

Hornus, Jean-Michel. *It Is Not Lawful for Me to Fight: Early Christian Attitudes toward War, Violence, and the State*. Trans. by Alan Kreider and Oliver Coburn. Rev. ed. Scottsdale, Pa./Kitchener, Ont.: Herald Press, 1980. 370 pp. \$13.95.

This volume on early Christian attitudes to warfare was first published in French in 1960, translated into German in 1963, revised by its author for the English edition in 1970, and finally published in English a decade later. It is a carefully researched study, provided with over 75 pages of footnotes and constantly leading back to primary documents and to significant secondary discussions.

The first two chapters address the "political and social setting" (pp. 17-51) and the "theological and religious setting" (pp. 52-90). It is argued respectively that the eschatological certainty freed Christian thought from complete domination of political power and that in the light of the law of love, revealed most clearly in the gospel, the battles of the believer took place on a different plane and with weapons other than the battles of the world.

The third chapter, "The Christian Attitude" (pp. 91-117), turns to early Christian reflections concerning matters of war, military service, and service to the state; expressions about their earthly country; and Christian respect for life. It is within this context that the distinction between the *militia mundi* and the *militia Christi* arose. The Christian attitude was not a flight from the world but a vocation to live in the world according to the law of love which the world had rejected.

The chapter on "Christian Soldiers and Soldier Saints" (pp. 118-157) takes up the topic of Christian soldiers in the Roman army. The investigation of the primary documents and their main interpreters leads the author to conclude that the Christians who were then in the army had not enlisted voluntarily after becoming Christians, but had already been in the army at the time of their conversion. They suffered much persecution because of their refusal to participate in the emperor cult and because of their new Christian attitude of love toward the enemy.

Two chapters are devoted to the church's first official position and its withering away (pp. 158-212). Hornus makes a strong and convincing case on the basis of solid sources and sound discussions that the attitude of the early Christians and the church's original position was antimilitaristic. The author traces the progressive "slide" of Christianity's attitude of refusing to engage in military service. Successively the church forgave repentant soldiers, then tolerated the nonviolent soldier and pardoned the killing soldier, and finally urged the believer to hide his deepest feelings. During the fourth century A.D. the change in attitude was complete.

The concluding chapter (pp. 213-226) traces the themes of Christian patience and hope. It also traces the developing doctrine of positive nonviolence in Tertullian, Origen, and Lactantius.

Hornus is to be commended for his penetrating analysis of both the historical and theological issues involved. His study is of greatest importance in assessing correctly the attitudes toward war, violence, and the state during the first four centuries of the church.

Andrews University

GERHARD F. HASEL

Rice, Richard. *The Openness of God: The Relationship of Divine Foreknowledge and Human Free Will*. Nashville, Tenn.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1980. 95 pp. Paperback, \$4.95.

This vigorous and tightly written little book, the first by a young theologian whose Chicago dissertation was a study of process theologian Charles Hartshorne, attempts to distance itself in some respects from process theology but owes much to it. It is a brave attack upon what the author calls "the traditional understanding of God's relation to the world," according to which God is sovereign and omnipotent, in complete control of events, having perfect foreknowledge, sitting enthroned outside of time as Lord over time, with past, present, and future all as one to him.

Rice insists that to hold this traditional understanding is to make human free will an illusion or to be guilty of intellectual laziness, entangled in all sorts of contradictions. Against it, Rice brings what he calls "the open view of God," according to which God experiences time and events serially, in principle just as we do. He is not changeless, but rather he is ever learning, ever experiencing new things. He does not know the future decisions which men will freely make as individuals, nor does he know the consequences that will flow from those decisions, because those decisions have not yet been made and are therefore not there to know. But God is clever: he knows all the options and can anticipate any eventuality. Though God plays the game fairly and the "cards are not stacked," the final outcome is assured because he is so good at the game. No matter what may go wrong, he has a contingency plan.

By taking this position, Rice thinks to solve some age-old conundrums and resolve such ancient antinomies and dilemmas as that posed by David Hume: "Is He willing to prevent evil, but not able? then He is impotent. Is He both able and willing? whence then is evil?" Rice believes his view makes more rational the idea of free will, replacing the notion of predestination with the concept of perfect anticipation and skillful planning. God becomes more sympathetic and egalitarian, and creatures become