

the pantheist identification of God and the universe. Space and time are essentially relationships between the events which constitute the universe; hence it may be seen that God himself cannot be within space and time, though his acts are so. God is 'outside' space and time, not of course spatially (since to be spatially outside anything is *ipso facto* to be within space), but in the sense that he is not a part of the universe to which space and time are intrinsic. And God plainly enjoys an existence different from, though to be sure analogous to, that of other beings – so that it may indeed be suitable to say that he is being itself rather than a particular being – since he is that agent to whose activity all the events in the universe are to be attributed, as opposed to those beings – such as galaxies, stars, planets, plants, animals or electrons – each of which may be said to cause events only within a certain comparatively narrow range. And related to every event as agent to act, yet outside the universe in the sense that he is not himself any of these events, it is indeed true that God both infinitely transcends us, and is nearer to us than we are to ourselves.

Renford Bambrough asks whether it is 'conceivable that God should not exist, and yet that everything else should remain exactly the same as if he did exist', and adds 'it seems to me that transcendental theology has given no adequate answer to this challenge'. Well, here goes. From the conception of God which is derived from the Bible that his non-existence would make, literally, more than all the difference in the world. Nothing would remain the same, since nothing would exist at all. The world consists of the acts of God, and real action on the part of a non-existent agent is inconceivable. Certainly the exaggerated conception of God's transcendence fashionable in some theological circles leads to nonsense, in the way that Bambrough has suggested, as surely as the

exaggeration of his immanence, against which this was, historically speaking, a reaction, issues in triviality.

Whether the best of the older metaphysical proofs of God's existence (typified by Aquinas' Five Ways) are valid as such or not, they are useful (as Hepburn hints) in giving sense, and (if I am right as against Hepburn) can actually be seen to do so, in that they show how talk about God is related to talk about the events which constitute the world with which we are acquainted, and hence how this discourse makes as much sense as any other sort of discourse. Hepburn is quite right in suggesting that, if we forgo these proofs as so many modern Protestant theologians have done, we will never be able to anchor our discourse about God, which is admittedly largely metaphorical, in anything literal; and thus theism will merely amount, in the last analysis, to one among several available pictures of the world, comparable to the others in the moral insight or aesthetic satisfaction it provides, but not conceivably true as a matter of fact.

Hepburn observes that Christians do in fact differ from other people in that they believe particular historical propositions, for example that Jesus physically rose from the dead, to be true. It is worth adding that they also believe that certain events, like the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come, will happen in the future. If these characteristic Christian beliefs and expectations about past and future are false, perhaps it would be better to use some term like 'evolution' or 'nature' (in the sense of Spinoza's *natura naturans* as against his *natura naturata*) to refer to the First Cause, instead of 'God'. But in fact they are true – though this appears to be a well-kept secret among the more diehard of contemporary Christians.

Hugo Meynell

CHRISTIANITY VERSUS VIOLENCE by Stanley Windass. *Sheed and Ward, 10s 6d.*

Reading this book was an experience of increasing sadness and disappointment. It is subtitled 'A social and historical study of war and Christianity',

and the opening pages seemed to promise a clearly presented analysis of the Christian's predicament as a member of human society, faced

perennially, and now more urgently than ever, with the problem of violence. The pages on St Augustine raised the first doubt about what was to follow. It is not enough to relate his views to the Vandals. What first led him to elaborate an apologia for defensive use of violence was actual experience of the Donatist crisis and the bands of terrorists to which it gave rise. Here was a situation, similar to many in our own times, when it seemed that those who disturbed the peace were beyond the reach of reasoning and could be restrained from attacking defenceless people by no other means than military force. To restore civil order seemed an essential preliminary to any settlement of the disputes to which Augustine and his generation were heirs, and which there had been many efforts to settle by peaceful means. To talk about Augustine finding 'easy ways' out of his difficulties is surely an ungenerous minimizing of very real difficulties long endured.

Under-estimation of the past becomes more evident when the author reaches the middle ages. We read: 'Thomas Aquinas has only one short question on war in his *Summa*, compared with twenty-four long ones about angels! Evidently there was no very serious problem here for medieval thinkers as there had been for earlier generations. 'What is evident in such a statement is insufficient acquaintance with Aquinas, and with his predecessors for that matter. The question on war is one of four on the vices opposed to peace. Peace, already discussed in *Ila. Ilae. Q. 29*, is seen as inseparable from *charitas* (love, friendship), which is its source. Less directly, but still vitally, peace depends on justice. Hence, for Aquinas, the question of war is not the central issue. Charity and justice, which are central, he examines at great length, in more than eighty questions.

To see Aquinas in focus we have also to look at thirteenth century efforts to establish justice and good government in place of feudal anarchy. War was a fact which had to be faced. The theory of the just war was a minor part of a real effort to face it, and helped to reduce at least baronial war. To see another aspect it is enough to compare what Aquinas has to say about clerics and war with Archbishop Turpin in *Le Chanson de Roland*.

The just war theory is, however, a *betê noire* of Mr Windass. There is a sustained sneer in his references to those who at any time have supported it. They are presented quite simply as apologists for war, who practice 'manoeuvres and subtleties', and who generally see war as a punitive measure, not as a last, reluctantly adopted means of defence. Suarez, we are told, was 'primarily concerned that the instrument of war should work'. Was he? Or was he appealing to what Christian conscience there was, in an attempt to contain the evils of war? Like Vitoria, Aquinas, and Augustine he was aware of his times and by no means out of touch with the world.

However, such questions of history are perhaps no more weighty than Mr Windass's slips about Trygve Lie (p. 118), or the Watutsi (p. 153), or his unawareness of some of the traditional teaching about the sin of fear. We are concerned with the present day and what is to be done now. Of this Mr Windass writes positively:

'Perhaps we should think of a crusade of *fellowship*. For to think of fellowship is immediately to think of a common undertaking, a partnership within a single legal structure; to think of building fellowship is to think of the discovery of a common task within the framework of a common law. Fellowship then demands justice – the assertion of rights, the construction of institutions, the formation of laws. At the same time fellowship points to charity; for a fellow is one for whom one has a 'fellow-feeling' – not the sympathy of condescension, but the sympathy of identification – a love, that is, which includes a radical assertion of equality, that very equality which is also the first demand of justice. Justice and charity come together in a new perspective, that of the universal community of men.'

He adds that the idea is not unscriptural. Nor is it, he might have added, untraditional or even un-scholastic. It should have the support of Christians and humanists alike; but there is little indication as to how it is to be realized. Still, there it is, an obvious and desirable ideal at which to aim.

Why, then, should this book be depressing? Because, it seems to me, it so often exemplifies

something of which Mr Windass is aware in a general sort of way and which he refers to on p. 159; the projection of the violence latent in us all, under cover of some virtuous label and in the security of a group united largely by its prejudices and hostilities. He describes 'the snowballing of hatreds which occurs when small resentments combine to seek out a common enemy or scapegoat. On a small scale the thing can be observed in any neighbourhood gossip group, when a few people find they share a scarcely definable antagonism to some other individual. Give them a few minutes to roll together their antagonisms, and a much more potent compound will emerge – the unfortunate victim will be hard put to it to re-establish his shattered reputation. Even those who did not share in the original antagonism may be drawn into the attack in order to "belong" to the group.'

Much of the weak criticism of theologians found in this book reminds one of such groups in the Church now, among whom it is fashionable to attack writers such as Aquinas from a little knowledge. In the same fashion are cheap and inaccurate sneers of which the following is a good specimen: 'While pious Christians, glutted with "supernatural" virtues, gloat over their boxing-

matches, it is the brain-surgeons and not their pastors who observe that, though their virtues may be supernatural, their entertainment is sub-human.' (Mr Windass has not kept up with *Osservatore Romano*).

Theologians, pastors, pious Christians, scholastics, bishops, are all common objects of resentment in search of a scapegoat. The resentments are often understandable and deserve appreciation, but it is a tragedy that so often those who harbour them attribute neither sincerity, nor humane feeling, nor a modicum of intelligence to fellow-Catholics who disagree with them on any matter. If we are to begin to frustrate the seeds of violence in the human personality and develop the strength necessary to face violence as Christians it is not enough to avoid becoming 'involved in a crusade of hatred against a Makarios, a Soekarno or a Mao Tse-Tung simply because (we) read the *Daily Blast*.' We need also to avoid becoming involved in a fashion of sterile criticism of our fellow-Catholics, past or present, simply because we read *Search*. Apart from anything else, it weakens, as in the present case, many an urgent plea for fresh consideration of a vital issue.

Anthony Ross, O.P.

POLITICS AND LAW by Gerhard Leibholz. *Sythoff (Leiden) 55s.*

A reviewer lays down this volume, chastened. It consists of a couple of dozen essays, most of which are themselves reviews of other books written twenty odd years ago. Due allowance made for the distinction of the author, the coincidence between his views and those of many liberal Catholics and that he is writing in a language not native to him, this book is more suited for the public library than the private reader. Reviews are a type of wine which rarely carries. If, as in this case, they are used as a vehicle to express the reviewer's own ideas rather than to guide the prospective reader, they have, when re-read, the character of a diary without the idiom or anecdote which makes so many an old chronicle a delight.

Professor Leibholz was one of several eminent German jurists and sociologists who sheltered in Britain during the years of Hitler. Unlike most of the others, he returned to his native land and today occupies one of its most respected posts, being an Associate Justice of the Federal Constitutional Court. While in Britain he was a frequent contributor to the more thoughtful publications, including *Blackfriars*. Particularly on the subject of the post-war development of Germany and Europe he expressed himself wisely during the dog-days of the war, when pattern-bombers on the one side and utopians on the other were knocking down every remaining structure in his country. However strongly he dissociated himself from the Nazis, his essential German character