

'belief' until it is void of objective meaning. This the techniques of contemporary philosophy can show; hence the effect of philosophy, far from leaving everything as it is, is destructive of religion. I believe most of the arguments of the book either to be invalid, or to be based on false premisses; but their presentation is both entertaining and skilled. Thus the book may be heartily recommended to philosophical believers as an object on which to sharpen their knives.

Penelhum's book has much to say on a point which is, I should say, not sufficiently adverted to by Nielsen; that it is very difficult to

philosophize about religion without begging the question of belief one way or the other. The unbeliever is apt to set up his theory of knowledge in such a way that God is bound to be excluded from the possible objects of intelligible discourse, while the believer will do just the opposite. The traditional forms of argument for God's existence would appear, according to this author, to be invalid; nevertheless, there seems no rationally compelling way of making nonsense of the theist's claim that God reveals his nature and purposes to believers through certain significant events in nature and history.

HUGO MEYNELL

THE SOPHISTS; SOCRATES, by W. K. C. Guthrie. *Cambridge University Press*, 1971. 345 pp. and 200 pp. £1.40 and £1 respectively.

These two volumes together are a reprint of the third volume of Professor Guthrie's *History of Greek Philosophy*, published in 1969 and already widely regarded as a standard work on the subject of the 'Greek enlightenment'. The aim of issuing them in paperback is to make them more cheaply available to students, and as such they are very welcome. Throughout both volumes, the author's concern is to establish what the various men whom we call Sophists had to say, rather than to discuss whether what they said was true or not, and thus the books are to be regarded as works of classical scholarship rather than of philosophy. Professor Guthrie's stance is that of an Olympian god, peering down through the dim ages on to the activities of 'The Greeks' (who were they, the Greeks? These books are much too inclined to generalize about them: 'In Greek eyes practical instruction and moral advice constituted the main function of the poet!') and never does he dirty his hands by descending to the struggle. There is little sense in these books that the controversies which concerned Thrasymachus, Protagoras and the rest have any very vital concern for those who are fortunate enough to have been born in the enlightened twentieth century; an impression that can be rectified by a glance into Popper's *Open Society and its Enemies*, so frequently cited in these pages, or into E. R. Dodd's edition of Plato's *Gorgias*.

Since they are works of reference more than anything, the volume on the Sophists is the more valuable, as it gathers together much material which would otherwise be difficult to track down. But one gets the impression that the person of Socrates is almost entirely obscured by the sheer weight of modern scholarship, which Guthrie too conscientiously takes into account. Even so, two recent books are ignored, even in the extensive bibliographies, namely Ryle's *Plato's Progress*, and *Merit and Responsibility* by W. H. Adkins, the former of which would undermine Guthrie's approach entirely (since it sees the historical value of Plato's dialogues as minimal); whereas the latter is essential in understanding the genesis of Greek ideologies. The books abound in apparently arbitrary and not always happy references to modern times, in the shape of quotations from Russell's autobiography, *The Listener* and Disraeli, with many others; and he falls into the trap, set by Prichard and sprung by Austin, of talking in terms of modern philosophy about the Athenians ('Socrates was famous for his utilitarian approach to goodness and virtue')—but otherwise these books are eminently sound, with everything good and bad that that implies. The general reader will find Plato more stimulating, and Aristophanes infinitely funnier.

PAUL POTTS, O.P.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL NOTEBOOK OF JOHN HENRY NEWMAN, edited by Edward Silleam. Vol. I. General Introduction to the Study of Newman's Philosophy. *Éditions Nauwelaerts*, Louvain, 1969. 258 pp. 390 Belgian francs.

'... the experience of the past seventy years has shown, in one instance after another, that those who forage for their own ideas or points of view in Newman's writings ... generally give an

account of his thought that he would scarcely have recognized' (p. 16). Newman, like Aquinas, has suffered (at the hands of friend and foe alike) from people who have failed to