

century history has laid down a terrible record of the existence of a culture of power and struggle," then the prophetic role that Henry Adams assigned to himself takes on special poignance. For he understood that nothing mattered more to the conduct of human affairs than the calculus of power, and those who wielded it with executive flair won his admiration. Yet Adams felt estranged from the polity that had spurned his claim to leadership, to which he had felt virtually entitled from birth. He was fearful and contemptuous of the financiers and technicians whom he suspected of being the unacknowledged legislators of mankind. He registered both an awe and a dread of power, and thus exemplified the tensions of naturalist thought. Friends like John Hay and Theodore Roosevelt, exercising the statecraft Adams had felt destined to display, were asserting their country's influence in a manner that would transform American diplomacy. Yet Adams himself, nursing those fantasies of power that afflict the powerless, could locate no direction, no purpose, no moral restraint in this realignment of international affairs. He recoiled in horror, haunted by the specter of apocalypse.

Conceiving the universe as a closed system vulnerable to entropy, Adams stressed the Second Law of Thermodynamics, which supposedly called into question the optimistic theory of evolution. Concluding that scientific laws cancelled each other out, bemused by the unwillingness of scientists to pursue the implications of their own discoveries and hypotheses, Adams withdrew into a private world of whimsy and intimations of impending doom. He became the man in the ironic mask.

It makes little sense to credit so unscientific a temperament with adherence to naturalism. Kaplan can do so only by minimizing the sadness Adams felt for the triumph of the Dynamo over the Virgin. Yet it is hard for the reader of *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres* to be immune to the charm of the medieval synthesis, which Adams romanticized and which suggested to him an antidote to cynicism and brutality. On the one hand Adams remained deaf to the upper registers of faith; on the

other he never managed to formulate a way of speaking truth to power. He never found the principles of order to challenge the *Machtpolitik* that, harnessed to the genius of technology, seemed so aimless and so reckless. In a world that tabulates the pope's divisions with a smirk, Adams's dilemma is excruciating because it is our own.

Yet *Power and Order* lacks the elegance of a seamless argument; Adams's conundrum is not linked to the novels of Dreiser, Norris, and Crane. An intellectual historian might have tried to show that the novelists had read Adams — and would have failed, since *Mont-Saint-Michel* and the *Education* were privately printed in limited editions. A literary critic might have drawn parallels. But Kaplan, who teaches English at Northwestern, contents himself with short and rather familiar proofs of the ferocity of social warfare in the classic texts of American naturalism. Despite its allusions to second- and even third-generation "naturalists" like Dos Passos and Mailer, *Power and Order* fails to construct a persuasive case for the vestigial strength of the naturalist tradition in American culture.

Kaplan's pithy analysis of Crane nevertheless deserves praise. He effectively demolishes the interpretation that Crane himself projected onto his fiction: that "environment is a tremendous thing." Yet his *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* remains affecting because of its criticism of the social code and of the sexual hypocrisy that drives its protagonist to suicide. Kaplan nevertheless fails to consider how Crane's strategy calls the naturalist enterprise itself into question. For if the impact of social codes is conceded and if, as history shows, they can be rationally and sympathetically revised, then naturalism — with its commitment to the supremacy of physical pressures — is undermined. No matter. A doctrine that is alleged to incorporate both vitalism and mechanism, both religious belief and atheism, both moralism and indifference to ethical value, both apolitical art and reformist fervor, is so elastic that its semantic and intellectual integrity is suspect. Kaplan rightly emphasizes the distinctive predilection for viol-

ence in naturalism (although Adams himself, oddly for Kaplan's thesis, exempted himself from the bare-knuckle bellicosity of the fin de siècle). Yet naturalism is so eclectic in its explanation for the sources of violence that, though plenty of corpses are visible, it isn't obvious where the bullets came from. [WV]

THE LISLE LETTERS edited by Muriel St. Clare Byrne

(University of Chicago Press; 6 volumes; \$250 to 12/31/81, \$300 thereafter)

Richard Marius

The times were turbulent. Arthur Plantagenet Lord Lisle was sent across the Narrow Seas to be the captain of Calais, the last English possession on the continent of Europe — a marshy, unhealthy location and a walled city that Thomas More described as an ugly and boring place. Lord Lisle, a bastard son of King Edward IV, was about sixty, but apparently healthy and vigorous and undoubtedly ambitious and hopeful about the future. He stayed at his post for seven years before he was summoned home and imprisoned in the Tower in the confusing events surrounding the fall of Thomas Cromwell. There he died in March, 1542, having just received the king's pardon.

The Lisle Letters make up the largest body of private correspondence left to us from the reign of Henry VIII. Now they have been gloriously edited and stunningly produced in six volumes. The first thing that must be said about this incomparable edition is that it is readable. The book lover can take it up without the depressing sense that primary sources from the daily life of nearly five hundred years ago are like medicine — good for one's general condition but bitter in the mouth and acceptable only by an act of will. *The Lisle Letters* as Ms. Byrne presents them and as the University of Chicago Press has printed them are a delight to peruse.

Ms. Byrne has departed from the standard practice of scholarly editions in several ways. She has modernized the spelling — a marvelous

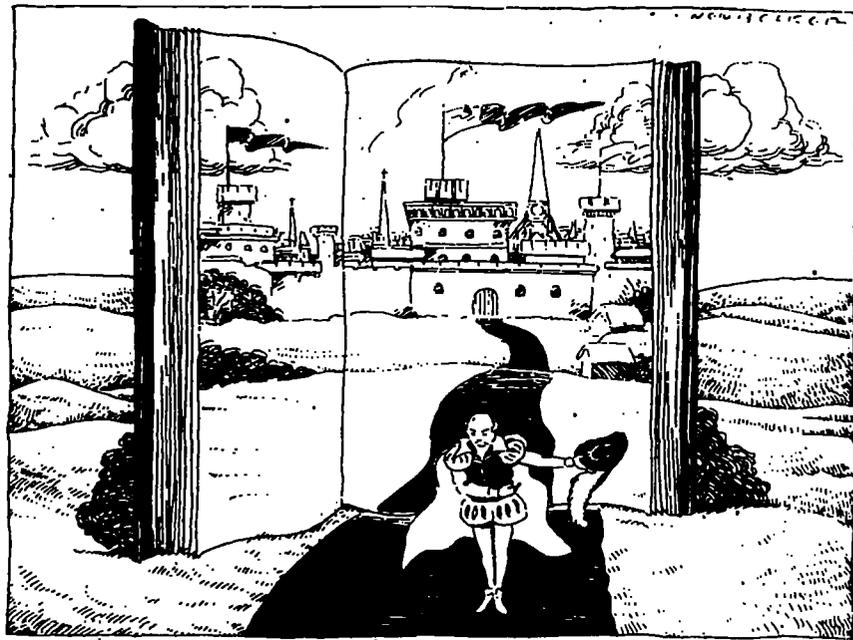
boon to the ordinary reader who finds little of value and much weariness in being forced to trudge through the chaotic spelling of the early sixteenth century. But her most important innovation has been to provide a running discussion of the letters throughout the six volumes rather than a commentary at the end.

It has to be said that sometimes she talks too much. But in general she gives a literate, sprightly context to the letters, and she helps them give us the feeling for the texture of the times that good letters in large numbers convey better than any other source.

Lisle's world revolved around great men, and influence was everything. An appointment that took an ambitious man far from the royal court could be a sentence to perpetual obscurity, and Lisle had to have agents to keep his name before the king, to report the news, and to give him advice. By far his best representative was his wife, Honor Grenville, a widow with seven children when Lisle married her. But almost as good was John Husee, Gentleman, Lisle's eyes, ears, and hands in London. Most of the letters are from these three, and we have so marvelous a collection of them because Lisle's personal correspondence was confiscated by the government in 1540 as Henry's agents sought to ferret out treason wherever they could.

It is from a letter of John Husee's, dated April 17, 1534, that we learn of the arrests of Thomas More, John Fisher, and Nicholas Wilson. And it is a letter from the same Husee on April 20 that tells us briefly of the hideous death suffered by the Nun of Kent — as well as two friars, two monks, and one ordinary priest — for her prophecies against the king. On the same day, the commissioners for the swearing of the oath attached to the Act of Succession made most of the citizens of London swear and, Husee informs us, "so shall all the realm over be sworn in like manner." This was the oath that, refused, caused More's death.

Yet most of the letters make no mention of the great happenings of the day. It was not safe to write such things, and the purpose of the letters was to do business, not to comment on politics. To be the captain of Ca-



Robert Neubecker

lais was a hard job, requiring an administrative judgment that Lisle sometimes seems not to have possessed, despite Ms. Byrne's continual pleas on his behalf. Cromwell, whom Husee mistakenly called Lisle's "wholly unfeigned friend," sometimes had to send over stern advice about how to deal with people and how not to annoy the king.

Still, Lisle did about as well as anybody could have done under the circumstances. He saw that the fortifications of Calais needed building up, the garrison strengthened, and wages paid. Like everyone else in the realm, he had trouble with fanatical Protestant preachers; and he could not always find his way between the king's professions of orthodoxy and the king's use of heretics to support his regime. Honor Lisle spent a lot of money on clothes and demanded a lot of money for keeping a household, and in consequence Lord Lisle was always in debt. Some of the letters must have embarrassed him, frustrated him, and made him afraid, since he at times owed a great deal of money to important people, the most important being the king himself.

The king was everything, and one of the great events of the correspondence is the annual presentation of Lord Lisle's New Year's gift to the monarch and the report sent back as to how it was received. The gifts were not niggardly. In 1536 — a year when a soldier's wages were eight

pence a day — Lisle sent over twenty pounds. But any gift was worth a smile from the king, and Lisle was surely delighted when Husee wrote in January, 1535, that he had delivered the New Year's gift, "his Highness then asking how your lordship and my lady did in his most hearty manner." And in April, 1536, Lisle wrote the king about a misunderstanding over an appointment in Calais, "fearing by some untrue surmise your Grace should have me in displeasure, which I had liefer I had never been born than to give your Grace any such cause."

For all his loyalty Lord Lisle was continually disappointed in the response to him from court. He found himself increasingly dependent on Cromwell, and he discovered again and again that fair words and bright promises were nothing but "holy water," as Husee called them, quoting Sir Ralph Sadler. Lord Lisle saw the problems of Calais as well as anyone did, but he could not get the king and court to treat them urgently; had he lived another sixteen years, he would not have been surprised to see Calais lost to England forever.

Through it all Lord Lisle and his wife kept strong their love and loyalty to each other. He always addressed her as "Mine own sweetheart," and he wrote during her absence in 1538: "In most the heartiest manner that I can I commend me unto you, desiring nothing in the world more than your coming

home." He shared his frustrations with her, his sense of being continually overruled and often insulted. He discussed their desperate financial affairs with a mixture of frankness and indulgence. She wrote him in cooler tones but still with affection and with great good sense. She was clearly the stronger and more intelligent of the two, and she was loyal to him until the end, sharing his imprisonment though, alas, not his cell.

Through the correspondence we see anew how small was the group that ruled English affairs. The Lisles seemed to have some dealing with almost everybody who counted. Letters appear here from the king; from Cromwell; the Duke of Norfolk; Thomas Cranmer; Charles Brandon Duke of Suffolk; Thomas Wriothesley; Edward Seymour, later Duke of Somerset; and John Dudley, later Lisle's nemesis. Honor Lisle had been married to John Basset, who died in 1528, and their son James married Máry, daughter of Margaret More Roper and William Roper. Mary Basset translated the *De Tristitia* of her grandfather Thomas More while he awaited execution.

And so it goes. Ms. Byrne's work establishes itself immediately as a necessary primary source for anyone working in Tudor England. But its greatest attribute remains its accessibility. With these volumes she has opened a spacious gallery into the past that will draw multitudes who desire to enrich their own lives by living again the lives of others long gone. [wv]

MINISTRY: LEADERSHIP IN THE COMMUNITY OF JESUS CHRIST

by Edward Schillebeeckx
(Crossroad Publishing Co.; ix+165 pp.; \$12.95)

John P. Galvin

Since the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) a succession of events in the Netherlands — publication of the "Dutch Catechism," doctrinal disputes about Christology and the Eucharist, a National Pastoral Council (1966-70) to implement the decisions of Vatican II, controversial appointments to the

episcopacy, and, most recently, the synod of Dutch bishops convened at the Vatican in January, 1980, under the direction of Pope John Paul II — has captured the attention of international observers, who wonder whether the postconciliar transformation of Dutch Catholicism is a paradigm or a warning for the Church in other lands. Diagnoses vary widely: from a fundamentally legitimate effort at necessary ecclesial reform to an upper-middle-class phenomenon causing disintegration of religious and cultural values and tending ominously toward isolation from the universal Catholic Church.

One particular dimension of these developments forms the immediate setting for the latest work of Edward Schillebeeckx, a distinguished Flemish Dominican theologian who has lived in the Netherlands since 1958 as professor dogmatic theology at the Catholic University of Nijmegen. The years since the Council have witnessed a sharp decline in the ranks of the Dutch clergy, both diocesan and religious, and a marked increase in the number of lay ministers not ordained to the priesthood but increasingly entrusted with important ecclesial responsibilities. Accompanying this trend has been the emergence of numerous "base communities" — more or less stably organized associations of Christians established at the initiative of their members and engaged in a variety of liturgical, educational, social, and political activities but frequently without the leadership of a priest. Since Schillebeeckx envisions the task of a theologian as critical reflection on ecclesial practice, it is not surprising that the recent history of Dutch Catholicism has stimulated him to reflect anew on the meaning of priesthood and its role in the life of the Church, even though most of his efforts during the past decade have been directed toward an elaborate and as yet unfinished project in Christology (cf. "Schillebeeckx: Retracing the Story of Jesus," *Worldview*, April, 1981).

Largely a revised and expanded version of four earlier essays, *Ministry* seeks to define church office, rather flexibly, as pastoral leadership of an ecclesial community and to argue that each community, whatever other gifts it may display, has a need

for — and therefore a right to — such a pastoral leader. In view of this dual purpose, the choice of "ministry" as the translation for a phrase literally meaning "ecclesial office" is particularly unfortunate. In contemporary American theological literature, ministry is a favorite catchword that can refer rather vaguely to almost any church-related activity; its use here, especially as the book's title, can only obscure the author's basic concern.

Since much of Schillebeeckx's argumentation is based on historical considerations, important chapters are devoted to studying church office in the New Testament and examining the understandings of priesthood that prevailed at different times in the Church's later history. The burden of his biblical survey is that while the specific forms of church office were determined by local needs and thus varied widely, evidence of pastoral leadership of the local church is present universally within the New Testament and represents an essential component of a true ecclesial community. As pastoral leader the office holder had certain inalienable responsibilities not irreducible to a mandate from the community, for office was a specific gift of the Spirit within a Spirit-filled Church. Yet, as the diversity within the New Testament suggests, no single official structure, however legitimate in itself, is normative for later generations of Christians.

Continuing his historical sketch, Schillebeeckx distinguishes rather broadly between understandings of church office in the first and second Christian millennia. The first thousand years were characterized by strong emphasis on the constitutive role of the Church, as reflected primarily in the connection of ordination with service in a specific ecclesial community. Because of the inner link between such a community and the sacraments, it was a matter of course that the pastoral leader presided at the Eucharist. The later period is marked by increasing privatization, largely due to non-theological factors. The Church's role of mediator between Christ and the pastoral leader recedes from view; interest is narrowed to the leader's power to celebrate the Eucharist. While understandable in its