

The answer is put in terms of subjectivity and 'inwardness' not because he denies but because he takes for granted objective truth. The problem is a psychological one and was bound to arise eventually out of reaction against the Hegelian view of history. 'One thing has always escaped Hegel—what it means to live'. That was the error Kierkegaard combated, the divorce of thought from life, contemplation from ethics. He foresaw the spirit of so-called detachment in which 'intellectuals' can sit back and contemplate 'climates of opinion', systems of ethics and religious doctrines all as specimens of human thought. The delirious despair of Kierkegaard's aestheticist is all too easy to visualise in 1949 and is a far more tragic figure than Sullivan's 'super-aesthetical' young man. It is beyond the aesthetic, ethical and religious stages that Kierkegaard finds the problem which is the centre of human life, 'Now I ask how I am to become a Christian'.

When we see that question in its context and feel its pathos we remember that Kierkegaard has been regarded as Scandinavia's foremost thinker and prose writer. But here is neither the gigantic Teutonic gloom nor the Aryan despair: there is none of the rootlessness that haunts Ibsen nor even the bleak emptiness that sometimes mars Hans Andersen. Kierkegaard's esteem as a writer can only be measured by his teaching, for style is something more than the power to titillate the reader's sensibilities. Style is the invasion of time by eternal truth, and two truths lay behind all that Kierkegaard wrote: the transcendence of God and the creatureliness and sinfulness of man. To become a Christian was to reconcile these two facts: the problem was how, and the sadness came from humbleness, not despair. Mr Thomte has done us a service by opening the gate upon Kierkegaard's thought and showing us the grace with which problems are posed even when they are not solved.

GERARD MEATH, O.P.

ALTERNATIVE TO SERFDOM. By John Maurice Clark. (Blackwell; 8s.6d).

Like a good many other people Professor John Maurice Clark is of the opinion that not only State collectivism but also *laissez faire* capitalism lead in the long run to something very like serfdom. He does not, like Professor Hayek, maintain that we must return to something like a *laissez faire* economy if we are not to tread the road to serfdom; but he is not very clear about what the Alternative to Serfdom is. In this series of lectures, delivered at the University of Michigan in the spring of 1947 he gets as far as suggesting that the alternative to serfdom is 'group organisation'. But that does not tell us very much.

Professor Clark is an economist and is concerned with immediate policy rather than with long-term possibilities. He is concerned with the world, in particular the American world, as he finds it and the possibility of modifying existing tendencies; with the growing power

of Labour, with the irresponsible way in which Americans have used their freedom, with the problems of pressure groups and the science of selling political programmes and the like. In his first lecture, 'Wanted: a balanced society', about the responsibility of groups to their members and vice versa, he insists that economic mechanisms are not 'neutral' and that economists must consequently concern themselves with ends as well as means. His second on 'The Human Material', is written from a purely evolutionary point of view. The word 'sin' is placed in inverted commas. 'To urge my personal philosophy', he says, 'would be out of place; to some it would seem atheistic.' Yet he does urge it, though it does not seem very relevant to the economic problems with which he is chiefly concerned. In a later part of the book he deprecates the view that an alternative to serfdom must rest upon a religious or philosophic basis. He does not seem to recognise that the danger of serfdom arises not so much from different forms of economic organisation—nationalised industries, collective farms, the Nazi Labour Service and the like—but from a system of belief which treats man, as Professor Clark seems to treat him, simply as a highly developed animal. He stresses the need for respecting the worth and dignity of men and their need and duty to work together in society without seeming to realise that men will tend to be treated like animals if power is given to people who believe they are no more than animals. It would seem that the danger of serfdom arises more from false beliefs about the nature and destiny of man than from the economic problems with which Professor Clark is chiefly concerned.

His third chapter is called 'Competition and Security' and is concerned with the fact that measures which are necessary for social security are also those which lead to monopoly. The kind of measures introduced under the New Deal and promised by President Truman last January are also the kind of measures which lessen the effectiveness of competition. Those industries in which monopoly is most developed—and Professor Clark does not believe either in perfect monopoly or in perfect competition—are those in which social security is greatest and industrial relations are best. Monopoly, however, tends to lead to exploitation as surely as competition tends to lead to insecurity. This insecurity is primarily due, Professor Clark suggests in his fourth lecture, to a perennial deficiency in demand which keeps a number of people permanently unemployed and leads to large-scale unemployment.

The 'Revolution in Economics' initiated by Lord Keynes reversed many of the recommendations of classical economics—as in wage or budgetary policy in time of slump. 'Its most serious conclusion', says Professor Clark, 'is that an economic system cannot maintain full employment', or indeed, any level of employment, unless it will invest as much as its members choose to save. That is to say we shall be plagued with unemployment for as long as money tends

to accumulate in the hands of people and institutions that do not want to spend it. The unemployment, the crises, the cut-throat competition and the insecurity of capitalism are primarily due to the concentration of property and thereby of income in the hands of too few people. Professor Clark remarks that the emphasis of the Keynesians is on 'more equal distribution of income as a means to enlarge consumer spending' but he does not conclude that the 'Alternative to Serfdom' lies in some kind of distribution of property which will maintain demand and make economic security possible without monopoly. His final 'Responsible Individuals in Responsible Groups' is disappointing, perhaps because it does not seem to lead to any conclusion. He observes how American Labour Unions tend to base wage demands on 'ability to pay', to allow capital a 'reasonable' return but no more, but does not conclude that industry should be organised on some kind of co-operative basis such as that proposed by Mr J. Spedan Lewis in his book *Partnership for All*, or that proposed by the British Liberal Party in their policy of 'Ownership for All'. His book is full of interesting observations about economic problems and policy; but it somehow does not seem to reach any conclusions and does not even foreshadow the kind of social security policy developed by the Truman Administration since the lectures were delivered. It almost seems that he is agnostic about economic policy as well as about man, that the economist has done enough by drawing attention to the difficulties and dangers of different policies without committing himself to a conclusion. His book contains much that should be of interest to policy makers in business, in Labour Unions and in Government, but not, perhaps, so much to ordinary people who are looking for an alternative to serfdom, a third way, essentially different from industrial capitalism and totalitarian collectivism, which combines personal freedom with social justice. Perhaps one cannot expect a scientist who regards man as a kind of animal to think in such terms; one does not seek freedom or justice in a laboratory.

PAUL DERRICK.

CHANGING ATTITUDES IN SOVIET RUSSIA: THE FAMILY. By Rudolf Schlesinger. The International Library of Sociology and Social Reconstruction. (Routledge and Kegan Paul; 25s.)

The legislation of 1936 and 1944 in the U.S.S.R. concerning the family, divorce and abortion was a complete reversal of previous doctrinaire policy. It was amusingly illustrated by the fate of an author, Pilniak, who published a novel early in 1936. The book, *The Birth of Man*, was attacked as propagating a bourgeois and sentimental conception of love and faithfulness in marriage. Then came the pro-family laws of July. A couple of months later the unfortunate Pilniak was again pilloried, but this time for the opposite reason: he had not written with sufficient respect for the family and the dignity of motherhood!

For some time Christian sociologists have been aware of the