

Christian terms, whose knowledge will be respected by other professional economists. In this way there would be some hope of bringing to an end the unnatural separation between economics and morality which has been the root of so much injustice in the past.

The ten essays in this book cover almost every aspect of reconstruction. It is impossible in one review to give an adequate appreciation of each one of them. They are not intended to be a complete and exhaustive study of the subjects treated, but should be a most valuable preparation for Catholics who wish to probe deeper into these matters, and a very useful introduction to Catholic principles for those outside the Church. Dom Ralph Russell and his collaborators have succeeded in producing not merely a collection of essays but a book which forms one organic whole, deriving its unity from the common faith of the writers.

DROSTAN MACLAREN, O.P.

REASON AND CONDUCT IN HUME'S TREATISE. By Rachel M. Kydd. (Cumberlege, Oxford University Press; 12s. 6d.)

Miss Rachel Kydd has given us an interesting analysis of Hume's teaching regarding the influence of reason on conduct. The question, 'Can reason influence conduct?' was answered by Hume, not with an absolute negative, and Miss Kydd considers that he is to be interpreted as meaning that reason can be a mediate cause of action, though reason alone can never be the basis of moral action. Hume's phrase, 'Reason the slave of passion', must be understood in this light, viz. not as totally destructive of the element of judgment in morality, but simply as a statement of Hume's view that any judgment is dependent on a pre-existent desire.

Miss Kydd makes a strong case for this interpretation, and we may well admit with her that Hume's statement of it destroys the *a priori* rationalism of his predecessors. Nevertheless the role which she gives to the mediate function of reason in Hume's thought does appear somewhat inconsistent with his general position, and indeed, taken in conjunction with his persistent undervaluation of the impelling power of the concept of duty, to raise problems of a metaphysical nature for which Miss Kydd does not appear to allow.

If Hume be not a moral statistician then he must face the question of whether reason does give us a knowledge which differs in kind from that of the senses. If it does, then he will be forced to revise his theory of knowledge, if not, it is difficult to see how the use of reason claimed for him by Miss Kydd can be other than inconsistent. Was he perhaps too acute a thinker to be consistent in terms of his own theory? In the attempt to find a moral criterion there does not exist—unless a *deus ex machina* is involved—a *via media* between a metaphysical approach in the Aristotilean sense and one which is subjective, properly falling within the provinces of the psychologist and

the student of culture. Or is it perhaps that a metaphysic more sensitive to the findings of scientific method might reveal a synthesis between the two approaches?

IAN HISLOP, O.P.

MELANCHTHON: ALIEN OR ALLY? By Franz Hildebrandt. (Cambridge University Press; 8s. 6d.)

Dr Hildebrandt modestly proposes to state rather than to solve the problem of the relationship between Melanchthon and Luther, mainly in the light of concessions made by the former to views on Reason, Law, and Power, which were incompatible with the strict Lutheran tradition. He claims that 'the theme is doctrinal and not historical', but his book is perhaps best understood as a contribution to the history of Protestant theology. Nevertheless recent events in Germany and the issues facing Protestantism today have affected the presentation, and the aim of the book is expressly stated to be practical: 'What matters to decide is whether or not the Church is justified and bound to make these concessions today'. The Catholic reviewer therefore may be content to note the incidental value of the theological exposition. Perhaps he will also be allowed to put in a plea that continental writers, unless they have the mastery of an Ernest Dimnet over English, should use their native language and arrange for a straightforward translation to be made; they will spare the reader a great deal of labour and perhaps a number of misunderstandings.

EDWARD QUINN.

ACTON: THE FORMATIVE YEARS. By David Mathew. (Eyre and Spottiswoode; 10s. 6d.)

It is much to be hoped that Dr Mathew's new dignity will not prevent him from completing this interesting and characteristic study of the great Lord Acton. This volume covers the formation of the historian and treats of the years from his birth in 1834 to the time when he came under the influence of Mr Gladstone in the Sixties. The background to this life affords Dr Mathew an opportunity to exercise the talent which is so particularly his, the disengagement of different lines of cultural influence concentrating upon a person or situation. The background here is extraordinarily rich and includes Bourbon Naples, St Petersburg, Dollinger's Bavaria, France moving towards 1870, the old English Catholic families, the Granville Whigs, Wiseman and the Tractarians. Dr Mathew has brilliantly illuminated these facets of Lord Acton's life and one might instance his study of Josephism, or Febronianism, as a particularly valuable example of his technique. All this is admirably done. As one reads the volume, however, and sees the emergence of the grand lines of Lord Acton's thought, one sometimes wonders whether these cultural excursions are strictly relevant to the main theme of the book. That is why it is so much to be hoped that the study will be completed and the whole