

men by nature, intellectually, morally and spiritually) would not be accepted today. He is careful, however, to distinguish between those arguments that are just against women and those that are against the ordination of women. He also notes those places where a writer has jumped to the desired conclusion too quickly.

The relevant scriptural passages are considered in detail, not only because the early Fathers based most of their arguments on these texts, but also because one of the main traditional objections to the ordination of women is the fact that Jesus and the Apostles did not choose women as witnesses. Van der Meer, however, positions the NT Church against the socio-religious position of women in the Palestine of that time. Now it is recognised just how low was the legal status of Jewish women, even by contemporary middle-Eastern standards; being held responsible for the first sin, according to the rabbinic tradition of later Judaism, their voices were considered shameful and therefore not to be tolerated in public. They were not allowed to learn the Torah or teach their children. The author therefore argues that they could not possibly have been added to the apostolic college as witnesses to the Resurrection, for, as they did not know the Law, how could they know it had been fulfilled in the person of Jesus? Moreover, the witness of a woman would not have been held valid by a Jew. As the position of women within the Christian community is different today, he reasons that it is illogical to assume—as has been done by so many people—that the choice of men as witnesses by Jesus and the Apostles is binding on all times.

The other traditional objections to the ordination of women stem from St Paul, and van der Meer considers the relevant passages in great detail. As with the other NT writers, he positions Paul against his background, and suggests that at times Paul thought as a rabbi and as a result accommodated himself to temporal circumstances. But he questions whether this attitude should be determinative for us, especially as at other times Paul transcended his rabbinism—particularly in the well-known text of Gal.3.28 concerning salva-

tion, in which there is neither 'slave nor free, male nor female'. Commentators may argue that this is an 'eschatological statement', not a revolutionary manifesto, but van der Meer urges that 'the new era, much as it is still to come, nevertheless is already begun!' Therefore, he says, the sociological structure of the Church should be altered to accommodate itself to the new situation.

I found little inspiration in the chapters of this book expounding what has been said about the status of women by the early Church Fathers, the Magisterium, and by speculative theologians from St Augustine and St Thomas up to the present day; I was saddened to read how low a regard one half of Christianity has had for the other. I even wondered if Christianity means something different for women than for men. Certainly it is shown here that the early women martyrs were a problem for the Church Fathers. The author also quotes some of the tortuous arguments used to exclude women from office even though women were showing themselves to be quite capable of exercising spiritual jurisdiction as abbesses in monasteries.

However, having revealed that most of the arguments against the ordination of women up to the pre-Vatican II period are at least ambiguous, van der Meer nevertheless concludes that as we have only known a masculine priesthood, it would be inappropriate for women to enter such a priesthood, for they could not take on this type of ministerial function without losing their femininity. This might have been the complete answer in 1962, when this book was written and when our ideas on priesthood were closed, but since Vatican II (as is pointed out in the afterword), there has been a development in the Church's understanding of herself. The search for renewal of the priesthood has meant that our ideas on priesthood and ministry are now open, and within this new spirit of openness we may discover forms of priesthood in which both the masculine and the feminine can be effectively represented. The translators indeed argue that the priesthood *cannot* be reformed and renewed without both male and female theologising and experience.

EILEEN WILKES

ESSAYS ON FREEDOM OF ACTION, edited by Ted Honderich. *Routledge and Kegan Paul*, London and Boston, 1973. 215 pp. £3.

This book is a collection of nine independently written and previously unpublished essays by Mary Warnock, John Watling, Harry G. Frankfurt, Anthony Kenny, David Pears, Donald Davidson, D. C. Dennett and Ted Honderich, who also provides a short introduction.

All, with the exception of Mary Warnock, who writes about Sartre's view of human freedom in *L'être et le néant*, contribute to current debate. This ensures enough interrelation to provoke the wish that the collection had been given a more deliberate unity. The essays are exploratory, defining issues and

testing arguments rather than advancing ambitious theses on the great issue of free will versus determinism. This has the advantage of bringing out the variety of topics huddled under this traditional umbrella.

The question that gets least attention is whether determinism is true. Honderich presents the evidence for the determination of human actions by events in the brain, which themselves have physical causes. Wiggins clarifies what the thesis of determinism is, but his aim is to refute the suggestion that it is not clear, rather than to pronounce on its truth. Kenny expresses surprise that so many philosophers should assume it to be true. Only Honderich and Dennett come out on the determinist side.

This comparative neglect is explained by the fact that a number of the contributors think that freedom of action does not depend on the absence of physical determinants. The weakness of reconciliations between freedom and determinism has generally been in the inadequate characterisation of freedom which they offer. To say that an act is free if not under compulsion, or if it was caused by internal factors (e.g. the agent's desires)—these are either manifestly false or in need of clarification. To say that an act is free if the agent was amenable to argument is more promising. It relates the freedom needed for responsibility to the notion of an action that issues from the agent's practical reason. It may be that a set of sufficient conditions for acting freely can be elicited from an investigation of practical reason, and that this would give a concept of freedom strong enough to underpin ascription of responsibility and to make intelligible the distinctions we make between persons and things. Such an account might show that we can ignore physical determinism. But it is not to be taken for granted that it would.

Dennett and Kenny are prepared to think that nothing in our concept of responsibility would need to be changed, while Honderich and Wiggins argue that if determinism is true then at least part of what is presupposed in our use of that concept would have to give way, and that this should imply very significant changes in our conception of ourselves as persons.

The crucial issue—and it is because they have in the past glossed over it that those who seek reconciliations seem to have been cheating—is in what sense freedom requires alternative possibilities of action. Determinism implies that when a man acts an event takes place which could not, by natural necessity, have been otherwise. Does it, or does it not, follow that the man himself could not have

done otherwise? The intuitions of philosophers yield different answers. Wiggins and Honderich believe that the consequence does not follow. But Kenny points out that the formal logic of necessity and possibility as they apply to events and actions is lacking, and so we cannot advance beyond intuitions which may well be fallible. I do not think Kenny means to imply that advances in formal logic will by themselves do the trick. The formalisations have to be looked at to see whether they do capture the inferences that we consider valid. There has to be advance simultaneously on various sectors of the front, perhaps the most important being the study of practical reasoning and the related analysis of the notions of wanting and intending and of the way in which wants explain the actions for which they give reasons. Here the articles by Pears and Davidson make valuable if tentative contributions. A reconciliationist, who wishes to characterise free actions as events caused in a particular way, must, just as much as the libertarian, be at pains to show in what way an action is produced by its psychological antecedents, and when those antecedents are such that the action is deemed to be free. Their essays are parts of an argument against a view, lately influential but unrepresented here, according to which psychological explanation is radically different from causal explanation and at the same time the only kind of explanation appropriate to action, as distinct from events. Both Pears and Davidson have exposed the fallacies in this position in earlier articles. In this book Pears argues for the implicit generality of explanations in terms of desires, so making them comparable to causal explanations of events. Davidson argues that freedom to act is causal power of a human agent, of which an analysis, though an incomplete one, can be given in terms of the beliefs and desires that cause intentional actions. It is, I think, a false move for libertarians to reject these arguments out of hand, for the kind of psychological determinism which they suggest (but do not establish) is incompatible with a rejection of physical determinism. To deny any form of causality in order to exclude physical causation from moral actions is to steer from the cliff to be sucked into the whirlpool.

Frankfurt's paper on coercion stands apart, in dealing directly with the attribution of responsibility under moral and legal pressure. His problem is how a man can be coerced by threats and promises, which, unlike physical force, operate indirectly. In the face of such pressure one may choose to succumb, thus it could be argued remaining responsible; but Frankfurt argues that there can be motives so

powerful that one cannot but succumb. This topic has been greatly neglected by philosophers, and even if Frankfurt's view proves untenable his paper still has immense value for its replacement of confused intuitions by clear and discussable distinctions. It is also a model of lucid philosophical prose, without jargon or the barbarous quasi-formal apparatus which lately has multiplied without necessity.

Two other contributions seemed to me of particular interest, those of Wiggins and Davidson. But none is a waste of time.

It would have been helpful to the general reader and to philosophers who do not cultivate this particular patch if the editor had spread himself a bit in his introduction, putting the different essays in context, emphasising the common issues and identifying the points at which they crucially differ and where further work is to be done. This would have reduced the frustrating feeling in the reader that although he can hear all the contributors they cannot hear one another.

JOHN BENSON

**BLACK CLUBS IN BERMUDA: Ethnography of a Play World**, by Frank E. Manning. *Cornell University Press*, Ithaca and London, 1973. 277 pp. £8.

This very interesting book is based on surveys conducted by the author in 1969-70 and in 1972. Its value is enhanced by the appendix in which the author gives his interview schedule. Given that Bermuda is a 'play' society, or has been since tourism took over from seafaring, Dr Manning asks what is the function of play in such a complex community with its class and racial tensions. It would be easier to follow his argument if he was not such an enthusiastic specialist with all a specialist's naivety. He is constantly using words like 'agonistic' without defining them and then spends a great deal of time explaining some platitude or term in common use. None the less it is a good book and he makes his case that the black social clubs have a vital role within Bermudan society, dominated as it is by white merchants and ex-patriates. These clubs developed out of the older lodges with their ideal of moral improvement, but emphasised recreation and, in particular, sport, which was until recently segregated. They also encouraged insurance and other schemes and provided some alternative to the old dependence on patronage. Because of their sporting ideal of life as a game the clubs stress both the importance of strategy and the element of chance, and accept hedonistic goals. Such a view of life is very different from the ideal of the methodic effort involved in salvation through work and undoubtedly much of our difficulty with Bermudan and West Indian males springs from the failure to realise this: the whole of the social experience of the blacks has led them to look for salvation through chance, the patron, the contact. This is mirrored too in the episodic salvation or conversion ethic of the churches whose fundamentalist and ascetic ideals the black clubmen are unable to accept—for the moment. The theology of the liberal has no contact with this world either in its Christian or its clubman form.

Although the clubman plans to exploit and compete, he is well aware that it is the 'breaks' that count and that he must play with 'style' and always before an audience with whom he communicates aesthetically rather than informatively. Round the core of sport is the 'show'—both entertainment and the projection of black identity or 'soul'—which has helped in the transition from a folk to a world culture. This all has political implications which are worked out in dialogue at the bar, a home from home, a clearing house for views, gossip and contacts. The club is then an image or symbol of reality, where, 'You tell it like it is', as opposed to the churches in which there is much hypocrisy about what 'ought' to be.

The great importance of all this is that the clubs have provided the Bermudan with an infra-structure on which he can build a society managed by blacks. The experience and power gained through the clubs before decolonisation has provided an institutional framework for a new society. In this Bermuda is unlike so many Caribbean countries where the vacuum left by the departure of the imperial administration has been filled by charismatic populist leaders and there are no indigenous institutions sufficiently deeply rooted to counter-balance the drift to despotism—as is the case in Grenada.

Bermuda, for better or worse (and in the long run it is probably for worse), is totally dominated by tourism and by expatriate finance. On this Dr Manning passes a more favourable verdict than most recent authorities, who tend to regard it as socially destructive and not even economically profitable—save to the expatriate entrepreneur. He argues that the black Bermudan has been able to respond positively to its impact and that within the hedonistic framework has even been able to rejuvenate the indigenous cultural heritage.

IAN HISLOP, O. P.