

that Dr Knox and those who think with him find it more congenial to talk about the Christ-Event than about the Person Christ; but how does one give personal allegiance to an *event*? One might have a genuine (though, it is to be hoped, a conditional and finite) devotion to Lord Nelson but hardly to the Battle of Trafalgar. Plainly, Dr Knox is striving to avoid entangling Christian belief with metaphysical concepts and systems; but, like so many of those who attempt this task, he uncritically accepts the assumptions of one particular contemporary metaphysical doctrine, in his case the doctrine that experience is the object and not just the medium of knowledge. (To preserve the Christian faith from contamination by metaphysics you need a metaphysician, not a non-metaphysician!) In asserting, as he does, without argument that the true humanity of Jesus excludes his pre-existence, Dr Knox brushes aside as unworthy of attention the whole tradition of Christological thought. It is significant that, while mythologizing belief about Christ, Dr Knox sees no need to mythologize belief about God; indeed, it is precisely because he understands 'God' in the traditional metaphysical sense that he denies Jesus' metaphysical pre-existence. More thorough-going revisionists, such as Dr Van Buren, find no difficulty in saying (of course in a

mythological sense) that Christ is God, because for them Christ and God are equally mythological. Dr Knox, however, appears to be running with the mythological Christological hare and following with the metaphysical theistic hounds. He is quite certainly doing his best to retain the traditional Christian attitude to Jesus; he speaks of Jesus as divine, but only in the sense that his divinity is 'a transformed, a redeemed and redemptive, *humanity*' (p. 113) and, while using the term 'divinity' of Jesus, he noticeably avoids the term 'deity'. He explicitly asserts that what matters is not who Christ *was* but what was *happening* in him and that nothing more can be required of a Christology than that it takes adequate account of the experience of the Church (pp. 56f). I can only comment that a Christology which limits itself to taking adequate account of the experience of the Church will be found in the end not to have taken adequate account of that experience. It is paradoxical that Dr Knox, with his extreme emphasis upon the experience of the Church, finds himself unable to accept the Church's own account of the ground of that experience; this does, I think, suggest that the metaphysical, epistemological and methodological tools with which he has equipped himself are not in fact adequate to his task.

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RELIGION IN A CHANGING WORLD, by S. Radhakrishnan. *George Allen and Unwin*. 25s.

For a lifetime the eminent author of this study has been caught up in a passionate effort to bridge the spiritual and intellectual gulf between East and West. He is so eminent that it is an embarrassment to know how to describe him; which of his many titles to apply. Sir Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan has served his country as ambassador to Russia during the grim days of the Stalinist ice age, as Vice-President and as one of India's best loved Presidents. His massive scholarship is embodied in editions of the central scriptures of Hinduism, the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavadgita* and the *Brahma Sutra*, which have been recognized as classics. But Dr Radhakrishnan is equally well known as an authority on comparative religion from books like *Religion and Society*, *An Idealist View of Life* and *East and West in Religion*. His seminars at All Souls during the time when he was Spalding Professor of Eastern Religions and Ethics at Oxford revealed, too, the wide range of his interests, his fascination with the lives and works of outstanding figures from many different faiths.

It is from a unique vantage point, then, that *Religion in a Changing World* has been written. And it is a book which Catholics cannot afford to ignore. The changes which Dr Radhakrishnan emphasizes have come about because now 'The human race is one. This oneness of humanity is more than a phrase it is not a mere dream. It is becoming a historic fact. . . . We stand on the threshold of a new society, a single society.'

His interpretation of this new situation comes close in some ways to Teilhard de Chardin's vision of convergence, of increasing complexification, and it is clear that he has gained a deeper respect for the Church on account of the wider, more genuinely universal views which have lately been circulating among Catholics. Above all because of the ecumenism and spirit of rigorous self-criticism promoted by Pope John through the Second Vatican Council and since supported by Pope Paul. The Christian churches generally now find more favour in Hindu eyes because of their greater tolerance of one another and their lessening

self-complacency. In Hinduism Christianity encounters another catholicism and for that reason is put to a particularly severe test. The confrontation of Hinduism and the Catholic Church especially, may well prove to be one of the major mental events of the near future; possibly more important than that with Communism or the agnosticism of scientific humanism.

Obviously when experiencing this challenge Catholics must retain their own integrity and avoid compromising the truths they stand for. But no doubt they can learn salutary lessons in their turn from Dr Radhakrishnan's strictures on bigotry. 'No one is so vain of his religion as he who knows no other. If we know the classics of other religions, we will admire them and share their joys and sorrows. Advocates of religion sometimes become missionaries of hatred towards other religions.'

Yet is in the very nature of the problem that a true understanding of another faith demands more than a knowledge of its classics. A way must be found to absorb its atmosphere, to become familiar with its spirit in quite a practical fashion; to borrow an insider's vision. Otherwise generalizations are bound to be made which must seem very odd to believers.

Most Catholics will be startled and alarmed to learn that 'The Christian teaching about sex is that it is usually wrong but can, in view of the

fragility of human nature, be "excused" in marriage, to use the words of Pope Gregory. Under the influence of Pauline theology Christianity developed into an anti-erotic religion.' Though this is a travesty of the real doctrine it is one often enough presented by puritans within the Church. Its dangers as a position are scarcely realized until we are confronted with it plainly from the outside. Again, when he considers the idea of revelation, so important to the Judaic faiths, Dr Radhakrishnan points out how 'it is not easy to admit that God has been partial to a fraction of humanity. He cannot be conceived to have favourites. If God is love, he is the creator of all his creatures and must have revealed himself to all.' Here he spotlights a difficulty which theologians have tended to evade and draws our attention towards developments from an original, primitive revelation which have to be seen as paralleling the unfolding of that scriptural revelation first made to the Jews. His observations on faith and reason, the problem of evil, the meaning of history and other crucial matters provoke fresh thought all the time and demand a re-examination of Christian doctrine as conventionally presented. If a parochial piety is to be avoided and the truth communicated apostolically to a world now so clearly one, this is an essential exercise.

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THE YOUNG MARX, by Bernard Delfgaauw. *Sheed and Ward*, 1967. 11s. 6d.

Professor Delfgaauw presents his book as an attempt to reveal 'something of the driving force behind communism' (p. viii) and believes that this driving force is nowhere more clearly evident than in the earlier writings of Marx. During the course of a wide-ranging book he gives a short description of Marx's life and work followed by an account of the sources of his thought and then an interpretation of Marx's atheism. He goes on to devote chapters to Marx's idea of philosophy, his views on dialectical and historical materialism and his views on humanism; then he returns to a discussion of the relation between Marxism, philosophy and Christianity and finishes with the obstacles to a dialogue with Moscow.

Let me say at the outset that, despite many strong criticisms, this book is well worth reading: books on the young Marx in English are in any case rare and parts of Professor Delfgaauw's book, particularly the second half where he is content with straight exposition, are excellent. It is therefore all the greater pity

that the book should have been so inaccurately conceived and put together. Small mistakes annoy (the *Criticism of Hegel's Philosophy of the State* is misdated, Feuerbach is called, of all things, an individualist!), and the style of the book often serves only to confuse: what, for instance, can be the meaning of: 'For Marx philosophy—and by *philosophy* here he meant *materialism*—had to be in interaction with concrete reality' (p. 51)?

There are three main points of criticism:

Firstly, it is Professor Delfgaauw's view that, according to Marx, man's alienation has its origin and basis in the duplication of human existence into a secular and a religious existence; in short, that socio-economic alienation is consequent upon religious alienation. This, as an interpretation of Marx, seems to me to be simply false. The reasons that Professor Delfgaauw advances to support his interpretation are not to the point, for they merely show that Marx proceeded from a critique of religion to one of economics and to a large extent used