

cation of partisan accounts, by retailing atrocity stories and past scandal; nor can a man tackle one form of category-hatred adequately if his mind is influenced by other forms of the same disease. In the matter of antisemitism there has been often in different times and places a scandalous gap between Christian teaching and the practice of Christians. There is also a long record of authoritative defence of Jewish rights, not least by recent Popes. It is more likely to help Jewish-Christian relations if attention is given to the latter rather than the former. Dr Parkes's book has too much atrocity narrative, helped by an apparently superficial knowledge of the middle ages. In his eyes Jews have done little wrong, and Christians little good in their contacts hitherto. (Hitler's massacres are the responsibility of the Christians ultimately.) Both orthodox Christian and orthodox Jew will find his extreme modernism irreconcilable with their belief. Catholics will see in his attitude to themselves many of the faults he would deplore in other men's attitudes to Jews. Altogether, while sharing Dr Parkes's keen desire for mutual understanding between Christian and Jew, one cannot but regret his latest book. It is the type of work which by its own prejudice and muddled thinking plays into the hands of antisemitism, and which by the assumptions of its obiter dicta, if by nothing else, strengthens injustice and misunderstanding in one direction while fighting passionately for their removal elsewhere. There is too much of that in the modern world; there are too many people, Catholic and non-Catholic, who will fight for justice in a particular case but not in all cases. What is needed now is not partisan championship of Jews, or Irishmen, or Catholics or Protestants, an open eye on Spain and a closed one on Russia or vice versa, but a defence of ultimate principles wherever we see them threatened.

ANTHONY ROSS, O.P.

KIERKEGAARD THE CRIPPLE. By Theodor Haecker, translated by C. van O. Bruyn, introduction by A. Dru. (Harvill Press; 5s.)

It appears that the indefatigable researches of a certain Magnussen have proved beyond doubt that Kierkegaard was a hunchback, and that the puzzling 'thorn in the flesh' to which he so often referred was neither more nor less than his hump and the disabilities which it entailed. The discovery of this matter of historic fact may disappoint readers of Kierkegaard who have hitherto been free to project their own private thorns on to his. Undaunted, the late Dr Haecker set about to reevaluate Kierkegaard's life and work precisely in the light of this discovery, and incidentally to offer some reflections on the interaction of corporal disability and spiritual living in Kierkegaard's own terms. His short but pregnant study is offered us in this English translation; and it need hardly be said that we are taken far beyond the confines of an Adlerian study in organ-inferiority. For Haecker, as the introduction points

out, 'it is not merely the influence of Kierkegaard's physical constitution upon his psychological constitution which is in question, but the influence of his hump in the question which occupies his whole work, his faith'. This inquiry takes Haecker and his readers into the very heart of Kierkegaardian criticism.

The author relates of Kierkegaard's faithful friend Boesen, how, 'Although he knew he sat by (Kierkegaard's) death-bed, and although he loved his friend and only wished him well in his last moments, Boesen had the courage to tell him that certain things had been exaggerated in the struggle and that his statements did not embrace either the whole truth or the actual facts'. Haecker was clearly eager to emulate this candid friendship, and his hero comes in for a good deal of kindly but firm criticism as well as much undisguised sympathy and admiration. His own standpoint is sanely thomistic, though his thomism is discreetly employed as an instrument of intelligent criticism, and never as a bludgeon or a rigid standard of comparison. But his strictures on Kierkegaard's use of the category of the 'Absurd', no less than some of his observations on Kierkegaard's alleged irrationalism, might have been considerably modified had he lived to consider the more recent work of Cornelio Fabro. This writer's *Foi et raison dans l'oeuvre de Kierkegaard*<sup>1</sup> should mark a turning point in Kierkegaardian interpretation.

The translation is for the most part very readable: some rather startling mistakes (*Dasein* precisely does not mean essence) should be corrigible by the reader; but there are one or two odd sentences less easily reparable. In compensation we are given several contemporary portraits and caricatures of Kierkegaard hitherto unpublished in this country.

VICTOR WHITE, O.P.

LE SENS DE L'HISTOIRE. Par Nicolas Berdiaeff. (Paris: Aubier, Editions Montaigne; n.p.)

This volume is the French translation of an early essay of Berdyaev's, first published in Russian in 1923. It contains, as well as a new preface to the French edition written by the author before his death, a reprint of the original preface to the Russian edition. Its translation into French has only an incidental interest for English readers, who have had the English translation since 1936 (*The Meaning of History*, London, 1936, Geoffrey Bles). Note, however, should be taken of an additional short chapter appended to the French edition, which was written in 1942 and entitled: *Histoire et Eschatologie*. Here, Berdyaev emphasises the three principal problems raised in any philosophy of history: progress, time, and freedom. Secular theories of progress are carefully distinguished from Christian messianic doctrines; time seen in its threefold aspect of cosmic, historical and existential significance; and,

<sup>1</sup> *Revue des Sciences philosophiques et théologiques*, XXXII, No. 3, July, 1948.