The secular clergy in England, 1066–1216. By Hugh M. Thomas. Pp. xiii + 422 + 8 colour plates. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. £75. 978 0 19 870256 6
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This is a long book from which a smaller one is struggling to get out. But how joyfully it is written, and how extensive and scholarly is Hugh Thomas's background knowledge. Chapters xi and xii, on the significance of book ownership amongst the clergy, are particularly good. Anecdote follows anecdote in this valiant and much-needed attempt to shine a light on the lives of the secular, as opposed to the regular, clergy between the Norman Conquest and the death of John. This is a painstaking task, and not an easy one unless those seculars also happened to be eminent or aristocratic ecclesiastics who appeared in written records. The author has scoured the primary sources thoroughly, both lay and ecclesiastical. Letters and chronicles have been devoured wholesale and with relish, particularly those written by Peter of Blois and Giraldus Cambrensis. The picture is even-handed in that, alongside plentiful and sometimes shocking tales of, for instance, the drunkenness and sexual incontinence of often poorly-paid lower clergy whose main duty was to serve God and say mass, comes similarly sharp criticism of the simony, nepotism and greed which afflicted some pluralistic higher clergy who should have known better. Indeed, so many seem to have fallen short of the ideal that the picture seems almost biased. It would have been good to have had more examples of those who did not. And the over-use of some phrases simply grates. 'The long twelfth century' – what on earth does this mean? – is used no fewer than eight times, for instance, in the eight-page conclusion. There is quite a bit of repetition. Also, it should perhaps be remembered that the vocation of the priesthood can be fulfilled in innumerable ways. (One wonders what the reformers would have made of those nineteenth- and early twentieth-century French clergy who reckoned – probably rightly – that it was a positive pastoral service to found brass bands or football teams to keep their young flocks out of mischief.) But these are exceedingly small quibbles. Overall, Thomas's book is a treasury of knowledge and a delight to read.

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Sacred authority and temporal power in the writings of Bernard of Clairvaux. By Alice Chapman. (Medieval Church Studies, 25.) Pp. xii + 240. Turnhout: Brepols, 2013. €70. 978 2 503 54105 1
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This book's title raises expectations of a meaty analysis of Bernard of Clairvaux's theoretical reflections on the relationship between the spiritual and secular powers, possibly set against the turbulent background of his own lifetime with its tensions and conflicts between the two. In fact, Alice Chapman offers something rather different. In what sometimes appears an insufficiently reconfigured post-graduate dissertation, her volume is primarily a semantic analysis of Bernard's use of the two terms *auctoritas* and *potestas*: the former a quality ascribed to the Church; the latter an attribute of secular rulers but with wider application

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through the Church's power over sin. The focus is precise: on the 152 occurrences of *auctoritas* in Bernard's works, and the 331 uses of *potestas*. There is an obvious association with the Gelasian doctrine of the two powers, which provides the cue for a lengthy discussion of the pre-Bernardine history of references to the Gelasian text in chapter i; but, as Bernard never actually cites the doctrine, this merely postpones the main argument. Three chapters deal explicitly with *auctoritas*: in terms of 'Ecclesiastical order' (chapter ii), 'Monastic order' (chapter iii), and in chapter iv looking at 'Connection and application'. Their concern is with spiritual structures and authority; discussion of the secular side, together with the spiritual, appears only in chapter v: 'The cooperation of sacred authority and temporal power'. A brief conclusion draws things to a close. The discussion is detailed, but at times worrying and confusing – confusion arising in part because the two Latin terms appear imprecisely differentiated, and are frequently discussed by using the English 'authority' and 'power' in ways which tend to merge the Latin through the ambiguity or similarity of the English words. The tunnel vision of the linguistic analysis is at times exasperating: one almost shrieks out in frustration when told where *plenitudo potestatis* appears in the texts (p. 125), with no meaningful attempt to excavate its meaning as a term. That failure to look outside the texts to the contexts, to turn from the written to the writer, is the book's most worrisome feature. Chapman insists that Bernard contrasts monasticism and knighthood (pp. 75–6), saying nothing of his support for the new knighthood of the Templars until p. 187. Bernard's self-proclamation as the most overt challenge to the core themes of Chapman's (and his own) arguments is similarly ignored until it can no longer be, and then receives only scant attention (p. 158). Bernard was a man of actions and words; authority and power discussed without examination of how they were exerted become empty constructs. This book certainly constructs, but its failure to engage effectively with Bernard as well as his works leaves a void at its heart.

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Die Siegel der lateinischen Könige von Jerusalem. By Hans Eberhard Mayer and Claudia Sode (Monumenta Germaniae Historica Schriften, 66.) Pp. xxvi + 231 + 111 ills. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2014. €64. 978 3 447 10156 1; 0080 6951

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Over the last two decades, Hans Eberhard Mayer has rendered tremendous service to historians of the crusader states of the Middle Ages. In addition to a history of the chancellery of the kingdom of Jerusalem, published in 1996, he oversaw in 2010 a monumental four-volume collection of the charters known to have been produced in the kingdom. The volume under review, prepared in collaboration with the Byzantinist Claudia Sode, serves as something of a companion to that much larger project. It contains descriptions of 111 seals, with illustrations where possible. Nine of the seals were struck for queens, two for a bailiff and one for a bishop. The actual survival record, however, is much thinner than those numbers suggests. Thirty-seven of the seals have been lost. For their descriptions Mayer and Sode rely on earlier accounts, some dating back to the Middle Ages. Nineteen of the illustrations are sketches of seals whose originals have

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