

Reviews

Humanity and Deity, by Wilbur Marshall Urban. (George Allen & Unwin, 25s.)

This book is an attempt at a restatement of the traditional view of the relation of God to man. Its central thesis is that "there are natural and logical witnesses for God," and the author claims to restate and revalue natural theology in the spirit of classical western theology and philosophy. Its central section is an examination of the historic proofs of the existence of God and an axiological interpretation of the theistic argument.

The first chapter establishes the starting point, found in the acknowledgement of ultimate values with the cosmological and ontological propositions they presuppose. Then by an examination of the language of religion we are shown that the essence of religion—for the philosopher—is the identity of the highest good and most real being. A further chapter examining and distinguishing the part taken by "myth" in the expression of the religious consciousness prepares the way for the central part of the book. The trend of the very important chapter on "Language and Logic in theology" can be seen in its special commendation of Leibniz, because for him "sufficient reason always implies considerations of value." Once this is accepted, we have the basis of the axiological interpretation of the theistic argument. The other aim of this chapter is to establish the organic continuity of dogmatic and rational theology and their logical relationship. The three great classical arguments are now examined; Anselm, Aquinas and Kant are considered and the axiological nature of their thought brought out. The axiological argument is described as an "argument to presuppositions"; given the acknowledgement of values one must acknowledge that which the values presuppose. The next subject is symbolism and the doctrine of analogy. The concept of the analogy of being is the key to the Christian solution to the problem of humanity and deity. There is a very interesting account of the relation of religion to science and to the humanities, in which, among other things, the "primacy of the axiological" is re-emphasised with support from Plato, Aristotle, Anselm, Aquinas, Leibniz and Kant, and found to be confirmed by the new epistemology of modern science. The theme is completed by calling in the experience of the mystics as the final witness against the two "heresies" the author has been attacking—a religion of mere humanity and a religion of mere deity. He holds that the

notions of humanity and deity cannot be separated without becoming unintelligible.

The affinities of the thought developed in this book can be seen from the authorities whose names are quoted above, and from its one quotation from the Bible—our Lord's words, "Ye believe in God, believe also in Me." It is a statement of Dean Matthews—that "the Deus philosophicus is not the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"—that receives perhaps the severest condemnation and strongest contradiction of any quoted in the book. Those of us who are still at least inclined towards the view expressed by the Dean, and confess ourselves more at home with the "living, anthropomorphic and psychological" God of the Old Testament and St. Paul, will find here much that challenges us to think hard. The real—and considerable—value of this contribution to the study of the philosophy of religion is its presentation of "the Deity who emerges from the Schoolmen's logic" in the setting of modern scientific and philosophical thought and its thorough treatment of the problems presented by language. The list of chapter headings looks exciting, and the reader is not disappointed.

G. ELWIN SHACKLETON.

Of God, the Devil, and the Jews, by Dagobert D. Runes. (Philosophical Library, New York, \$3.)

This is a collection of essays, or perhaps one should say comments, of varying length and on a wide variety of subjects, within the field of ethics and religion. The author, it seems, is well known on the other side of the Atlantic, but for others of us the biographical details provided are welcome. He is a Doctor of Philosophy of the University of Vienna, the writer of numerous books (mostly on philosophical subjects) and the editor of sundry scientific journals. Couple all this with an intriguing title, and a peculiarly striking front cover and it is not perhaps surprising that the book arouses interest. It must be confessed that one reader at any rate found his hopes disappointed. True, the writer puts his finger on some real problems of relationships both with man and God, but his handling of them is not uniformly helpful. There is religious sincerity here and humanitarian passion is evident in a constant championing of the oppressed. It is clear that Dr. Runes is on the side of the downtrodden and therefore of the angels. But woe betide everyone else! One would gather that the Church's ministers spend most of their time "blessing bayonets," that pews are full of bigots, and that the science of theology is pursued by men altogether born in casuistry. There are no half measures. In prayer, it would seem, most people are merely ambitious, or

roundly hypocritical or simply naive. (Among the prayers condemned is that of the parent for the sick child, the reason being that "the Lord doesn't make little children sick so that prayers, no matter how ardent and anxious, may make Him heal one and let a thousand others perish . . ."). The author's other works may be as distinguished as the opinions quoted on the jacket suggest, but if so this is not up to his usual standard. It suffers from chronic indignation, not all of which is righteous.

G. W. RUSLING.

The Sabbath: its meaning for modern man, by A. J. Heschel. (Farrer, Straus & Young, New York, \$2.75.)

Dr. Heschel is Associate Professor of Jewish Ethics and Mysticism at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, and his book gives us some idea of how an orthodox Jew regards the Sabbath. Christians usually emphasise the grim and unyielding nature of the Jewish Sabbath in order to emphasise by contrast our Lord's attitude to it. Consequently this book will be a deeply moving experience for most of us. It is the offering of a poet and lover. Dr. Heschel holds that Judaism marked the transition from the hallowing of things and places to the hallowing of time. In true Jewish fashion he holds God's revelation to be in time and not space, as evidenced by the fact that "eternity uttered a day." The abstentions of the Sabbath rather than being bonds are analogous to the *via negativa* of the mystics because they guard the holiness of the Sabbath by saying what it is not. The real value of this book, however, is that it admits us into the author's joy and love. "There is a word that is seldom said, a word for an emotion almost too deep to be expressed: the love of the Sabbath." "Friday eve, when the Sabbath is about to engross the world, the mind, the entire soul, and the tongue is tied with trembling and joy—what is there that one could say?"

The production of the book is on a scale we have forgotten in this country, and enhances the feeling that one is dealing with a poem, not a treatise. One exhortation we should do well to observe: "One must abstain from toil and strain on the seventh day, even from strain in the service of God."

The Infinite Way, by Joel S. Goldsmith (George Allen and Unwin, 8s. 6d.)

In a world so taken up with the things on which one can bark one's shins it may be argued that any view which places the spiritual before the material is valuable. Even so, it is difficult to know what to say about this little book. It tries to state an amalgam religion of the Huxley-Heard school in Christian

terms, and in consequence the New Testament exegesis is sometimes startling. For example: "Jesus said, 'If I go not away, the Comforter will not come to you.' Was this not clear enough for all to understand? If you do not look away from the personal sense of salvation, meditation and guidance, you will not find the great Light within your own consciousness." So, "We come now to face our orthodox superstitions and to leave them, Was Jesus sent into the world by God to save it from sin, disease or slavery? No. God, the infinite Principle, Life, Truth and Love, knows no error, no evil, no sin and no sinner." The essence of true prayer is to realise that we are never separate from our good. "That which I am seeking, I am." "Here ye learn that 'the Kingdom of God is within you' and therefore prayer must be directed within to that point of consciousness where the universal life, God, becomes individualised as you or as me." The author's evident devotion to Vedanta makes his Christian transcription necessarily of the Christian Science school. Thus "The sense which presents pictures of discord, disease and death, is the universal mesmerism which produces the entire dream of human existence." "There is no evil. Let us therefore stop resistance to the particular discord or inharmony of human existence which now confronts us." "When we are confronted with any person or circumstance that appears to be mortal we must realise 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God' and all that appears mortal is allusion or nothingness. We will fear no mortal and no material circumstance because we recognise its nothingness." This is all very well for the spiritual dilettante, but would it have saved a John Bunyan or a C. H. Spurgeon? One suspects that "salvation, meditation and guidance" had to come in there, and that Enlightenment by capital letters might have proved insufficient.

Sri Auribundo and the Soul Quest of Man, by Nathaniel Pearson.
(George Allen & Unwin, 10s. 6d.)

Sri Auribundo was an Indian philosopher who died in 1950, and in these five essays Mr. Nathaniel Pearson, who was closely associated with him, expounds the first twelve chapters of his work *The Life Divine*. In the Preface, Mr. Pearson says: "Although the result of his work thus became more completely veiled from our outward-seeming judgment, we must not lose sight of the fact that in Sri Auribundo's written works we have for these present times the widest and most comprehensive knowledge of the Divine Reality that the world has yet known." Sri Auribundo's attempt was apparently to bring East and West together by trying to penetrate behind their divergences of approach to the primitive

knowledge of Reality expressed particularly in the Vedas and Upanishads. The wholeness of this vision became split into the passivity which seeks to experience "the Transcendent Calm and Silence" and which degenerated into illusionism in the East and on the other hand the effort to bring down into the world the very bliss and ecstasy of that Divine Reality," an active endeavour which degenerated into agnosticism in the West. Unfortunately like most of these endeavours at religious integration the result is rather too wordy and too vague to convey very much to a Western mind. Whether it would convey more to an Eastern mind is an open question. Mr. Pearson says that ". . . all cosmic Being is essentially an embodiment of Consciousness and that this pure Consciousness is itself a Being, or more properly an all-extensive Existence. In other words, Consciousness itself is the underlying reality of Cosmos." Although he thus sets aside the Eastern conception of an impersonal absolute, his capital letters bewilder at least one Western reader.

Religion and the Modern World. (George Allen & Unwin, 7s. 6d.)

The eight lectures here reprinted formerly appeared in the *Hibbert Journal*, and formed the series which inaugurated the London School of Religion. Let it be said at once that they are in a different class from the well-meaning but woolly attempts to find common ground among different religions with which we are now so unhappily familiar. These lectures are characterised by scholarship and spiritual insight. Viscount Samuel opens the series with two lectures on "What is happening to religion today?" and "Does religion stand to reason?" In the former he makes valuable suggestions indicating a possible way out of the old "freewill v. determinism" impasse. Dr. R. H. Thouless follows up with "Has psychology explained religion away?" in which he considers particularly the work of William James, Leuba and Freud. Fr. Cotbishley, S.J., makes a singularly lucid and valuable contribution on what can be a uselessly vague subject, "Do the mystics know?" Dean Matthews' assignation is "Religion and Religions," treated with characteristic scholarship and charity; but the really thorny question of "Religion and world unity" is left to Sir S. Radhakrishnan. His solution seems based on the Hindu discrimination between "essential spiritual experience and the varying forms in which this experience has in course of time appeared." He will hardly expect to escape a charge of syncretism in some quarters. Canon Raven speaks on "Is there a Christian politics?", and Sir Wilfred Garrett on "The Christian attitude to economics." While agreeing that "Christian" politics and "Christian" economics do not exist as such, both lecturers make valuable

suggestions for Christian action in their respective spheres. Altogether, a stimulating and worth-while little book.

DENIS LANT.

Church Organ Accompaniment, by Marmaduke P. Conway.
(Canterbury Press, 9s. 6d.)

Here is another most useful book from Dr. Conway, in which he deals with the subject of organ accompaniment in its application to the service of the Church and gives the reader the benefit of his experience by practical hints and suggestions. Beginning with a historical survey of the use of instrumental accompaniment in the church service from the earliest times, the author faces the development of Church Music and continues with chapters on the accompaniment of the present-day service, including brief notes on Plainsong. A notable feature is the chapter devoted to the Psalms, each one being discussed with a view to providing the appropriate background of organ tone, not forgetting the desirability of dispensing with the organ occasionally. Organists called upon to supply the accompaniment for performances of *Messiah* and *Elijah* will be particularly interested in the sections specially concerned with these works. Dr. Conway deals with each number separately and in detail and his hints on performance are most instructive. As he points out, an acquaintance with the full score of such works is a great advantage in translating the pianoforte accompaniment into a satisfying and effective organ-representation of the real thing: some examples of adaptation of pianoforte accompaniment are given in an appendix. Dr. Conway stresses the fact that real musicianship is needed in these matters and, in this connection, he emphasises the many requirements which an accompanist should be able to fulfil. The book is written in a very readable manner and will be a welcome addition to the organist's library.

FRANK DODSON.

Congregationalism and Reunion, by P. T. Forsyth. (Independent Press, 5s.)

Specially republished in preparation for next June's meeting at St. Andrews of the International Congregational Council, this stimulating little book reproduces two lectures delivered by Forsyth over 30 years ago. The amazing thing is that almost nothing in these pages has been rendered out-of-date by the passing of more than three decades. On the contrary, what Forsyth has to say here is as relevant and timely as though it had been written since the Archbishop's Cambridge sermon or the issue of the *Church Relations in England* report. The first paper, in Forsyth's inimit-

able way, lays before Anglicans the Free Church point of view and declares that unity lies not in order or sacraments but in the Gospel and is a question of the authority of God rather than the affinity of Christians. In the second paper Forsyth, now addressing his own people, says that Congregationalism stands for autonomy but that if local autonomy does not serve "the supreme autonomy of the Great Church amid the powers of the world" the ecumenical, the prophetic and the apostolic notes will be lost. In reunion discussions he states, Congregationalists must stand firm on the issues of ministry, polity and belief, i.e. they must demand recognition of their existing orders, insist that unity is not a matter of polity, for no polity is sacrosanct, and they must declare that in respect of belief they are "in the true Catholic succession, which is the Evangelical," doing so not by means of a creed for individual subscription, but as a confession of living faith. The publishers have done well to issue this profound yet clear and illuminating book. Always wise, often trenchant and epigrammatic, it will be welcomed in circles wider than Congregationalism alone. Certainly Baptists will profit from reading it.

GRAHAM W. HUGHES.

Spiritual Healing, by Arthur Dakin. (Carey Kingsgate Press, 9d.)

This is as stimulating and provocative in print as when delivered as an address to the Ministers' Fellowship. With his main emphases—that psycho-analysis is work for the expert, that in healing by suggestion and praying for the sick we must add, "if it be God's will," and that our main business in this sphere is prevention and getting men spiritually healthy from the start—there will be general assent. But queries may arise about the assertion that, "there are no conditions that we can stage to make miracles possible. . . . Nor is faith enough. . . . I should be hopeless, I think, if I had to believe that God's power and mercy was at all times exactly and nicely conditioned by my faith." One would agree that "an excessive subjectivism is disastrous" and that miracle "is God's work and not ours." But that staggering statement in the first two Gospels about the inability of Jesus to do mighty works because of their unbelief sticks in one's mind. "Unbelief and contempt of Christ stop the current of His favours," said Matthew Henry. Surely the implication here is that more faith would have made more mighty works, even if we cannot equate the two mathematically? But this pamphlet will do nothing but good. Whether it provokes agreement or disagreement, both will become better informed.

E. BUCKLEY.

The Tree of Life and other verses, by Nathaniel Micklem.
(Oxford University Press, 7s. 6d.)

These excellent poems express, under the image of the Tree of Life which links heaven and earth, the "questionings of sense and outward things" of a wise and scholarly mind. Dr. Micklem challenges our acceptance of the explanations and definitions of the powers around us given by scientific knowledge or cold reason, and he suggests that they are no nearer wisdom than mythology or even superstition; he asks his questions always from the firm assurance of Christian faith.

Written in compact Spenserians, they cannot be read hastily, and they stimulate speculation by their careful but pleasing expression of thought. This form is notoriously difficult to handle happily, but here the thorny problem of Spenserian diction is only occasionally raised.

The rest of the book contains poems in various metres with a more personal and domestic approach, all pleasing and some outstanding. The light verses at the end recall the author's searching humorous glances over his spectacles; they are a cheerful conclusion to a thoughtful and attractive book.

DAVID J. DANIELL

The Atlantic Community of the Early Friends, by Frederick B. Tolles. (Friends Historical Society, 2s. 6d.)

In these interesting pages is reproduced the presidential address given at Lancaster last August to the Friends' Historical Society by Dr. F. B. Tolles of Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania. It shows how, following the comparative failure of Quaker missions to Europe and the East, the Friends found in N. America a field so well prepared by Puritanism that a fruitful harvest was gathered by the Quakers who, from 1655 onwards, travelled back and forth across the Atlantic in considerable numbers. The result was the growth of the Atlantic Community, a remarkable fellowship united by love, a common faith and the constant interchange of epistles and personal visits. It is a remarkable story of courage, faith and zeal and is here told with great skill.

GRAHAM W. HUGHES.

Scottish Journal of Theology, Dec. 1952 (4s. 6d.) contains articles, "The Command of God the Creator" by W. A. Whitehouse, "The O.T. Conception of Miracle" by H. Knight, "The Ecumenical Significance of Anglicanism" by S. Bailey, "The Term 'Life' in Syriac Theology" by A. F. J. Klijn, a revaluation of St. Anselm by C. R. Walker, and a study of *Mark xvi.* 1-8 by C. E. B. Cranfield and the usual reviews. [Published quarterly by Oliver & Boyd].