

of the point in his large and unfinished book on the Eucharist, recommends (in the article *Eucharistie*) *bisra* as the Aramaic equivalent behind the New Testament *soma*; in the article on the recitals of institution (*Einsetzungsberichte*) Schümann dismisses this out of hand ('sicher nicht *bisra*'). Short articles on 'tags' should also be noticed; for instance, on *Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus* (Beumer) or *gratia supponit naturam* (Alfaro): these seem to me exceptionally valuable. Jedin has good articles on the Councils and the Conciliar movement; Schlier and Ratzinger share an article on the Body of Christ (*Leib Christi*; special articles on the Encyclicals *Mystici Corporis* and *Satis Cognitum* are promised).

To attempt to go further in the space available would simply be to list articles and contributors. Enough has perhaps been said to indicate the outstanding value and interest of the Lexikon. Hardly any of the contributors (on theological topics, at least) restricts himself to a summary of approved commonplaces; the general impression continues to be one of a Church intellectually and spiritually alive. It will be interesting to see how the new *Catholic Encyclopedia*, work on which has already started, will compare with this fine achievement of what is very largely German-speaking Catholicism.

The reviewer notes with regret that of his two patrons the Pope appears under 'C' and the centurion under 'K', presumably because of a traditional biblical spelling.

CORNELIUS ERNST, O.P.

Hume Reconsidered

HUME'S PHILOSOPHY OF BELIEF

by Antony Flew; Routledge and Kegan Paul; 30s.

This is an admirably interesting and informative work on Hume's *Enquiry Concerning the Human Understanding*, that is to say on those aspects of Hume's philosophy which Hume himself thought were most important, and which have proved in the long run most influential. Professor Flew has supplied us with an aid which will make it easy for much less learned people to consider—and to find in their original places—what probably amount to most arguments of any significance that have been offered in criticism or defence of Hume, so far as they relate to matter covered in the *Enquiry*. For this service he deserves very warm thanks. He himself reports, discusses and takes up a position on the arguments in hand. Only someone who is already as well-read as Professor

Flew himself in this field should dream of doing without this book if he wants to consider Hume.

Anyone for example who has an interest in natural theology should consider Hume. For if Hume is right then there is no such science, and it does not appear that he has been clearly and intelligibly shown to be wrong. It may be reasonable to be convinced that that philosophy of cause and effect and of arguments about the same is wrong, without being able to show how; it is not permissible to claim that one can give a cosmological argument that ought to be accepted by philosophers, if one cannot answer this well-known cavil.

Hume was not competent in logic. It is important for his position to be able to argue that there can be no ground to hold the maxim 'Every beginning of existence must have a cause'. This he does, not in the *Enquiry*, but in a passage in the *Treatise* to which Professor Flew refers without apparent misgiving. If we suspect the passage (*Treatise, Book I, Part III, Section III*), it appears that Hume is doing one of two things.

Either he is confusing the following two propositions: (i) 'Necessarily, if anything begins to exist, something causes it' and (ii) 'If anything begins to exist, then of something it holds necessarily that it causes that thing'. (i) is evidently what the maxim means: it might be called 'the weakest possible form of the principle of causality'. But it is only to (ii) that Hume's arguments apply with any force. For he really did succeed in showing that, given a cause and an effect, there was no logical connexion between them; that is, the cause could be supposed to exist and not the effect, without any logical impossibility; and *vice versa*. Nor was he attacking a straw man: philosophers, though not the vulgar, had thought just what he showed to be false. (That the vulgar had not thought it is evident from popular belief in miracles and wonders and *lusus naturae*). Now it is likely enough that Hume would observe no difference between (i) and (ii); observing such differences would be a characteristic activity of such a despised class as school logicians.

Or, if Hume was genuinely discussing (i) rather than (ii), he relied on an argument from imagination to assure us that 'Something has come into existence without any cause' describes a possible state of affairs. But imagination can have no authority here. All it can do is to supply us with as it were a picture of something coming into existence, without a picture of a cause annexed, the title under the picture being 'Picture of something coming into existence without any cause'.

We are left with this: There is no formal self contradiction in the proposition 'Something came into existence without a cause'. That is to say, that proposition is not of the form 'Both p and not p'. But that is not even enough to show that 'Every beginning of existence has a cause' does not belong to the class of necessarily—logically necessarily—true propositions. For that class is wider in extension than is the class of propositions whose contradictory is self contradictory, as can be shown in the well-known example of colour expanses. An expanse of colour A and an expanse of colour B cannot coincide if A and B are

(determinately) different colours. Possibly one could save the situation for Professor Flew—who sets great store by this position—by excluding as logically impossible only propositions which were either self contradictory or were subject to the argument from imagination and impossible by it. (But I doubt if one could).

I do not particularly wish to suggest that the weak maxim about causes is logically necessary. I do not know whether it is or not, or quite what importance the question has. For Flew quotes a passage from a letter of Hume in which Hume strenuously denies that he ever maintained so absurd a thesis as that something might come into existence without a cause. But if it is true, in whatever manner, that every beginning of existence does have a cause, then, since causes cannot be very well supposed to move in a circle, it follows that either there is an infinity of beginnings of existence produced by causes which in their turn began to exist, or there is at least one cause which had no beginning of existence.

Thus someone who unrestrictedly assents to the statement 'Every beginning of existence has a cause' is committed to a fairly startling disjunction; at least from the point of view of a strictly 'anti-metaphysical' philosophy. So striking a result of such a proposition as 'Every beginning of existence has a cause' arises from its being a (universal) *relational* proposition.

These are points of logic which would certainly have had no appeal for Hume, and, which perhaps have not particularly struck Professor Flew, whose strength does not lie in that direction either—cf. his remarks on page 130 about material implication. 'Of course', he says, 'the statement that the philosophical relation of conjunction holds between event A and event B is closely analogous to the statement that the logical relationship of material implication obtains between the proposition reporting the occurrence of A and the proposition reporting the occurrence of B'. But any pair of true propositions materially imply one another (that is part of the meaning of this technical term); so there is no analogy. Incidentally, I think Professor Flew is confused by Hume's expression 'a philosophical relation', he only means what any scientist or philosopher would call a relation, by contrast with the vulgar who would say 'These two things are far distant from one another, there is no relation between them', as if distance were not a relation. (Cf. *Treatise, Book I, Part I, Section V*).

On page 69 Professor Flew reasonably accords with Professor Passmore's (whose book has been inadvertently omitted from the bibliography) remarking how Hume fails to note that 'logically compulsive demonstrations' may start from matter-of-fact premises and terminate in matter-of-fact conclusions. (E.g., the disjunction cited above would be such a matter-of-fact conclusion). But on page 117 he is back highly praising Hume (or so it seems) for saying 'Nothing is demonstrable, unless the contrary implies a contradiction'. Or is there a thread of consistency in that in the earlier passage he says that 'fortunately' both the premises and the conclusion in demonstrations of matters of fact are equally contingent? I.e., are we supposed to take a proof as doubtful just because the

premises are 'factual' and not 'logical'? If the premises are true, that they are the 'factual' kind of truth would hardly seem to be a point against them or against any conclusion logically *derivable* from them.

G. E. M. ANSCOMBE

Reviews

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH AND OTHER FAITHS, by Stephen Neill; Oxford University Press; 21s.

In this book one can say that the dialogue between Christianity and other religions has really begun. This is something which is still so rare that the book deserves serious study from all who are interested in the presentation of the Christian faith in the modern world. Dr Neill's own position is firmly Christian without any hint of syncretism, yet he shows himself 'open' to the truth in every form of religion, and, what is perhaps more important, his object is not so much to try to convince others of the truth of Christianity as to lead them to give it the consideration which it deserves by placing it in its true perspective.

Dr Neill takes into consideration not only Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism, but also primitive religion, which he maintains remains the religion still of about 40 per cent of mankind; and then for good measure adds two chapters on Marxism and Existentialism, as being the faith or religion, in the very broad sense of the term (as the ultimate truth to which people are prepared to commit their whole life), of a considerable part of the modern world. His book is therefore an attempt to meet the challenge which Christian faith has to face to-day in all its most serious forms. His method is the same throughout. In each case he tries first to give an objective and sympathetic account of each religion based on the writings of its leading exponents and showing how each religion attempts to meet the challenge of the modern world. He then submits it to a criticism from a Christian point of view. This is done with both candour and charity, attempting to see what is valid but putting the answering challenge of Christianity, or rather of Christ, because that is what Christianity is, in the clearest terms.

On the whole his presentation of the different religions is reasonably objective and is based on a good deal of personal experience. There are some exceptions. In the chapter on Hinduism, he is somewhat unfair to Mahatma Gandhi (to whom for some reason he always refers as 'Mr' Gandhi, perhaps to emphasize that he rejects any claim to his being a 'mahatma'), and to call the Bhagavad