

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

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techniques and intentions of the Ricardian group, and possibly of other medieval writers.

As a further indication of the book's rich content, Mr. Burrow suggests a correlation between Ricardian manuscript illuminations and poetry, and, in his most perceptive chapter, presents a Ricardian "image of man" as it emerges from the poems.

In his introduction, the author expresses the hope that his account "will start a debate from which may emerge some clearer sense of what the poetry of this age is like." He has succeeded in presenting his case for a Ricardian literary period, and, at the same time, sheds new light on the individual genius of the four major poets of the era. His work is indeed a rewarding and welcome addition to the canon of medieval literary criticism.

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The Learned Doctor William Ames: Dutch Backgrounds of English and American Puritanism, by Keith L. Sprunger. Urbana, Chicago, London: University of Illinois Press, 1972. Pp. xii, 289. \$10.00.

Until this thorough-going study, we have had no full-length account of the life and works of William Ames (1576-1633), one of the principal builders and defenders of the Congregational church polity, a central figure in the complex developments known as Puritanism. Ames was known to his contemporaries in the scholarly world by his Latinized name, Guilielmus Amesius, since his major works, as was normal, were thought out and published in Latin for the international intellectual world of his time. He was, besides a theologian, also a voluntary exile for his religious beliefs. Professor Sprunger gives a full portrait of the man, but he concentrates more on Ames as an intellectual force than as a witness to his faith.

Ames was an undergraduate and later a fellow at Christ's College where he was permanently converted to radical Puritanism. Like many others known as radicals, he soon found the ordinary posts where he might otherwise have preached and taught not open to him and, as an alternative to conformity, chose exile in the Netherlands. The numerous English and Scots drawn into the Netherlands for various reasons in the course of the long effort to stand off the Spanish presence, made up a mixed group, from conforming Anglicans to the most radical reformers, all living under conditions much less constrained than in the British Isles. In the Netherlands Ames served first as military chaplain and free-lance theologian, producing tracts against Arminians and Separatists alike. Known as "the Watchman" because of his rigidly alert Calvinism, he was pleased with the Synod of Dort's interpretation of predestination in terms affirming limited atonement, the irresistibility of grace, and the perseverance of the elect after initial conversion. But he never wished to separate from the established Church of England, clinging to the possibility that the whole Church might be converted from such abominations as Arminianism and ceremonies and surplices to the pure Word of God as the Calvinists in the Church of England understood it.

Ames's great opportunity to let his voice be more widely heard came when in 1622 he was offered a chair of theology at the University of Franeker in

the remote north of the Netherlands. Here he established an international reputation, producing his two major works, the *Medulla theologiae*, a systematic outline of theology which went into at least seventeen editions in the 1600's, and his *De conscientia et eius iure, vel casibus*, as well as other works of no small importance such as his *Bellarminus enervatus*, against the Jesuit theologian, and his *Philosophemata*, which spells out Ames's views on "technology" (*technologia*) or "technometry" (*technometria*), the science defining the branches of knowledge in Ramist fashion according to their nature and keeping them theoretically pure and distinct from one another. "Technology," in this original meaning of the term, was the prolegomenon to theology itself.

Ames's theology drew on fairly widespread sources—Augustinianism, scholasticism, standard Protestant authors and even some Catholic, Covenant theology, and much more. But through it all, as through the theology of many other second-generation Puritans, was laced the logical "method" of the sixteenth-century French philosopher and educational reformer Peter Ramus, with whose thought Ames had been filled at Christ's, the leading Ramist stronghold at Cambridge. Ames used Ramism not only to construct "technology" but also to manage basic tensions of Christian faith in its Calvinist interpretation. On the one side was the indivisible simplicity of God known in his Word, on the other were the excruciating demands of human reason, a relentlessly dissecting faculty which even Catholics frankly acknowledged was inadequate to the divine truths revealed in Jesus Christ but which Calvinists believed to be totally corrupt, lock, stock, and barrel. Mediating between the two for Ames was Ramist logical "method," which was thought really not to interfere with any subject it organized—and it organized them all, including arithmetic, geometry, grammar, rhetoric, logic itself, and even God's revelation. Ramist method simply let the "natural order" of all knowledge show through, not excluding that of biblical teaching.

In Ames's case, Protestant agonizing over faith and reason, as Sprunger shows, was nowhere more acute than in problems regarding Christian ethics. Catholics, who did not believe that all man's actions were totally corrupt, but only that human nature was not entirely to be trusted, had to think through quite specific problems of conscience, theoretical and practical, if they were to live their Christian faith in the real world. What were the Christian's more or less exact obligations, for example, in his speech, financial dealings, worship, political activity, family life, and so on? Investigation of such questions leads inevitably to discussing, among other things, the interweaving and seeming conflict of obligations and thus to assessing which obligations and which violations of obligations are more serious and which less. Such considerations involve casuistry, or the study of particular obligations in concrete and difficult cases (*casus* in Latin). But in Ames's classical Protestant doctrine, since everything one did was depraved and totally sinful, what was the purpose in all this weighing and balancing? Was this not Phariseeism, since, as Ames's fellow at Christ's, William Perkins (quoted here, p. 164), had clearly put it, "Every sin of itself be mortal"? Perhaps, but Perkins had left some leeway: "Yet all are not equally mortal." Hence some Protestant theologians, Perkins and Ames among them, in fact produced books assessing particular obligations

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and violations. Ames's eclecticism, Ramist-controlled, shows clearly here, for these books, though differing from Catholic teaching at some crucial points, depended largely on Catholic moralists, since Protestantism nowhere ever developed a moral theology so patiently elaborated as that which resulted from the massive communal reflection on specific responsibilities fostered by the Roman Catholic doctrine and practice of penance.

The casuistry issue, with many others skillfully explored here, places Ames clearly in the fascinating perspectives first elaborated for the modern scholarly world in Perry Miller's work on *The New England Mind*. Ames in fact had kept a careful eye on New England, and had he lived a bit longer and emigrated, as his widow and their three children did, he might well have been the first head of Harvard College itself, instead of his former student Nathaniel Eaton. At Harvard Ames's works were perhaps the most thoroughly thumbed books after the Bible. Cotton Mather summed up Ames's relationship to the Colony with the complacent precision they both practiced: Ames "was *intentionally* a New-England man, though not *eventually*" (quoted, p. 251 here). "Evtually" Ames was international, speaking to all Western Europe out of the tripartite English-Dutch-American milieu which Professor Sprunger's subtitle identifies.

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Baron Friedrich Von Hügel and the Modernist Crisis in England, by Lawrence F. Barmann. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1972, pp. xxiii, 278. \$18.50.

Baron von Hügel has already been studied several times, one good reason being that he alone had remained unscathed among the Modernists, and this made it relatively safe for Catholic scholars to write about him until recent times, when, as Dr. Barmann remarks, the official biography of Cardinal Bourne dared not even suggest "any indication that there had ever been such a thing as the Modernist crisis" (p. 233). These times are happily over and the "time seems ripe for a comprehensive history of the complex modernist phenomenon expressed with as much objectivity as historical scholarship can muster" (p. ix). It is plain that the author did not choose the subject of his study because of its supposed innocuity; but because "the single man, more than any other, who was the rallying point for modernist thinkers and their activities in Western Europe was Baron Friedrich von Hügel." Here Dr. Barmann strikes the same note as Dr. Vidler who showed in his recent book that van Hügel was "the chief engineer of the modernist movement."

Among the major influences which helped in "the growth of an enquiring spirit," the author rightly places the Abbé Huvelin whose example "helped to keep my faith and my reason through those terrible years of 1906-1914." Huvelin's personality helped more than what he actually said. "There sanctity stood before me in the flesh." The relationship with Newman was of a more intellectual kind, and at the Cardinal's death the Baron could write to