

prehensive definition of the Church as a Communion.

The second part of Père Hamer's treatise, taking 'Communion' as the substance of the Church's unity, examines its generative causes under the general heading of the Royal Priesthood of the People of God, in Jesus Christ and his mission, creative of a priestly people. The work of the People of God in the world is then summed up in the apostolic functions of the hierarchy, the place of the lay apostolate, in the New Testament and in the teaching of Aquinas, as witnessing to the Faith, and as a state of life within the Mystical Body.

The third part discusses the notion of Communion, its various modes of expression, and its

applications to the Church in the New Testament, in the early centuries and in the thinking of the middle ages, the part played by the Holy Spirit in bringing about the unity of Communion, and its psychological and social implications, viewed from different standpoints within the traditions of Christendom. Père Hamer's book was written, of course, before the issue of the Dogmatic Constitution *de Ecclesia* of Vatican II, but he includes two interesting appendixes dealing with collegiality in connection with the drafts *de Ecclesia* of Vatican I. This has a considerable bearing on the practice of Collegiality as it is likely to work out in the future life of the Church.

Henry St John, O.P.

THE BEGINNINGS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY by Franklin Edgerton, *Allen and Unwin, 45s*

The subtitle of this book is '*A summing-up after a lifetime of philological study and reflection.*' This is misleading, for the body of the book is merely a selection of texts from the earliest Hindu sacred book, the Rig-Veda, to the *Mokshadharma*, an assortment of treatises on how to attain 'salvation' from the world which appear somewhat incongruously in the twelfth book of India's colossal Epic, the *Mahabharata*. Edgerton's contribution (apart from the actual translation) is an introduction of a mere forty-eight pages in which he develops again his theory (obviously at least partially true) that all the speculation that leads up to the famous identification of *atman* and *brahman*, the inmost 'self' of man with the 'ground' of the whole universe, can be traced to magical identifications of parts of the microcosm (whether seen as man or as the sacrifice) with natural phenomena (the sun, moon, lightning, etc.) in the microcosm. This may account for the nature of his selection which gives fifty-two pages to the frankly magical Atharva-Veda and only twenty-four to the far more comprehensible and 'respectable' Rig-Veda. The eighty pages from the *Mokshadharma* will be welcome since this important, if late, collection is all too often ignored.

And yet one is left wondering on what principle the selection was made. Everyone would seem to

agree that in the all-important Upanishadic period which is predominantly pantheistic in feeling, there is a trend on the one hand to pure monism and on the other to a recognizable form of monotheism which elevates one of the two not very prominent Rig-Vedic deities, Siva and Vishnu, to the supreme status of an omnipotent and omniscient God.

The first tendency crystalizes in the very short *Mandukya* Upanishad, the second in the *Śvetasvatara* Upanishad and the Bhagavad-Gita: and yet neither of these Upanishads are included, and the selections from the Gita are on the whole unrepresentative since they do not bring out the whole purpose of the Gita, which is gradually to raise the personal and active God to a status that is superior to that of the impersonal and eternally inactive Brahman (the culmination and climax of the last chapter where God at last speaks of his love for man, is omitted!)

Pace the author, far too much material of a purely magical order has gone into the selection. This is undesirable, not because it is 'nicer' to turn a blind eye on the undoubted magical nature of many of the texts, but because so much of this material is simply incomprehensible to the modern mind. And why, one wonders, are we not allowed the profoundly beautiful and very short *Iśa* and

*Kena* Upanishads – both of them far more influential on later philosophy than all the hymns of the Atharva-Veda ever were?

The author seems to take pride on his translation of the Gita, not only because it is literal but also because he has tried, as far as possible, to preserve the order of the Sanskrit words. This does not make for elegance (which may not matter), but it

does not make for intelligibility either (which does). The translations are indeed unnecessarily flat and pedestrian; and what, one wonders, is gained by translating *manas* (cf. Latin *mens*) which corresponds almost exactly to what we call 'mind' as 'thought-organ'? A disappointing *Nachlass* from a great scholar.

R. C. Zaehner

FRENCH MORALISTS: THE THEORY OF THE PASSIONS 1585 to 1649 by Anthony Levi, S.J.,  
Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press 1964, 55s.

In this long study Fr Levi sets out to unravel and define the complicated strands of classical, Augustinian, Thomistic, neo-stoic and Italian Renaissance influences on French moral theory in the first half of the Grand Siècle. As a representative touchstone he has singled out the changing ideas on the nature of the passions in works ranging from du Vair's *Philosophie morale des stoïques* (1585) through François de Sales, Camus, Coëffeteau, Jansenius, the medical theories of Cureau de la Chambre, and finally, as a culminating point, the *Traité des passions* (1649) of Descartes.

The opening chapters are devoted to a study of inherited theories, the main body of the work, with the exception of an important central chapter on the cult of 'gloire', pursues the inquiry in chronological sequence. The aim of the work is to show how the evolution of these ideas about love, hate, hope, fear, anger and so on, reflects and even explains the changing attitudes to concepts such as 'amour', 'gloire', 'amour-propre', especially in works of the creative literary imagination. At the same time, the validity of hitherto commonly accepted assumptions about the exact connotation of these important terms is questioned. In his conclusion Fr Levi finds that throughout this period there was an increasing loss of confidence in reason and nature which, in spite of Descartes's valiant rearguard action, did not succeed in avoiding the final vacuum: 'It is even possible to argue that the "Grand Siècle" never existed until it was all over, a projection of regularity, order and serenity in the perverse imagination of Voltaire, a myth witnessing to the

insecurity of the brave new era which replaced it. Were not the good sense, the taste, the restraint . . . so many defences against the threatening disintegration of the established values of the old order?'

In a way, yes; and yet why is it that this conclusion does not seem to carry conviction, nor yet belong sufficiently clearly to the intricate process of argument? Perhaps it is just a failure of communication, perhaps the intense concentration on one angle of vision only, that concerned with the passions, has led to a somewhat distorted general view of both the epoch as a whole and some of the individual moralists. This is probably the inevitable result of the very nature of the work: it is an academic thesis which in spite of its learning has not really been transformed into what it well might have become – an outstanding book by a scholar of unusually wide background. The author is a philosopher and theologian as well as a modern linguist.

'Some of the portraits are attractively achieved, but the whole work has the air of an industrious compilation', says Fr Levi of Cureau's lengthy volumes on the passions. The scope of Fr Levi's own work, his detailed analyses of little-known texts, his meticulous summaries – all this has never before been attempted on such a scale in English. But could not the reader have been spared this mercilessly formal, academic treatment, the repetitions, the monotonous style and presentation? The author disarmingly admits that he has made little attempt to disguise the nature of the book's origin. Why not? The process: thesis-into-book is surely