

divine justice, each so handy for the preservation of our own comfort or status; the superficiality of our common answers to the questions 'Who is God?', 'Where is God?' and 'Can God do everything?' Some theologians may, perhaps, feel her treatment of these mysteries oversimplified, but she offers no facile answers; we must do the work ourselves.

Throughout the book, one is aware of her passionate conviction that there is something in the child's vision that we cannot afford to miss; that each stage of life has its peculiar insights. 'Nor is it true that a little one first of all receives somewhat superficial impressions and later comes to appreciate the depth of life. It may even be that the person whose life is just beginning goes through depths of which we have lost all recollection. . . . Anyone who attains to faith realizes that this is a process that has gone on throughout his whole life' (pp. 16, 18). The patronizing attitudes which have their origin in Rousseau's romantic 'discovery' of 'the child', and which still persist in the devaluation of childhood implicit in some contemporary writers (see Ronald Goldman *passim*), receives a most wholesome corrective here. We should indeed all be grateful to Dr Klink for a book whose aim is—and note the order—'to help you to gain a more profound understanding yourself, and in your attempt to explain these things to your children' (p. 2).

Mr Alves has attempted something quite different, though his concerns do coincide with those of Dr Klink at one or two points. *The Christian in Education* offers a review of the contemporary English educational scene with particular reference, indeed with very copious reference, to the Newsom, Plowden, Gittins, Durham and Carlisle Reports, as well as to other official documents which have been influential in moulding public attitudes to the problems of religious education in the schools of today. His book will, I am sure, be a most useful guide to students in Colleges of Educa-

tion as well as to others whose business it is to keep themselves well informed on recent pronouncements in this field. It would be unfair to complain of a lack of personal commitment in the book; rather, it is here that its chief merit lies. It is a deliberately detached survey of a notoriously difficult subject. Mr Alves has done a very professional job in presenting so lucid and well organized an assessment in so compact a form.

As is inevitable in any such study, the current notion of 'open-ended' religious education tends to dominate the foreground. That it is ultimately a delusion Mr Alves recognizes clearly enough. He would, I am sure, agree that in the last resort the Christian teacher must base his claim to be listened to on something more than an open-minded readiness to hear all sides of a question. But only in the last resort? 'The openness of the present situation in Religious Education derives from a concept of man which is basic to Christian thought' (p. 95). There are, however, other aspects of the Christian concept of man that have a right to be heard. 'The Christian', says Mr Alves, 'is one who is struck by the biblical story.' He is also, I suggest, one who knows of an order of reality which transcends, and may also interpenetrate, both the physical and the psychical, and of a source of power within that order of whose impact he can speak from personal experience. If he is to call himself a Christian he must no doubt be more than that; but he can hardly be less. I do not mean it as a criticism of *The Christian In Education* when I say that the Christian in education cannot afford to be merely defensive about such convictions. Mr Alves is here very much concerned with the art of the possible. But he is also too sensitive an observer not to be aware that if the Christian is not prepared to commit himself on these matters people will just go and inquire about them elsewhere.

This is a useful little book which will provoke as well as inform.

E. A. ROBINSON

PROBLEMS OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE, by Terence Penelhum. *Macmillan*, 1971. £2.80.  
CONTEMPORARY CRITIQUES OF RELIGION, by Kai Nielsen. *Macmillan*, 1971. £2.80.

Each of these books is a worthy addition to a series which has already started well. Penelhum is most fair and judicious, able to see both sides of the case of religious belief and unbelief to a degree given to very few authors. Nielsen only sees one side of the case, and is, in his way, all the more readable for that.

Nielsen attacks a view rather fashionable

among contemporary philosophers, which sees religion as a kind of island of discourse and behaviour, susceptible neither to attack nor to defence by considerations drawn from philosophy or the sciences. He argues that the religious believer is either committed to a naïve anthropomorphism in his discourse about God, or has subtilized and etiolated his

'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