

restored, modern man will be cursed by fear, unrest, and the will to destroy for all his days. Without a spiritual change in the heart and mind of man there will be no peace and no stability in the world. 'Humanity feels an imperative need for a complete regeneration of the heart and mind.' 'Let us start out from the isolated bridgeheads of Europe, build up internationalism in various key regions of Europe and restore the shattered structure of the Continent bit by bit—this is the only realistic approach and programme. The architects of the new Europe can be found in Great Britain, France, Switzerland and Scandinavia.'

To the Catholic it is written large where all these remedies may be found.

MARGRIETA BEER.

PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERSTANDING AND RELIGIOUS TRUTH. By Erich Frank (Cumberlege, Oxford University Press; 10s. 6d.)

These six lectures, supplemented by copious and valuable notes, are addressed to the philosophical understanding rather than to religious sentiment, yet they do not appear hard-bitten enough for the marches between science and religion. They deal with an ancient feud, sometimes as though it were still conducted as at the beginning of the century.

Now religion may be offered to the scientist as a relief or escape, and may be so accepted, for like other men he does not always want to talk shop; or again, he may be shown, as in these lectures, and acceptably too, that religion is an attempt to wrestle with a reality beyond his professional technique that yet must be faced. Nevertheless, as in other relationships, a stable agreement means common ground, and this is not provided in these lectures: a German Protestant strain discountenances such an agreement in advance.

Is it because there are divisions rather than distinctions? Echoes of post-Reformation conflicts reverberate from the first lecture on the nature of man. On the one hand the mechanism of the physical world, and on the other the challenge to reason and nature from religion—and romance. The Copernican revolution paradoxically landed man in the prison of his consciousness: the theocentric habit of the medievals did at least enable them to look at the wriggling creature with a certain detachment and as a part of a going concern. This seeing of things in their proper place, essential to the virtue of humility, enters into the connected sense of humour and temperance of knowledge. Despite an exuberant treatment of external finality, the pathetic fallacy of projecting human feelings into the outside world is not a weakness of the medievals who wholeheartedly went Aristotelean. They did not explain natural events by anthropomorphic concepts of psychic forces, nor begin by giving an ethico-religious sense to the term *soul*. It is the religious philosopher of another tradition who is saddled with the difficulty of reconciling the claims of the Here and Beyond, or rather of deciding which to suppress.

St Thomas has little use for violence and does not invoke the idea of religion as an interruption from another plane. Dr Frank, for all the deference he pays to scientism, has not, one suspects, so great a confidence in the religious usefulness of the reason: he does not allow that the traditional demonstrations for the existence of God do more than reassure those who already believe on other counts. That the agonized attempt to deny God may be more moving than the *quinque viæ* need not be gainsaid, but a rational exposition must not be charged with more than it claims, and there are times when Pascal's saying must be transposed if only to defend the reason against the heart. The reason has its rights, and arguments should be followed whether their conclusions fulfil a wish or disappoint it. This is the ground of rational theology which religious philosophers have been too ready to evacuate, perhaps because they have never liked the scenery. And so the world of science remains in its profaneness, and some religious temperaments even rejoice in the affronts they can offer to reasonableness. But this is not the tranquillity of order of the Thomist synthesis, the communication of the sciences in society, the discipline of exact analogy that is the rule of wisdom. We must look for light from Maritain rather than from Bloy, though from the latter comes more of a blast. Pascal's wager, St Augustine's struggles may be signs of a deeper and holier reality than Archdeacon Paley can accommodate; nevertheless the Whigs and Anglicans are wanted here. Scientific theism must be re-examined, undistracted by the feeling either that it is what one wants or that it has fallen out of fashion. At any rate, do not think that thinkers such as St Thomas thought that they were leaping into the unknown on making an act of faith, or screwing themselves up to a Kierkegaard gesture, or directly attempting to establish an object of complete adoration, or doing anything else but trying to make sense of what would otherwise be a meaningless bustle of events.

The third lecture, on creation and time, continues the antithesis of religion and science. Cosmology, it is thought, must remain with a creaturely chain of causes and effects, and creation must be excluded; 'to re-introduce into science the concept of creation, with its implication of supernatural intervention, would verge on absurdity'. How is it then defended? As a religious, not a scientific, idea, which throws light on the conditions of novelty in moral choice. Though in one place the notion is freed from what is termed 'the metaphysical assumption that the world had a beginning in time', it is something of a feat to have discussed its religious context with but an oblique footnote reference to the careful analysis of St Thomas which shows that creation does not necessarily involve a historical process. The contrast between sense and sensibility is continued in the fourth lecture, on truth and imagination. Sense is for the world of verifiable facts, but there are other realms to which we can testify with assurance. A Thomist, however, is not so disposed to take refuge from

science, even in its most bigoted senses. The concluding lectures, on history and destiny, and on letter and spirit, show the author at his best; he has left his questionable bases for wise and prudent moral reflections, where he stands in all the strength of what may be called a gracious existentialism.

This review has not done justice to his great learning and sympathy. But it is really a tribute, for the lectures themselves encourage a discussion and offer so much information; they have made us circle the need for a strictly scientific account of the preambles to Christian belief and practice. It is not fair to criticize a work for what it does not set out to do. A challenge and supplement to scientism is here worthily offered. Yet it may be observed that however powerful the case for religious truth, if it be presented as a world wholly apart from science, the result can be no more than to turn the scientist into a man who also happens to be a believer. It may be an appeal to his gallantry—but Balaclava was neither an exemplary military action nor the subject of a particularly fine piece of poetry—or it may be a confrontation with the real issues of guilt and death. But, in principle, is it not better to argue up through the sciences themselves? Dr Frank is known for his distinguished book *Plato und die sogenannten Pythagoreer*; it is suggested that some of the issues he raises, though vivid and difficult, are in reality but so-called problems. They are problems when we are urged to lead a double life, but not when rationalism and belief can be shown at work in the middle term of a discipline that is at once scientific and religious, open to influences beyond reason, alive to analogy, exacting in its demands for rational evidence.

THOMAS GILBY, O.P.

AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER? Ananda K. Coomaraswamy. (John Day Co., New York; \$2.25.)

All that Dr Coomaraswamy writes goes together; all contributes to his main purpose of making inescapably clear the difference between a sacred and a secular order of life and thought. The seven essays here use the same principles and point the same moral as the two volumes already published on 'the normal view of art', but their starting-point is usually somewhat different. One, on 'reincarnation', appeared in BLACKFRIARS last November. Among other subjects treated the *The Bugbear of Literacy* (a withering indictment, amply documented); Guénon's writings and their significance; and the idea of 'spiritual paternity' among primitive peoples. On this last, by the way, two patristic passages should be added to the christian parallels. 'It was not you who formed your son, it was God who made him; you did but minister to his appearing (*parodos*). it was God himself who wrought the whole' (St John Chrysostom, P.G. 61. col. 85). *Nec qui concumbit nec qui seminat est aliquid sed qui format Deus* (St Augustine, *De civ. Dei* 22, c. 24).