original work itself, supplemented by microfilm reproduction, can satisfy the demands of the serious scholar.

DOUGLAS H. PARKER, *Laurentian University*

Viator: Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Volume 2. Ed. Lynn White, Jr. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1971. Pp. vi, 397. \$12.00.

Volume 2 of *Viator* has a strong medieval bias: out of twenty-two articles, only three touch on the Renaissance. Henry Ansgar Kelly's "The Metamorphoses of the Eden Serpent during the Middle Ages and Renaissance" focuses on the lady-faced Eden serpent of medieval literature, drama, and art and does not brood over the gradual masculinization of this human-headed tempter in the sixteenth century. In "Mehmed II the Conqueror and his Presumed Knowledge of Greek and Latin," Christos G. Patrinelis uses contemporary Greek sources to prove that the Italian humanists who portrayed the fifteenth-century sultan as a philosopher-king fluent in Latin and Greek were wrong: he knew neither. Charles B. Schmitt writes on "Theophrastus in the Middle Ages," confirming that direct knowledge of Theophrastus' works was very limited indeed in the medieval period, and that it was not until the fifteenth century that some of his more important writings were discovered. All three articles have useful bibliographical footnotes. Yet if *Viator: Medieval and Renaissance Studies* is to live up to its name, succeeding volumes will have to give the later period fuller – and more adventurous – representation.

ROBERTA FRANK, *University of Toronto*

G. R. Elton. *Policy And Police: The Enforcement of the Reformation in the Age of Thomas Cromwell*. Cambridge University Press, 1972. Pp. xi, 445.

This book is the latest contribution to Dr. Elton's chronicling of the revolutionary doings of Thomas Cromwell. It is in fact a series of extremely detailed accounts of cases which illustrate the government's method of securing national obedience to Henry VIII's assumption of the headship of the church, an act involving unprecedented claims on the part of the government and consequently unprecedented problems in enforcement.

Dr. Elton challenges the widespread opinion that the Henrician Reformation was readily accepted by the people as a whole and tyrannically enforced where it was not so accepted. On the contrary, he contends there was widespread opposition, and the government's treatment of it was careful, often lenient, and strictly legal. Open defiance could be put down draconically, but a surprising amount of opposition was allowed to pass with mild rebukes. And Cromwell did not use spies; he did not need to. There were plenty of loyal subjects willing to denounce each other spontaneously. The author traces numberless cases from the first delation to the final disposition where that can be known, and records how gingerly the government had to deal with some cases. The result is a triumphant demonstration of his interpretation. Indeed, the only real fault in the book is the length – there are

too many stories. The book is simply too long. Surely a more modest length could have been achieved through selection, compression and a judicious use of appendices.

Length aside, the book reinforces Dr. Elton's (and others') sympathetic picture of Cromwell as a disinterested practitioner of limited liability revolution within the existing framework of English legality. The author's bias is evident but never obtrusive (nor are his characteristic deft cuts at historians who in one way or another fail to meet his exacting standards of interpretation or scholarly method). It is a mark of the Elton fairness that he never lionizes the new leviathan, never (well, hardly ever) glosses over its revolutionary nature. The reader's appetite is certainly whetted for Dr. Elton's promised study of the revolution as a whole, a study which should underline the extreme importance of these years as changing the course of English history, and history-writing.

This book vindicates the legality of the Cromwellian-Henrician revolution, and significantly this is taken as an exoneration. Cromwell would have rejoiced if he had known how much he would contribute to what has become one of the strongest convictions in the English mind – that what is done legally is done well, especially if done in the name of national unity. Cromwell's victims, great and small, were sacrificed to an awakening national self-sufficiency. Their crimes consisted of thinking and saying what had been thought and said from time immemorial. They did not change their minds fast enough. They will always be seen as standing in the way of the march of the English nation, fated to defeat and lucky to be defeated legally. Thomas Cromwell fell, but his cause triumphed. Dr. Elton has both analyzed and illustrated that triumph.

J. W. DALY, *McMaster University*

Derek Wilson. *A Tudor Tapestry: Men, Women and Society in Reformation England*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1972. Pp. viii, 287. \$9.95.

This original and imaginative study of the period of the early English Reformation is a popular history in the best sense, in that its matter and style will invite and nourish the interest of the reader who is no specialist in the period, while its scholarship will not betray him. Mr. Wilson rests his work on the history of a group of English countrymen of the 16th century, especially of certain families with a Lincolnshire connection, and examines the way in which the great religious events of the reign of Henry VIII animated and interfered with their lives and fortunes. The strongest thread running through this "tapestry" is the fortune of the Ayscough family (also spelled Askew), in its own connections and in those of families with which it had important ties, especially the family of Ralph Lascelles of Sturton.

Mr. Wilson chose his sample well, since it provides him with a series of related vignettes or "panels" centring on particular individuals, of whom the most celebrated is Anne Ayscough, the dauntless and difficult heroine of some of Foxe's most memorable pages. As the story moves along we find ourselves presented with an interrupted but coherent narrative history of the main events of the Henrician reformation, concluding with the dramatic execution of Anne Ayscough in 1546.

The book is most original, and its authority most important, in the earlier chapters