Division' of Schürer's History. The 'Second Division', covering 'the internal conditions of Palestine and of the Jewish people', in other words, an intellectual and religious history, is less successful: Schürer failed to fathom those internalized aspects of Jewish piety which transcended the letter of the Law. The Pharisees, in his view, took a wholly juridic view of the covenant between God and Israel. The view is narrow and distorted. If, as one assumes, Vermes and Millar contemplate a revised version of the 'Second Division' for their Volume II, the process of rectification will undoubtedly prove more formidable.

The book is impeccably printed and bound. It deserves a place on the shelves of every theologian and ancient historian. Impecunious students, however, might find their needs well served by a cheaper book: *A History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus*, by Emil Schürer, edited and introduced by Nahum N. Glatzer (Schocken Paperback, New York, fourth printing 1971). Schürer survives in many guises!

*D.S. Barrett*


Every age has its own popular beliefs and ideas. These are usually just commonly held conceptions of the ways things are and of the ways things can or ought to be done. They are taken for granted rather than being consciously thought out and expressed. This body of popular belief deeply influences the ways people think and act. It influences their concept of the past and their expectations for the future. And all this in ways which are difficult to determine.

Every spoken or written word is affected by such popular belief. So is every branch of learning. Even those who reject or are critical of such beliefs are more influenced by them than they realise. The Gospels of Jesus Christ are no exception.

They, too, have been influenced by the popular beliefs and practices of those who wrote them, or of those men close to Jesus of Nazareth from whom the traditions about him have come. John Hull has done biblical study a service by his careful study of the way in which magical beliefs and practices have influenced the Synoptic Gospels.
The author first gives an account of the sources of our knowledge of Hellenistic Magic and briefly indicates the impact these discoveries have had on New Testament Study. He then outlines the main features of Hellenistic Magic, pointing out both the syncretism in magical traditions and the persistence of magical beliefs and practices. A further chapter is devoted to the relationship between magic and miracle, and then the influence of magical ideas on the Synoptic Gospels is discussed together with the Evangelists' awareness of, or reaction to, the magical traces they found in the traditions handed down to them.

The author gives quite an assortment of witnesses to Hellenistic magical beliefs and practices. However, in the main, they go no further back than the first centuries of our era. So there is a wide area of conjecture as to how widespread these beliefs would have been in the milieu which gave rise to the Synoptic Gospels. At least the antiquity of the magical practices the author cites should not be presumed simply on the grounds that the magical papyri from the first centuries of our era are not original compositions but appear to be copies or translations of long established magical traditions.

Hellenistic magical beliefs and practices were gathered from a wide variety of cultures and religions, but as the author correctly remarks: 'Greek religion is the foundation of Hellenistic Magic. All the borrowed names and conceptions are built upon a Greek basis' (p.36). But the reverse procedure is also true. Where Hellenistic magical practices are found, for example in Judaism, it could be that the belief underlying them is not the same as in the Greek world. In a different religious context the same practice could have an entirely different meaning. And this applies particularly to Judaism which strongly resisted Hellenistic influences, even if not always successfully.

The point at which magic touches the Synoptic Gospels most closely is in the miracle stories. But here it is necessary to distinguish carefully between the essential content of the miracle and the form in which it is narrated in each Gospel. The essential content of any miracle is always concerned with a manifestation of salvation, a revelation of God's presence in Jesus of Nazareth. However, as the author recognises, the form the narrative takes may, and does, vary quite considerably. As one would expect, this difference reveals each Evangelist's personal view of magic, especially where traces of it are already present in the tradition they received. The modifications made by Luke and Matthew to the material they took from Mark is particularly revealing here.

The author leaves the impression that he has sometimes failed to distinguish sufficiently between the content or intention of the miracle stories and the way they are narrated. Many of the miracles and exorcisms in the Synoptic Gospels certainly betray the influence of popular magical beliefs and practices. But
perhaps this is no more than a reflection of the Early Church’s struggle to understand and express their belief that Jesus is the Christ.

The author himself best sums up his findings. ‘We find that the miracles of Jesus, and particularly his exorcisms and healings, were interpreted as being magical at an early date, that in the light of contemporary presuppositions it was inevitable that they should have been so interpreted and that the Gospels themselves witness to early stages of this interpretation’ (p.142).

This is a valuable book on a rather neglected area of New Testament study. It is to be hoped that others will continue to explore the avenues opened up by the author.

_Gerald P. Fitzgerald._


Since Harnack’s _Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte_ appeared in 1886-9 there have been many scholarly corrections both in points of detail and in broad interpretation. Yet no one has surpassed Harnack’s mastery of the historical sources or his ability at developing a synthesis covering a long period of time. His discussion simply cannot be ignored by any serious scholar. Indeed the terms of the debate about the historical development of Christian doctrine have not really been put more adequately by any scholar since, although men like Loofs, Seeberg, Tixeront, Werner have tried valiantly.

The first sign that a major new synthesis might emerge came with the publication of Jean Daniélou’s _The development of Christian Doctrine before the Council of Nicea_ 2v. (1964-). Pelikan, however, has a much more ambitious design – to survey the development of Christine doctrine from 100 to the present. There is no comparable work. If the other four volumes retain the standard of the first, Pelikan will have placed the whole Christian community in his debt. Few others will have the stamina to cover such a wide range of material, let alone have the ability to deal with it so competently.

Two earlier works of Pelikan’s need to be seen as prolegomena to the present series: _Development of Christine Doctrine_ (1969) and _Historical Theology_ (1971). Pelikan believes that the historian must take into account in one sweeping sequence, the greater events and movements which have swayed the