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Further measures suggested include: a declaration of the rights of man or rather an affirmation of the dignity and worth of the human person and a reform of canon law in the sense of making the Church of the West less legalistic. This again is linked with demands for a restatement of natural law. It is considered necessary that the Church should be, and should be seen to be, dissociated from groups responsible for policies that are not only considered antisocial, but are incompatible with Christian charity. Latin America is cited here, with particular reference to the reasons for the present difficulties of the Church in Cuba.

Unnecessary barriers and a lack of charity in relation with other Christians is condemned; what is particularly criticized are the often quite needlessly harsh forms and expressions used. There are demands for a revision of the legislation relating to mixed marriages. It is demanded also that the relations between Christians and Jews be re-examined. One writer pleads for an improvement of relations with Mohammedans.

The foregoing gives some indication not only of what some Germanspeaking Catholics hope from the Council, but also of what they generally think of the Church at the present time. It must be pointed out that not all writers confine themselves to points of detail. One of them very effectively makes the point that what matters is not dealing with symptoms, but that the Council should do two things: base our Faith again firmly on what is its centre, the Incarnation of our Lord; and make clear that Christian morals are not mainly concerned with sex, but that they are an integrated whole based on love of God and neighbour; everything else will follow.

W. A. STEINER

Reviews

PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION, by John Wilson; Oxford University Press; 125. 6d.

About five years ago several groups of writers attempted to present an account of religious belief which would be acceptable to an influential school of British philosophy, sometimes called 'logical empiricism'. New Essays in Philosophical Theology, a collection of papers published in 1955, was followed in 1957 by two further symposia, Faith and Logic and Metaphysical Beliefs, and by Professor Ramsey's Religious Language and Professor Braithwaite's An Empiricist's View of the Nature of Religious Belief. Few readers, whether philosophers or believers,

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found the analyses of religious language presented in these books wholly satisfactory: but until recently nobody has come forward to do better.

Philosophy and Religion takes up the discussion where it was left in 1957. From among religious utterances of various kinds the author selects for discussion those which purport to be statements of fact about supernatural realities. He considers and rejects various analyses of such statements put forward by one or other of the writers mentioned above: they are not, he argues, helpful myths, or parables, or self-justifying assertions, or explanations of ordinary or miraculous facts in the world. Instead, he suggests, religious assertions are genuine factual assertions which are verified by religious experience rather in the way in which statements about physical objects are verified by sense-experience. In general, he thinks, existential statements are a shorthand way of talking about common and recurrent experiences which we find useful to group together. So too in the field of religion: an apparently existential statement such as 'there is a God' would have to imply that certain experiences of vital interest and, importance, are permanently available at least to certain people under certain conditions.

Two objections to this theory are considered in the book. First, there are no publicly agreed methods of verifying religious assertions; secondly, not all people appear to have religious experiences. To the first difficulty, the author replies that an assertion may be verifiable and informative within a limited group of people: a 'language-game' may be played only by a minority, and be none the worse for that. *Apropos* of the second, he is prepared to concede that religious talk may be meaningless to the non-believer. But so is talk about music to the tone-deaf; and yet we can test assertions about musical merit and reach a wide measure of agreement concerning the value of different compositions. As people can be taught to tell good music from bad, so perhaps they may be taught to have religious experiences and thus to place themselves in a position to test religious assertions.

Religious experts, the author suggests, should design a testing programme for religious assertions. After a suitable purification, the subjects of the programme might come to have certain experiences which recurred regularly under specified conditions: experiences which might be called 'love', 'grace', 'power' and the like. Then there might be constructed an entity from which these experiences might be regarded as flowing. If this entity is called 'God', then a statement such as 'God is love' becomes an empirically falsifiable assertion implying that whenever we have enough experiences to be able to say that we are confronting God, we shall always have a simultaneous experience of love.

Only such a testing programme, the author considers, can make religion logically respectable. But such a programme will take a long time to complete, and in its course much traditional dogma may have to be scrapped. Meanwhile, we have to live. Accordingly, the author devotes a final chapter to the problem of practical choice in religion. 'Without logical clarification', he writes, 'no

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practical decision can be rational: without practical decision no logical clarification can be more than academic. The result is that we neither think effectively nor live decisively'.

Throughout the book, the argument is clear, patient, and ingenious. If, in spite of this, we find the author's conclusions preposterous, we do well to question his initial assumptions. There is good reason to doubt whether it is either possible or necessary to reconcile the assertions of natural theology with the philosophy of logical empiricism. That philosophy, as its name suggests, derived from two sources: the improved formal logic introduced by Frege, and the traditional British empiricism put into canonical form by Hume. Because the greatest British exponent of the new logic subscribed warmly to the epistemology of Hume, the two elements have often been regarded, by admirers and critics alike, as inseparable. But in the last decade more and more philosophers have combined an admiration for the new logical techniques with a belief in the fundamental incoherence of empiricist epistemology. Now that it has ceased to be fashionable to regard tables as logical constructions out of sense-data, we may look forward to a cessation of attempts to present God as a logical construction out of internal impressions. Hume's philosophy is, as it was meant to be, incompatible with any natural theology worthy of the name: the God of Christian orthodoxy, the maker of the world, cannot be the object of any experience however mysterious and sublime. God's existence can be shown only as the conclusion of an argument, not as the delivery of a sixth sense. The renaissance of logic has provided tools for the deployment and criticism of such arguments; the revolution in epistemology has removed some of the obstacles to their consideration. It is yet to be seen how natural theologians will make use of their opportunity.

ANTHONY KENNY

HISTORY OF THE MISSIONS, by Bernard de Vaulx. (Faith and Fact Books) Burns and Oates; 8s. 6d.

MISSIONS IN THE WORLD TODAY, by René P. Millot (Faith and Fact Books) Burns and Oates; 8s. 6d.

TEACHING ALL NATIONS, A Symposium on Modern Catechetics. Ed. by Johannes Hofinger, s.J. Translated by Clifford Howell, s.J. Burns and Oates; 35s.

The two books in the Faith and Fact series reviewed here cover the entire field of the Catholic Missions, the first taking the story from Apostolic times to 1914, the second summarizing the present state of the Missions in a geographical rather than a chronological order. Necessarily very compact in their treatment of such a huge subject, the first still manages to give a useful summary of the controversy concerning the Chinese Rites, while the second has some en-

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