

rational support for them (Aquinas), or showing that religion is not impossible (Maimonides).

The third group, represented first and foremost by Kant and Kierkegaard, consider that the task of philosophy is to make room for religion.

Each of these attempts to bring philosophy and religion together has its positive and negative points, but the author is above all concerned with the danger of Reductionism, i.e. the tendency in philosophy to reduce religion to something that does not issue from revelation. This danger exists even in the third structure, for the refusal of philosophy to specify the object of faith may cause this to become irrelevant and religion then becomes a matter of a purely practical attitude.

Finally there is the opinion prevailing in the Anglo-Saxon world. This sees the task of philosophy as a purely analytical and therapeutic one, consisting in an accurate description of the language which is properly religious, distinguished from and not confused with others. Here the author would like to see again a greater sympathy for some sort of metaphysical discussion, for in order to show that the concept of God is not an illusory one, we would need to

demonstrate its instantiation in some way and not merely rest content with describing its use in religious discourse.

This book may well provide a good average introduction for beginners. But I do not think that it has anything more to say. It seems to suffer somewhat from the sharp distinction between natural and supernatural knowledge, which forms the basis of the discussion, and the author should certainly have had a closer look at the way in which he understands this distinction. A discussion of it in its original Neo-Platonic context would have been very illuminating, the more so as the author reproaches Neo-Platonism for bringing philosophy and religion too close to each other.

The historical approach, which was meant to be an engaged one, rather than a tracing out of a development in the past, failed to stir me. In fact I found it very standard, doing little justice to some of the more exciting works to which reference is made. This I would particularly stress for Jaeger's *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers*. Kant, too, suffers under this handbook standardization which never looks beyond the two first Critiques.

ROB VAN DER HART, O.P.

REFORMATION, John M. Todd. *Darton, Longman and Todd*, London. 377 pp. £3.75.

Mr Todd has set out to write a general account of the Reformation that will be acceptable to a certain kind of audience. Not Catholic but catholic, not Protestant but reformed: his book is imbued with the *ambience* of the ecumenical movement and such aspects of the Vatican Council acceptable to this *milieu*. The best thing in the book is a single chapter, which, however, takes up a third of the book, on Luther. Mr Todd has read a lot of Luther scholarship and some of Luther himself and he presents us with a moderate, rather conservative, existential, amiable, figure likely to be acceptable to those with more right than I have to criticize. He precedes this with a long introduction on the errors of the middle ages. This is simply dreadful. Mr Todd's middle ages—prepared, as he tells us, for those lacking time to read much—are all of a piece united at least in error about theology and the Church. St Boniface's strictures on a bizarre and perhaps half-pagan figure of the eighth century, Aldebert, are cited as though the affair were in some way typical. If one considers Aldebert's opinions as retailed by Boniface carefully, they show more resemblance to those of Henry

VIII than any medieval figure I can think of—except perhaps Gregory VII. Mr Todd thinks St Francis dominated the thirteenth century. This means he is the figure Mr Todd finds most sympathetic and convenient from that century, but I doubt if many contemporaries would have agreed, especially the miserable peasantry of the 'golden age of demesne farming'. On the Albigensians, we are told that when the heresy 'would yield neither to the preaching of St Bernard nor of St Dominic a "crusade" was called. War was declared on the Albigensians and the heresy destroyed in Europe by Christian soldiers, supported by the Dominican friar preachers.' (p. 68.) Is it pedantic to recall that St Bernard had been dead half a century before the Albigensian Crusade, and that the Dominican Order was not yet in existence? If Mr Todd would read what St Bernard actually wrote he would, I think, find that medieval religion was a little more complicated and a little less monolithic than he argues. He does give a good summary of the history of the Bible in the high middle ages, however.

Returning to the hundred pages or so Mr

Todd has left after the middle ages and Luther, he is fair and knowledgeable on the English reformation, but he faces formidable competition here and the reader could look farther and fare better. He finds Calvin unsympathetic and gives us only a very condensed summary of what he thinks Calvin was at in the Institutes. This is where I think the limitations of Mr Todd and the circle to which he belongs comes out.

Mr Todd feels justly but he feels faintly. He says all the right—and all the usual—things about Luther's thoroughly justifiable attack on indulgences and points to their superstitious appeal and theological inadequacy. But he never says anything about the corrupt and corrupting doctrine of witchcraft; but this superstition was more than congenial to the 'pagan' new Protestant's mind, and no one was ever burned as a witch in Rome. Mr Todd is positively statesman-like on Luther's dispensation for bigamy in favour of Philip of Hesse. If one looks at it in the light of a serious view of faith and morals I am far from sure that Tetzl was not the lesser of the two evils. Again Mr Todd makes his Reformation amenable to modern ideas by what seems to me a considerable misuse of the notion of lay participation in the structure of ecclesiastical authority. In a sense the subjection of authority in faith and morals to the whims of a conceited, capricious, dirty old man like Henry VIII may be called an example of lay responsibility in the Church—but in a very misleading sense. It was Calvin and his followers who saw that to take the liberation of religion from the domination of professional clergy arranged in an irresponsible hierarchy, in isolation from the reform of lay society, is to jump from the frying-pan into the fire. Precisely because they attacked the whole conception of hierarchy and brought their authority over faith and morals with the Bible into the neighbourhood, Calvin is much more original and much more serious in the last resort than Luther. Mr Todd simply does not see this—neither for that matter did Luther. It is easy to criticize a Calvinistic republic such as Geneva and to sneer at its limitations as presently fashionable. But men are never offered the chance to live in an ideal commonwealth of their own making; they must choose from what is on offer. If I had the choice I should prefer to have been a citizen of Calvinistic Geneva than a client of King Bomba, Madame Dubarry, or the Lutheran Vasas.

Mr Todd's view seems to me to reek of

Anglo-Saxon philistinism. No one would argue that the renaissance popes were the best we have ever had, but they were very far from the worst. They were amongst the least cruel, the least prodigal of human life and the most tolerant rulers of their age. If they too readily led their Papal State into diplomatic alliances and the consequent wars, they were very much less savage affrays than the Zwinglians, Lutherans, and Huguenots engaged in. It does not seem to me that it will do to gloss the latter because they were religious wars in an age of faith. The renaissance popes were probably the most cultivated and understanding patrons of art and architecture that ever lived. I do not know how to weigh the articulation of the greater part of the architectural and artistic vocabularies that served Western Europe for the next two centuries or so, against the bringing of the Bible, the Sacraments to the people—or such of them as could read, who were substantially fewer than those who could look at a religious painting or a great machine for worship like a baroque church; I do not, I repeat, know how to do this, but then neither does Mr Todd, only he does not know he doesn't.

Inevitably Mr Todd appeals to the insights of modern theology. They seem clearer to him than they do to me. The Calvinist concern with the predestination to damnation of the reprobate seems a case in point. Mr Todd points to the inadequacy of the medieval logic Calvin inherited as the culprit. I am afraid Calvin is not alone in finding the logic Mr Todd condemns rigorous rather than medieval. Mr Todd flies into the plea of mystery as soon as the problem is touched on. But the problems are more extensive and the mysteries deeper than he allows. For him: 'The twentieth-century theologian implies that grace is offered to all men; and that many theologians now believe every man gives an affirmative answer and that none is in a place of suffering for eternity' (page 294). This is a mish-mash of bad arguments welded together by *non-sequiturs*, even though Mr Todd correctly reports the opinions of some well-known theological writers. If these theologians maintain that nobody is in Hell because everybody repents just in time they seem to me merely guillible: if they maintain that God is too nice to put them there and pops them into Purgatory at the last minute they are wrong and clearly heretical. Surely Calvin reads like a breath of fresh air after this sort of thing?

This then is not my kind of book, but it is

not a bad book of its own kind, and after all it is unjust to blame Mr Todd for not writing a different sort of book. It will do nobody any harm and if it is read with a realization that

beneath Mr Todd's charity and urbanity lie many profound and excruciating problems it will do a lot of good.

ERIC JOHN

MISSIONARIES TO YOURSELVES, edited by Aylward Shorter and Eugene Kataza. *Geoffrey Chapman*, London, 1972. 212 pp. £2.50.

If you had been a missionary priest going to East Africa a hundred years ago in order to spread the gospel in this vast unevangelized area one of the first things you would have done would have been to train a catechist. What, you might ask, is a catechist? A hundred years ago he was the local African convert who could do practically everything the priest could do except say mass and hear confessions. Today the catechist spends his time in the following activities: 'Teaching religion or giving instruction; visiting Christians, or the sick, preparing adults for the sacraments; presiding over Sunday Services; collecting church tithes; preparing lessons; keeping registers and reporting regularly to the parish priest'. His role has not changed a great deal; his job grew up in an emergency situation when catechists were a necessity in those pioneering days of the first missions. The question which this book *Missionaries to Yourselves* asks is whether they are still a necessity today. In fact the title of the book is taken from a speech delivered by Pope Paul on his visit to Uganda in 1969. It implies that now the Church in Africa is independent and can evangelize itself, and yet if we examine the list of contributors to this book the majority are still expatriate priests.

The first chapter is an interesting survey of the history of the catechist in East Africa. In it, Frank Nolan, w.f., emphasizes both the indispensable role the catechist played and also the diversity of the forms which it took. The rest of the book consists of essays which reflect on the results of a survey carried out in East Africa on the role of the catechist, his status, his training, his remuneration, etc. A questionnaire was sent out to bishops, priests and catechists and they were asked to give answers to many detailed questions about the role of the catechist. These answers give a fascinating insight into the world of the catechists and their employers. One of the subjects which looms large is money. The catechist is dissatisfied with his pay and so suggestions about how this situation might be remedied were asked for. The answers range from the fairly obvious, 'raise salaries', to the more ingenious, 'loans for sewing machines'.

But a fairly clear picture emerges and the conclusion is that catechists are still very important for the work of the Church.

Many of the essays deal with immediate practical problems. Adrian Hastings' chapter on the theological understanding of the catechists is perhaps the most rewarding. He asks whether catechists exist only because there is a shortage of priests: this seems to be the unconscious assumption of many of those who replied, and he points out that it would seem to be a dangerous form of clericalism. But the Church in East Africa does seem to be tied too closely to an inflexible approach to the ministry. The role of the catechist needs to be examined together with the role of the priest; both must be seen in terms of the needs of the local church which they serve. It was an early emergency situation which deprived many communities of a regular celebration of the eucharist, but today this seems to be accepted as normal. If the local communities are really going to be centred on a regular weekly or even daily celebration of the eucharist then it will be necessary first to recognize the catechist as having a ministry in his own right, and not as a substitute priest. This, in turn, would involve 'not merely the upgrading of catechists in training and competence but the qualitative change of at least some of them from being non-eucharistic ministers to being eucharistic ones'.

This collection of essays should be of great interest to anyone in the Church in East Africa, but it can also offer help to other Churches in two respects. First, it offers an example of a very professional approach to a particular problem. It carried out a detailed survey (with all the latest IBM equipment) so that changes could be based on real information and not on just guess-work. The same example might be followed in this country on such a topic as Catholic education. Secondly, it does offer some suggestions for a new pattern of Catholic ministry in a society with rather few professional, full-time presbyters. It might be useful reading, therefore, for many a promoter of vocations.

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