

- 10 Sallie McFague, *Speaking in Parables: A Study in Metaphor and Theology*, (Philadelphia, Fortress Press, 1975) p. 165.
- 11 S. T. Coleridge, *Literary Remains*, (New York: AMS Press, 1967) vol. IV, p. 63 (emph. mine).
- 12 "Only a life sufficiently large and alive . . . a life dramatic with a humble and homely heroism which, in rightful contact with and in rightful renunciation of the Particular and Fleeting, ever seeks and finds the Omnipresent and Eternal; . . . only such a life can be largely persuasive, at least for us Westerns and in our times." Baron F von Hügel, *The Mystical Element in Religion*, 1st ed., (London:1909) vol.I, p. 368.

## Reviews

**THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO AQUINAS**, ed. Norman Kretzmann and Eleonore Stump, *Cambridge University Press* 1993, paperback £12.95

This is the latest in Cambridge's series of companion volumes to the great philosophers: collections of specially commissioned essays of critical exposition by international scholars, plus a substantial bibliography, designed to serve as reference works for student and non-specialist alike. *The present volume succeeds admirably: its ten essays are well-chosen and informative and the bibliography is very full up to 1991 (to 1992 as regards works by the essay-authors).* Of course, it is once again Aquinas as philosopher, not as theologian, that is covered, which is a pity and causes some problems for the essayists.

The essays themselves fall into three main categories: three 'backgrounders', followed by five dividing up Thomas's work according to certain non-Thomas subject-divisions, and a final two dealing rather summarily with the fact that most of Thomas's works are not themselves works of philosophy though containing philosophy.

The first backgrounder, "Aquinas's philosophy in its historical setting" is from the Hollands scholar, Jan A. Aertsen (and perhaps one should say that the English of this essay is sometimes obscure, and would have profited from more editorial scrutiny). The essay does two things: it gives a very adequate introduction to the medieval university context of Thomas's work, and it presents the more orthodox view of Thomas's philosophy as having its own proper positive independence from theology (a view which a later contributor — Mark Jordan — finds not nuanced enough). The second backgrounder is a magisterial account of "Aristotle and Aquinas" from the veteran scholar Joseph Owens, attempting to compare and contrast the philosophies of the two thinkers, and finding the difference in Aquinas's deeper account of what existence means. Finally

David Burrell gives us a careful and masterly study of "Aquinas and Islamic and Jewish thinkers". Actually, though Averroes is mentioned, only two thinkers are really in question: Avicenna, whose views on essence and existence are compared and contrasted with Thomas's, and Maimonides on creation and providence and on the naming of God. On the whole this background section is just what students and non-specialists will require of a companion to Aquinas.

Now comes the division of Aquinas's thought itself, and here one has to ask why it is divided in a way Thomas himself would not have divided it: namely, into "Metaphysics" (John Wippel), "Philosophy of mind" (Norman Kretzmann), "Theory of knowledge" (Scott MacDonald), "Ethics" (Ralph McInerny), "Law and politics" (Paul E. Sigmund). Of these the McInerny essay is a marvellous example of condensed exposition which cannot, I think, be faulted. But why is "Law and politics", which Thomas would have thought of as integrally part of the one practical science of "Ethics", divided off? The remaining three essays must deal with everything Thomas calls speculative science, that is to say with what Thomas calls Physics and Metaphysics (accepting that he is little interested in doing mathematics). There is here no coverage of Thomas's physics, except what can be squeezed into metaphysics or separated off as the study of one peculiar animal, namely human being. The essay on metaphysics is clear and workmanlike, but it almost entirely concentrates on the notion of being (and what is called the 'discovery'(!) of being), and lacks a properly complementary treatment of the notion of good. For good we must be content with some mentions in McInerny's "Ethics" essay and some remarks on will in the "Philosophy of Mind" essay. "Philosophy of Mind" is, of course, a title not for what Thomas actually writes about, but for what moderns would write about in his place. But Kretzmann's treatment is very solid and useful. But then comes an essay on "Theory of knowledge", apparently something different from "Philosophy of Mind". In fact, Scott MacDonald starts by saying that Thomas has no word for what we now mean by 'knowledge'; but this apparently doesn't prevent him having a theory of it! What the essay actually deals with is what Thomas called logic (though not formal logic), and derives mainly from Thomas's commentary on Aristotle's Posterior Analytics. But the matter is dealt with as though it was an argument with Cartesian and post-Cartesian doubt, so that it is presented in a distorted frame made to fit a more modern preoccupation with epistemology. This middle section of companion essays is workmanlike, but I think the 'distortion' into a modern perspective of some of them is a weakness. Finally, there are two epilogue articles provoked by the fact that Thomas's philosophy often occurs in non-philosophical works. Mark Jordan relates Thomas's philosophy to his theology, a difficult subject with which I have wrestled elsewhere (in my introduction to the Oxford University Press's World Classics volume of Aquinas's "Selected Philosophical Writings"). Jordan has very good things to say on virtue and on sacramental causality, but is, I think, in the end wrong in suggesting that theology exerts a non-

philosophical influence on Thomas's philosophy, forcing it beyond itself and into a part of theology. Thomas's views of instrumental causality are philosophically argued for as a philosophical extension of Aristotle's work, and are not a case of "turning philosophy into theology". And the fact that virtue as the philosophers conceive it is not "strictly speaking" virtue as theologians conceive it, does not deprive philosophy of its own independent status. Jordan is here assuming what he has to prove. Eleonore Stump's essay on "Biblical commentary and philosophy" has useful things to say about the biblical commentaries themselves, and about Thomas's ways of reading the bible, but does not I think contribute much to the understanding of his philosophy,

There are printing errors in the book. Eventually, I began to note down some of them: p89.17 has "lead" for "led", p198.-3 has "good", p207.19 "intenal", p211.6 "constituent", p211.-14 has "not look" for "not to look", p242.-13 h3s "subordinated".

TIMOTHY MCDERMOTT

**LIVING A CHRISTIAN LIFE** by Germain Grisez. *Franciscan Press, Chicago, 1993. Pp xxiii + 950.*

Of the greatest books since Vatican II NOT reviewed by this journal, Grisez's *Christian Moral Principles* (1983) is surely among the most glaring examples. Legend tells that the prospective reader was simply overwhelmed by it. A decade later, it is still overwhelming, an astonishing treatment of the foundations of moral theology: freedom, community and character; conscience and moral knowledge; basic human goods and modes of responsibility; moral problems and norms; sin and redemption; Christian love and human fulfillment; the place of prayer, the sacraments, hope, and the Church in a rich, specifically Christian, moral life. It is the flagship of the renewal of natural law theory in moral theology and presents a still unanswered critique of other methodologies, in particular those opposed by *Splendor Veritatis*, the recent encyclical so obviously influenced by the thought of Grisez and his school.

*Christian Moral Principles* was the first of four projected volumes, together called *The Way of the Lord Jesus*. Having presented the foundations of moral theology, Grisez is now treating specific moral responsibilities: those common to all or most people (vol. 2.), those specific to certain groups (vol. 3 — though rumour has it that this volume will be rather different), and those specific to clergy and religious (vol. 4). The second volume is just as monumental as the first: another thousand pages, similarly encyclopaedic and destined to be equally definitive. It treats in turn: the theological virtues; sin and repentance; moral judgement and problem solving; justice and social responsibility; communication relationships; bioethics; sexuality; work and property; and political morality. And there are improvements in the present volume over the previous one: no schmaltzy cover; footnotes rather than endnotes; no wads of text in tiny print like an insurance contract; outlines at the