

activities. By capturing the affairs of McIlvaine's life with a wide lens, moreover, Smith illuminates the national and international community's opinions on chattel slavery and how overseas support for the Union hinged on the perceived centrality of emancipation to war aims. While Diana Bass argued previously for McIlvaine's status as the principal leader of the Evangelical wing of the Episcopal Church, Smith expands his analytical scope to the transnational level of ecclesiastics and politics. With British recognition of the Confederacy hanging in the balance in the wake of the *Trent* affair, Smith's findings spur readers to consider how different the resolution of the slavery issue may have been without McIlvaine's diplomacy – albeit Smith perhaps overstates the bishop's influence. Although the narrative's thick detail obscures the larger picture at times, this biography yields great insight into a paramount, oft-overlooked figure in the nineteenth-century Atlantic world that is sure to stimulate fresh lines of investigation in fields ranging from religious history to foreign policy.

BAYLOR UNIVERSITY

RYAN J. BUTLER

Theology and society in three cities. Berlin, Oxford and Chicago, 1800–1914. By Mark D. Chapman. Pp. viii + 152. Cambridge: James Clarke, 2014. £25 (paper). 978 0 227 67989 0

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It has been vogueish in recent years among some English-speaking theologians, not least John Milbank, to condemn the secular western university as a location for theological activity. Where faculties survive, they argue, they have been compelled to make ignominious compromises with secular disciplines. It is 'compromise', however, which Mark Chapman takes as his theme as he reflects upon the academic institutionalisation of theology since the Enlightenment. In Augustine's *corpus permixtum* of the Church, 'there was never a time when there was no secular', and this, Chapman suggests, has been no less true for the practice of university theology. He offers a fascinating analysis of theology's relentlessly creative interaction with its surrounding society in three case studies, originally presented as the Hensley Henson lectures in Oxford in 2013: Berlin in the aftermath of Napoleonic invasion; Oxford during its painful renegotiation of its relationship with the Church of England in the mid-nineteenth century; and boom-town Chicago at the turn of the twentieth century. Each context reveals theologians offering ambitious ideas for how education might serve the purposes of God and how theology might serve society. From the clericalisation of theology as a discipline in Schleiermacher's Berlin, Chapman goes on to explore how Anglican Oxford persisted in its treatment of theology as integral to all education. The practical theology of the Tractarians, deeply suspicious of the German model of university theology, functionalised 'all aspects of education including theology around a set of Christian practices and virtues' (p. 57). In the years following the 'crisis' of *Essays and Reviews*, however, this educational ethos was increasingly assumed by others with far weaker allegiances to the Church of England. Far from undergirding all other educational activity as a 'necessary science', theology now became a discrete discipline in the research university. In his third case study, Chapman shows how in the University of Chicago (established 1890) theology itself

became reconfigured by a new ‘necessary science’, namely sociology. In the fast-expanding metropolis of Chicago, the Divinity School considered training in the empirical analysis of social conditions and practical placements as valuable as learning Greek prepositions; the ‘prevention of tuberculosis and syphilis’, wrote Shailer Matthews (dean of the Divinity School, 1908–33), ‘is quite as much an element of duty as the maintenance of church-going’ (p. 96). Was theology thus swallowed up by the social sciences? Employing the thought of David Martin, Chapman is not so pessimistic. Recognising the *corpus permixtum*, social history does not have to eradicate the distinctive hopes of the Christian community. It will question, certainly, but it also fruitfully teases out the motivations of theologians in their compromised habitats. Rooted in hope, however, Chapman suggests that theologians can none the less still be committed to ‘calling the university to its highest good ... to keep alive a vision of hope in a world that seems to have given up dreaming’ (p. 106). *Theology and society in three cities* gives strong reasons, with wit and historical depth, to continue challenging those who nostalgically long for an age of pure theology. It deserves wide readership, not least among those calling for the foundation of new Christian universities.

THE QUEEN’S COLLEGE,
OXFORD

DANIEL INMAN

The gospel according to Renan. Reading, writing, and religion in nineteenth-century France.

By Robert D. Priest. (Oxford Historical Monographs.) Pp. xi + 265 incl. 7 figs.
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Ernest Renan’s inaugural lecture as professor of Hebrew at the Collège de France in 1862 was so crowded that many were turned away, and it led to street demonstrations by both admirers and opponents. Napoleon III’s Minister of Education suspended him from his post not only because his implied rejection of the divinity of Jesus was offensive to Catholics, but because the controversies surrounding his teaching were a threat to public order. This was the perfect preparation for the publication the following year of Renan’s *Vie de Jésus* in which he developed his ideas more fully and explicitly. The book was an immediate sensation, selling 168,000 copies in the first eighteen months, inspiring a lively and often acrimonious public debate, and taking only two months to reach the Index. Robert Priest’s absorbing book neatly divides into five sections: ‘The Author’, ‘The Book’, ‘The Debate’, ‘The Audience’ and ‘The Legacy’. Renan was born into a modest family in the Breton fishing and cathedral town of Tréguier. He won a scholarship to a Paris seminary where he was trained in languages and biblical criticism, but in 1845, prompted by religious doubts, he left the seminary, and resolved to make his career as a scholar. His passion was philology and he adopted a linguistic determinism, according to which the ‘Semitic’ was fundamentally different from the ‘Indo-European’. The unique role of Jesus was to combine elements of both. Restored to his chair on the fall of the Empire in 1870, he was elected to the Academy and after his death in 1892 received a state funeral. ‘The Book’ aimed to bring Jesus into the ambit of history rather than theology. While it was emphatically a work of science,