

Acts 6—7. The correspondences suggest the kind of circumstances which could give rise to the use of this kind of material.

The patient examination of evidence in this study supports the author's conclusion that both the collections of aphoristic sayings and the individual sayings found in the double tradition owe their formulation to a particular circle within the early Christian community. One important corollary to this is the fact that these conclusions provide indirect support for the Q-hypothesis, but this is an aspect which the author is content to mention, not explore: it would be interesting to pursue this with a supporter of the two-Gospel hypothesis! But the real question which is left unanswered at the end of the day is how material which derives from one circle in the church relates to the teaching of Jesus himself: it is a question raised on the last page, but left open, since it needs further investigation. But this is the most intriguing question of all, and it is hoped that Dr. Piper will decide to pursue it.

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ANGLO-CATHOLICISM: A STUDY IN RELIGIOUS AMBIGUITY by W.S.F. Pickering, *Routledge*, 1989. xiii + 286pp. £35.00

After 1945, Anglo-Catholicism, once a constant source of Anglican controversy, became largely accepted as one of three streams of Anglican 'tradition', the others being Anglican Evangelicalism and Anglican Liberalism. The ecumenical tendency to blur significant differences helped to soften the situation, while a widespread belief that Anglo-Catholicism was dying out at parish level also drained away the excitement that had once surrounded its existence. Vatican II isolated the movement even more, and it took the marginal issue of women's ordination to rouse the fighting spirit of a depressed minority. With the present Bishop of London constantly talking about issues of 'principle' it was time for some one to throw over the talk about 'comprehensiveness' and point out instead the confusions and complacencies which have grown up in the Anglo-Catholic milieu. Dr William Pickering, who recently retired from teaching sociology at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, has filled the gap with a full-length critique of what he says is a basically ambiguous movement, and someone is going to have to reply to his vigorous attack.

Dr Pickering divides his work into three parts. The first five chapters outline and discuss the history of the Anglo-Catholic movement. Then follow four chapters under the heading 'Ambiguities', here Pickering stresses the conflict between theory and practice: Anglo-Catholics (he says) advocate 'catholicism' but behave like an Anglican sect; they laud the apostolic succession but obey bishops only when they choose to do so; they are equally selective in their attitude to the authority of Rome. Pickering's touch is less certain in a chapter on 'ambiguity over sexuality' which raises the question of possible links between homosexuality and Anglo-Catholicism: 'might it not be possible', he suggests, 'that the adulation of (clerical) celibacy is seen as a legitimate rationalization of actual or latent homosexuality?'. The Anglican capacity for tolerance needs strengthening, not weakening.

In the final section of his book Pickering points out that many Anglo-

Catholics find the ambiguities of their position in the Church of England intolerable. 'No one can deny that Anglo-Catholic priests have been able to turn Anglican churches into mirrors of Roman Catholic parish churches. The ambiguity arises in the realization that Anglo-Catholicism is a party and can never be more than that in a church which is a melange of Protestant and Roman Catholic ideals and practices.' Only those who move from Canterbury to Rome achieve a clear solution of their problem: those who remain 'Anglican' cannot, in Pickering's view, escape from ambiguity.

The strength of Dr Pickering's case is that Anglo-Catholicism failed. Success would have meant either the setting up of an acceptable Church of the Via Media, which was what Pusey originally wanted, or, at a later stage, the disappearance of 'Anglicanism' into the Roman obedience. Neither event took place. The nineteenth-century Church of England survived the crucial first generation—the loss of Newman, the appearance of monasticism, the aesthetic passions heated by the Camden Society—without vital modification, and from then on Anglo-Catholicism could not be 'Roman' in more than style if it were also to remain 'Anglican' in substance. Dr Pickering's criticism is entirely right, in the limited sense that there was no moral point in a Roman-orientated Anglo-Catholicism continuing in principle once it had been defeated in practice—Rome already existed and had no need of these highly individualistic provincial witnesses. It is not even as though the survivors have prevented the Anglican ordination of women to the priesthood: they have failed there too, just as a generation before they had failed to prevent, for what it was worth, the formation of the Church of South India. Victorian Anglo-Catholicism thrived as an alternative Anglicanism in a society where Roman Catholicism was still regarded by the majority as socially and politically unsound; late twentieth-century Roman Catholicism has itself become the respectable religious alternative and has squeezed Anglo-Catholicism into ecclesiastical insignificance.

One way of answering Pickering's well-written and closely argued assault might be to take another look at John Keble who, with all respect to the much more imaginative Newman, was the real creator of Anglo-Catholicism. Keble never supposed for a moment that he himself was any kind of *Roman* Catholic; he was sure that he drew on a paternal, purely 'Anglican' tradition; he didn't know the meaning of religious ambiguity and he had no second thoughts about a totally devoted marriage. He was quite unimpressed by Newman's abusive *Difficulties Felt by Anglicans* (1850), which in some ways states Pickering's case for him: for Keble, these were difficulties felt by Newman, who had abandoned the struggle. It is by no means clear to me that Keble failed. His bland, domestic, obstinate, classical piety played a vital role in bridging the gap between 18th century Anglicanism and a post-modernism which would hardly have struck Keble himself as more than that 'world' which one had always to deny. Dr Pickering's sub-title is too restricted: it is 'Anglicanism', quite as much as Anglo-Catholicism, which is 'a study in religious ambiguity'.

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