

summarily dismissed. Either he does not see that this puts him among the non-descriptivists, or does not explain in what his own presupposed non-descriptivism consists, and in what it is preferable to the brands he has passed over.

Another major weakness in the book is the ambiguity or obscurity in Mr Warnock's use of 'morality'. This word is used to designate sometimes a set of linguistic expressions (a normative ethical theory), sometimes a set of behaviours, and sometimes, unhappily, to designate one at one stage of an argument, the other at another, where the validity of the argument requires non-ambiguity. Cf. 'in so far as morality may be said . . . to have for its object the mitigation of suffering [i.e. the 'it' refers to a causal entity, like an aspirin, capable of mitigating suffering] . . . what it offers as reasons . . . are actually reasons' [i.e. the 'it' refers to a conceptual entity, like a proof, capable of offering reasons]. The sense in which humans may 'offer reasons' is not relevant

here]. Also, not a few bold generalizations in the book are questionable, not a few assumptions calmly taken, far from banal.

Has Mr Warnock succeeded in giving 'a reasonably general "account" of morality, neither fragmented into unobviously related details, nor emptied of substance'? Where he has done well, as in the earlier chapters, others have done at least as well already. Where, as in Chapter 6, he offers something less battle-worn, he argues less well, though the need for argument is greater there. Perhaps it is well for moral philosophers that Mr Warnock has not succeeded. For if all morality could do (with dubious success, so far as one can see) were what behavioural conditioning can claim more plausibly to be able to do, to 'expand our limited sympathies', it might be better simply to declare the bankruptcy of 'morality'.

Italics proliferate in this book like spots in measles.

LAWRENCE MOONAN

A HISTORY OF APOLOGETICS, by Avery Dulles. *Hutchinson and Co.*, London, 1971. 289 pp. £4.

This impressive piece of historical scholarship is one of the Theological Resources series published jointly by Hutchinson and Corpus. In offering the reader a clear, concise and balanced history of apologetics Dulles draws on his immense knowledge of this field compiled in two decades of research, teaching and writing.

The book is divided into six main sections: apologetics in the New Testament, the Patristic era, the Middle Ages, the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, the nineteenth century, and the twentieth century. Dulles' method is to present briefly the major contributions of each of these periods, to show the shifts in apologetics as Christian writers adjusted to shifting challenges, to demonstrate a certain continuity and discontinuity as apologetics developed, and to analyse and summarize briefly the contributions of each period. As in his *Revelation Theology* (Herder, 1969) Dulles writes a basically objective account and strives 'to keep my subjective views from obscuring the materials themselves' (p. xvii). Considering the merit of Dulles' views this would be an impoverishment were it not for the fact that he promises a companion volume on the theory of apologetics. As a (masterful) historical narrative the present volume stands on its own merits: but one of the values of historical knowledge is to liberate oneself from one's history. For this reason alone I think a book on

apologetic theory by Dulles, whose background in this field is *nonpareil* and whose methodology is always precise, is an urgent necessity for this era of future—shock.

The volume under review provides readers seriously interested in historical theology with a thorough yet brief conspectus of the history of one vital aspects of theology; further, it affords a brief glimpse of the *zeitgeist* and of the thought of the towering figures in this history. If the reader likes what he sees (and in this volume he only sees an introduction) he can go to the works of the writers themselves. Many of these writers faced challenges not wholly dissimilar to those of today. They still have insights that are of use to Christians seeking to respond to today's ultimate concerns. Justin, Aquinas, Schleiermacher, Newman, Blondel, are all with us once again, not only in dissertations but even on the BBC. And the reason for this is that they have something to say. When the very reality of God has (until recently) been called absent or dead, we have good reason to look to apologists who confronted pagans, Averroists, idealists and rationalists. And when Christianity is in diaspora we have reason to look to—let us say—Athenagoras and his colleagues of the pre-Constantinian epoch. A knowledge of history not only liberates us from our past; it provides the foundations for building on what is valuable in that past.

In a work of broad scope such as this there are bound to be occasional errors and omissions. For example, a date of death should be added to that of birth for Austin Farrar (p. 243). Also there might have been more attention to students of language such as Ian Ramsay. Do not they too belong under the broad umbrella of recent apologetics? Similarly we would have liked to see at least a brief treatment of John Macquarrie's philosophical theology. No matter where his thought ranges in the future, the first third of Macquarrie's *Principles* got through to much of confused young America in the sixties. The largest omission by far seems to be Dulles' inattention to a Christian apologetics for the redeemed earth. Some of the authors he treats have

leads for us in this critical need—e.g. 'Paul', Irenaeus, Newman, Coleridge, Chardin. In his forthcoming volume I hope he will draw on the insights of Joseph Sittler, the World Council of Churches and, for that matter, even the American Indian religions. Christian apologetics was almost mute when technocracy ravaged the new world. Let us hope the Church will speak out before England Los Angelizes with the motor car and the third world destroys its last frontiers. Finally, the printers seem determined to price themselves (and theology) out of business! Four pounds, as even Mr Heath must realize, is too much for 289 pages.

Despite the need for reflation, this book is highly recommended. EDWARD P. ECHLIN, S.J.

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA'S TREATMENT OF THE PROBLEM OF EVIL, by W. E. G. Floyd, O.S.B. (Oxford Theological Monographs). Oxford University Press, 1971. xxiii + 107 pp. £2.10.

When I was a student of philosophy I solved the problem of evil. I can remember vividly the occasion—I was preparing for an examination—and the lawn I was pacing when I solved it. Unfortunately for the human race I have forgotten how I solved it.

Of course, the problem only exists for those who believe in an all-powerful, wise and loving God: why doesn't he put an end to it? There was no problem for the Manichees. They saw the world as a battlefield on which two equal and opposite gods, a good and a bad, struggled for mastery, while man was impotent, tossed by the rival forces, a spiritual soul helpless in the prison of a body that was evil simply because it was material.

But those who believe in a single, good God cannot answer the questions so easily. The Gnostics who were such powerful rivals to Christianity in the second century, found an answer in a system inspired by Platonist ontology: although there is a supreme, transcendent deity, there emanates from him a descending series of inferior spirits, each rank further removed from ultimate goodness. Somewhere in this chain the decline from goodness shows itself in the creation of material things, which was frequently described as the work of a hostile inferior deity or demiurge. The supreme God does not interfere with the evil in the material world, because it is his nature to be totally apart. Man cannot put an end to it, because he is not free: evil is an essential quality of the life of the human soul in its earthly prison, though a small number of predestined 'spirituals' are saved, because their

souls are capable of acquiring the knowledge which alone can release from matter.

Clement had been trained in the eclectic philosophical fashions of his day, and assimilated into his thought elements of middle Platonism and Stoicism. He spent his best years as a Christian educator in Alexandria, a city that was a centre of intense academic activity and a hot-house of intellectual novelties; Gnosticism flourished in such soil. His major work, the *Stromateis* or 'Miscellanies', is a detailed refutation of the Gnostic world-view. The supreme God is also the creator; therefore the material world is good. The first man introduced evil into the world by his sin, and it remains a fact of human existence for every generation. But although man is born with this inclination to sin, and is subject to temptation by the devil, he preserves his free will and therefore his responsibility for his own actions. The afflictions of life are not so much evils as an educative discipline applied to us by a wise and loving Providence. The theoretical problems of evil are thus solved; *practically* they are solved by the redeeming work of Christ and man's free will.

Dom Gregory Floyd knows his Clement like his own hand; he provides a thorough systematization of the Father's theories and compares them point by point with those of his Gnostic adversaries. He shows incidentally that Clement, for all his opposition to the Gnostics, follows them in the belief that salvation is knowledge. But the author is a modest man; for all his familiarity with his subject, he is reluctant to trust himself to