

this defining moment within the broader canvas of the revolutions of 1848/49. Despite this, the pope behind these events is little known, and still awaits a proper scholarly biography in English. The task has now become extremely 'delicate' since, in the year 2000, the Catholic Church proclaimed Pius IX 'Blessed'. Indeed, the canonisation process is on-going, and has revived old controversies that many had thought long-buried. The Edgardo Mortara affair casts a dark anti-semitic shadow over this pope and his far from benign legacy. It is much to David Kertzer's credit not only to describe Pius IX's experience during revolution in unprecedented depth, but to do so with great scholarly insight, analytical acumen and narrative flair.

These pages describe how Giovanni-Maria Mastai Ferretti, who was elected Pius IX in 1846, had not always been the reactionary pope of the 'Syllabus of Errors' or 'papal infallibility'. His early reforms and liberalisations made him the great hope of Italian nationalists just before Europe was plunged in an almost continent-wide revolution in 1848. To his surprise the pope became the symbol of Italian unity and a rallying point for war against Austria. Yet Pius was no mere Italian prince and his position as head of global Catholicism made his position complicated. After flirting with liberalism and reform, the pope found himself propelled forward on the crest of a wave of popular and revolutionary enthusiasm which he was utterly unable to control, let alone harness. His attempts to rein in the growing radicalisation of the population of Rome and the papal states gave rise to one of the most remarkable *volte-faces* of history. The liberal beloved Pius IX metamorphosed into the wicked reactionary pope-king who tried to hold back the tide of history. Besieged in the Quirinal Palace, the pope made a daring escape attempt, eventually reaching the safety of the great fortress of Gaeta in the kingdom of Naples. Here he appealed to the Catholic powers to retake Rome and re-establish his absolute rule.

This was to have deeply tragic consequences. The short-lived Roman republic of Giuseppe Mazzini and Giuseppe Garibaldi, despite ending in disaster, kept alive the hope for more enlightened government and a better future. After a bloody siege the papal police re-imposed order with unconcealed ruthlessness. As Kertzer eloquently demonstrates, Pius IX learned all the wrong lessons from his exile. He believed concessions had bred revolution, and spent the next three decades of his overly-long pontificate as the foremost enemy of modernity. Yet, as this fine book argues, the genie was well and truly out of the bottle. 1848 challenged the divine right of the papacy and showed that nobody was immune from accountability ... not even Christ's Vicar. Grippingly written, page-turning and scholarly, this book is an immense achievement which few can hope to equal. This is a magnificent book; analysis and narrative at their finest.

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*A biography of James Rendel Harris, 1852–1941. The daily discoveries of a bible scholar and manuscript hunter.* By Alessandro Falcetta. Pp. xxviii + 676 incl. 41 figs and 3 maps. London: T&T Clark, 2018. £150. 978 0 5676 7418 0

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Falcetta has provided a spirited account of the exceptionally long career of James Rendel Harris, one of the leading textual critics and manuscript collectors in

Britain at the turn of the twentieth century. Having been elected as a Fellow of Clare College, Cambridge, in 1878 to teach mathematics, Harris soon became seduced by the approach to Scripture as mastered by (the former scientist) H. J. A. Hort, leading him to devote himself to biblical studies from 1881. Like many Nonconformist theologians in Oxford and Cambridge during this period, Harris exhibited a fearlessness in his critical approach to the Bible that led to a far more adventurous scholarly life than many of his Anglican colleagues. Although raised a Congregationalist, he became a Quaker after marrying Helen Balkwill and joining her in a missionary endeavour to the United States in 1885 where, after a spell at Johns Hopkins, he secured a theological post at Haverford College near Philadelphia. It was during a sabbatical from Haverford that the couple made their first visit (of seven during his lifetime) to the Middle East to find and purchase manuscripts. Over the course of these expeditions, Harris secured a significant number of codices for Western libraries, including Syriac versions of the *Apology of Aristide* and the *Odes of Solomon*. Falcetta records these expeditions in exceptional detail and good humour, not least the 1892 visit to Sinai with the so-called ‘Sisters of Sinai’ (Margaret Dunlop Gibson and Agnes Lewis, whose contributions to scholarship are detailed in Janet Soskice’s *Sisters of Sinai* [New York 2010]) and, less comfortably, the more senior Cambridge textual scholars F. C. Burkitt and R. L. Bensley (with whom Harris published the *Four Gospels in Syriac from the Sinaitic palimpsest* in 1894). No less engaging is Falcetta’s careful tracing of Rendel’s contributions to political and religious life in Britain, spurred by his employment in 1904 as director of studies at George Cadbury’s Woodbrooke Settlement in Birmingham, an educational institution open to people of all genders, age, nationality and denomination. Whether it is on Rendel’s tenure at Woodbrooke, his presidency of the Free Churches or his and Helen’s commitment to the relief of Armenians during the genocide, Falcetta has extensively employed the Rendel Harris archives and a plethora of unpublished correspondence from other theologians of the period to offer a comprehensive account of a colourful career during the period of academic professionalisation in British theology. While the biography would clearly have benefited from less narrative history (at points it reads like a transcription of a diary) and more contextual analysis, its careful research and attention to detail will be of importance to those interested in the development of theology, religion and education in Britain at the turn of the twentieth century.

DIOCESE OF CHICHESTER

DANIEL D. INMAN

*In darkest London. The manuscript of Joseph Oppenheimer, City missionary.* By Donald M. Lewis. Pp. xxviii + 275 incl. 26 ills. Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 2018. £18.99 (paper). 978 1 57383 564 0  
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Historians of Victorian Britain still know surprisingly little about the lives of London’s poor. The decennial censuses confirmed a substantial and sustained growth in raw numbers: the overall population of the capital increased by almost 150 per cent between 1801 and 1851. Most working people endured perilously mobile lives as they chased new, and usually short-term, opportunities for unskilled