

grace is mediated through 'natural' laws and institutions. He is so anxious to preserve the element of personal responsibility that he forgets the extent to which even the Christian's decision is, in the providence of God, determined by institutional forms and social circumstance.

IAN HISLOP, O.P.

THE END OF TIME. A Meditation on the Philosophy of History. By Josef Pieper, translated by Michael Bullock. (Faber and Faber; 10s. 6d.)

Dr Pieper's argument is based on the contention that 'there is no philosophical question which, if it really wants to strike the ground intended by itself and in itself, does not come upon the primeval rock of theological pronouncements', and that this is particularly the case where the philosophy of history is concerned. For the end of time means two things: the end-situation *within* history, and the ultimate state of affairs *outside* history when time is ended; and the first of these is unintelligible except in the light of the second. The book thus leads us away from the inadequacies of contemporary 'culture-sociological' philosophizing about history to a more realistic approach. It is not difficult in these days to feel 'apocalyptic' about the future; and as Dr Pieper shows, while the 'progressive' views of history of a Kant or a Fichte now seem to us incredibly naïve, the outlandish symbolism of the *Apocalypse* no longer seems so outlandish. . . . For this age, the idea that the world may come to an end in horrific catastrophe is no remote possibility. Nor is the idea of the dominion of Antichrist as a 'planetary despotism with progressive technical development and the extinction of spirituality'. At the same time, as Dr Pieper points out, Christian hope, the conviction that in the end Antichrist will be defeated, does not merely look to the end-beyond-time: 'it is a distinguishing mark of the Christian martyr that in him "no word is raised against God's creation"': it is Antichrist who 'is hostile to creation': 'is it so unlikely that the Church . . . might remain the sole champion of the natural dignity of man?' Christianity looks to the eventual establishment of a 'new heaven and a new earth': which must mean that 'this mundane reality which meets concrete experience, this "waiting" creation in its entirety, will also . . . beyond all expectation, have a happy ending'.

Dr Pieper put us deeply in his debt with the publication in English of *Leisure the Basis of Culture*: this present book greatly increases our indebtedness. It must be confessed, however, that the translation is far from felicitous, and may unhappily put off readers who would otherwise profit by Dr Pieper's wisdom.

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