesiastical. And if, as Forrester argues, Pusey's viewpoint was fully formed by 1850, it would nonetheless be valuable to see how it revealed itself thereafter. I hope he can be persuaded to turn to that task.

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ATHEIST PRIEST? DON CUPITT AND CHRISTIANITY by Scott Cowdell, *SCM Press*. 1988. Pp. xix + 103. £6.50.

As a simple 'man in the pew', the writings of academic theologians—especially those of Cupitt's ilk—have left me with a distinct sense of scepticism and produced in me a strong feeling of nausea; as a philosopher of religion in the 'analytic' tradition I have found such writings strange and the arguments presented lacking in rigour. Mr. Cowdell writes at the beginning of his 'Conclusion' (p. 83): 'I hope that I have demystified Don Cupitt somewhat in this study and offered a broader perspective on his more controversial views'. It is to the author's credit that he can rightfully claim to have done this and hence alleviated some of my initial scepticism and illuminated aspects of Cupitt's writing that I at least had formerly found strange. One would however have hoped for more, in a way which I will explain later.

The book certainly fills a gap in the literature; it is of considerable benefit to have (i) the development of Cupitt's thinking reconstructed; (ii)