

EXTRACTS AND COMMENTS

PHILOSOPHICAL QUARTERLIES. The more important and learned quarterlies are not, or should not be, patient of slick 'extracts and comments.' They should not be subjected to pot-boiling nor to hasty judgment. Penguin's task must be restricted to drawing attention to a few articles of outstanding interest or merit which have appeared recently, without essaying to advance an adequate conception of their contents. In the realm of constructive philosophy there have been several such. Mention may fittingly first be made of an article by Père Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., in the issue of *Revue Thomiste* dated Avril-Juin, entitled 'La puissance d'assimilation du thomisme.' Its object is a familiar one, to show 'comment le thomisme peut s'assimiler ce qu'il y a de vrai dans les différentes tendances qui subsistent dans la philosophie contemporaine,' but it has seldom been worked out in so comprehensive and masterly a fashion and in so small a space. The article may be of some particular interest in this country in view of the misgivings which have been expressed (*e.g.* in a review of Fr. Vann's *Morals Makyth Man* in the last *Criterion*) as to the authenticity of a thomism which claims to provide 'a world view, an outlook, in which the experience of to-day can be coherently judged, ordered and synthetised,' and which is represented as 'a rationalization of whatever is worth incorporating in contemporary tendencies and philosophies.' Père Garrigou-Lagrange has no doubt of the assimilating and synthetising virtues of Aristotelian-thomistic principles. He groups as the three dominant tendencies of contemporary philosophy: *agnosticism*, *positivist* and *idealist* (neo-positivism of the 'Wiener Kreis' and the phenomenologists); *vitalism*, in its manifold forms; and finally a more heterogeneous group of German metaphysicians following such diverse masters as Scheler, Driesch and Hartmann. Père Garrigou-Lagrange is, however, less con-

cerned in this article to show how these several tendencies are to be absorbed by the thomist, and with what results, than to expound and demonstrate the 'assimilative' and 'absorbent' properties of the several fundamental principles of Aristotelico-thomist philosophy itself. It is this that gives his article, albeit only a brief outline of the subject, a lasting value.—Dominating in various ways and degrees most current philosophies, both academic and 'popular,' Père de Munnynck, O.P., finds the idea of 'intuition.' Few words indeed are used more glibly, and with greater havoc to exact thinking, through failure to consider and define the various senses, legitimate and illegitimate, which it is made to bear. In the July number of *The Thomist* he renders a great service by distinguishing these various meanings and by defining the validity of the claims of each. In connection with what Père de Munnynck classifies as 'supra-rational intuition,' an article in the July *Philosophy* by K. W. Wild on 'Plato's Presentation of Intuitive Mind in his Portrait of Socrates' may be commended.—Has the thomist anything to offer for the solution of the critical problem? In other words, can there be a thomistic critique of knowledge which establishes its transcendental realism philosophically and rigorously, or is a thomist committed to a more or less 'naïve' realism which is content to accept unquestioningly the 'reality' of the object which the mind apprehends as independent of its own thinking? Here for many is a crucial question on the answer to which they will consider the claim of thomism to be taken seriously as philosophy will depend, and it is a question to which thomists themselves have given no unanimous answer. Père Garrigou-Lagrange, M. Maritain, and more emphatically M. Gilson, may be quoted as asserting that for the thomist the critical problem can have no existence, or at any rate is insoluble. P. Roland-Gosselin, O.P., Mgr. Noel of Louvain, Pères Picard and Boyer, S.J., may be quoted, on the other hand, as maintaining, not only that the critical problem is a genuine and soluble one, but also as offering a 'critique of reason' which claims to be based on St. Thomas himself. Analysis of what these several authors understand by the critical

problem suggests that their disagreements are not so radical as might at first appear. But that the late Père Gardeil, O.P., may be justly grouped with the latter is suggested by a hitherto unpublished paper which is reproduced in the Spring number of *La Revue des Sciences Théologiques et Philosophiques*, though his contribution may be considered by rigorous epistemologists to be 'ontological' rather than strictly 'critical,' and to that extent question-begging. Such an estimate would perhaps be unjust, but no philosopher interested in the subject will fail to recognise the value of this paper for its effective elimination of the pseudo-problem of the 'bridge' (between the 'mind' and the noumenal 'real') which has so often obscured the issue, and for its equally effective elimination of false and crude presentations of the claims of realism. More strictly 'critical' in its approach is the compact and closely-reasoned essay 'Towards the Solution of the Critical Problem' which Fr. A. Little, S.J., contributes (in English) to the current *Gregorianum*. A noteworthy merit of this essay is its suggestion that St. Thomas, by emphasising the reflex character of the act of judgment, disposed in advance of the objection that no solution of the critical problem is possible without begging the question on the grounds that the critical conclusion is a distinct and subsequent act itself requiring justification. Mention must also be made of W. H. Walsh's criticism of Kant's approach to the critical problem in the July *Philosophy*.—In the same number of *Philosophy* there is also an impressive vindication of 'free will' and a demonstration of the self-contradictions of determinism from Professor A. E. Taylor which, if not in direct dependence upon, is in close harmony with St. Thomas's treatment of the subject.—Those who are sceptical of the 'use' of philosophy in general or of thomist philosophy in particular may be commended to some of the considerations in a somewhat rambling and highly pragmatic article in the July *Thomist* by Fr. Daniel O'Grady, while those who having passed that stage, but are hazy as to what philosophy is all about—besides many who fancy they know already—will be interested in Fr. O'Kane's *quæstiones disputatæ* on the subject in the same number.

THEOLOGY AND BRASS TACKS. In the July-September number of *Purpose* there is a noteworthy essay by Mr. T. S. Eliot, who is turning his attention to 'The Idea of a Christian Society.' It is, we are told, a chapter from a forthcoming book by Mr. Eliot on the subject. He justifies his entry into the arena on the grounds that, 'While the practice of poetry need not in itself confer wisdom or accumulate knowledge, it ought at least to train the mind in one habit of universal value: that of analysing the meaning of words: of those that one employs oneself, as well as the words of others.' The importance of this all too rare qualification is well illustrated in the essay, which, within the restricted terms of reference which Mr. Eliot has imposed upon himself, is an admirable exposition of the subject with some excellent diagnosis of current trends, and some equally excellent reflections on the position of the Christian in contemporary society:

When the Christian is treated as an enemy of the State, his course is very much harder, but it is simpler. I am concerned with the dangers to the tolerated minority; and in the modern world it may turn out that the most intolerable thing for Christians is to be tolerated.

Meanwhile, Mr. Eliot's concern with 'right theology' in its social implications and still more, perhaps, his lack of enthusiasm for the 'local version' of Fascism, had drawn from Mr. Ezra Pound, in the Spring number of *British Union Quarterly*, some characteristic 'Notes on the Solitudes and Depressions of my esteemed and distinguished contemporary, Mr. Thos. Stearns Eliot.' Mr. Pound is very impatient (our language only permits these grotesque understatements) with Mr. Eliot's 'letch after God,' and his 'mousing round for theology.' Although there was a time—the time of the *Personæ*—when Mr. Pound's God was very much alive, he now has no use for a 'Lot of dead cod About a dead God,' and finds that 'the danger of Mr. Eliot's theological verbiage is to collect Gothic oddments like the bloke cited on page whatever who says New Testament Greek is the language of the Holy Ghost.' He finds a still more serious 'danger' in that 'when logic attempts to deduce particular *shoulds* and *should nots* from the UN-

KNOWABLE it generally paralyses all thought and all action, or gives it up and muddles along amid left-overs and superstitions.' Mr. Pound's remedy for Mr. Eliot's 'Solitudes and Depressions' is, of course, to muscle in with Mosley:

Mr. Eliot's gloom could have been avoided IF instead of fussing about the 'local version' he had had the vigour to consider what part of totalitarian thought the local version took for granted, what, in the immediate flux of national dangers and miseries, the local forces had omitted to *specify* because their hands and minds were FULL, and more than full of the immediate needs, and affected by changing contingencies, such as helping keeping England and Europe out of yet another bloody mass murder for the profit of gun-touts and loan-sharks, or protesting against the further degradation of English farming and the murder and debasement by malnutrition of a few more hundreds of thousands of Britons

We draw attention to Mr. Pound's outburst for two reasons. In the first place because it is symptomatic of a pretty widespread impatience with a utopian Christian sociology which is exclusively concerned with principles and long-term action and fails to get down to brass tacks. In the second place because Mr. Pound's article suggests powerfully that the 'local version' of totalitarianism is tainted pretty strongly with precisely that vitalistic activism and contempt for the transcendental which is the most disturbing feature of the Continental versions. This is important in view of the fact that it is credibly reported that an increasing number of Catholics in recent months have been, very understandably, attracted by many of the concrete proposals and the immediate policy of British Union. Mr. Pound's observations may, therefore, be of some service to Christians as a criticism of their own tendencies to evade present evils in their preoccupation with principles from which they fail to draw immediately practical conclusions, and at the same time as a warning against accepting too readily and unquestioningly his own remedy for our 'Solitudes and Depressions.'

A REVIEW OF POLITICS. Any indication, therefore, that Catholics are getting to grips with scientific sociology and political realities is very welcome. For this reason we hail

the new *Review of Politics* which Dr. Waldemar Gurian is editing from Notre Dame University, Indiana. In the first number Jacques Maritain's 'Integral Humanism and the Crisis of Modern Times' usefully summarises some leading ideas of his *True Humanism*, but adds little fresh. The other articles are mainly concerned with radical and much needed scrutiny of current political assumptions. Particularly acute is Goetz Brief's critical historical account of 'The Rise and Fall of Proletarian Utopias'; and Mortimer Adler brings heavy dialectical artillery to bear on the Party System as viewed in the light of the claims of the Common Good. Most refreshing is C. J. Friedrich's 'The Deification of the State,' notwithstanding his incidental fall into the trap of supposing that when St. Thomas expounds Aristotle he does not expound Aristotle but uses him as a peg to air his own views. His criticism of current assumptions regarding the state as unsound and un-Christian is radical:

Can we hope to get away from the spectre which haunts our thinking on man and society? . . . For not only is it inherently contrary to the Christian view, but it stands in the way of creative innovation both at home and abroad. At home it prevents our progressing beyond the present impasse between labor and its employers; abroad it keeps us from looking at the world in terms of a common humanity and its emerging common ends. There is no answer to these questions except in terms of radical change. We must recognise the purely functional nature of such concepts as order and the state. Indeed, we may go so far as to assert that *the state does not exist*. There are governments, peoples, countries, there are kings, parliaments, dictators, parties and concentration camps, but there is no evidence in support of the idea that some sort of holy unity, some mystical transcendence need be attributed to them, that they indeed should be seen as a whole. This idea, propagated by the governing gangs who wished to see themselves identified with the community, in the last analysis appears to be a perfectionist ideal for the realization of which man would have to be something different than he actually appears to be.

In the same number there are several important reviews, including a very fair and balanced one of Douglas Jerrold's *Necessity of Freedom*. The second number is especially remarkable for Donald Davidson's 'Agrarianism and Poli-

tics,' Etienne de Greef's 'Psychology of the Totalitarian Movement' (an article whose importance and seriousness is rather too over-larded with gossip), and the late Dom Virgil Michel's 'Ownership and the Human Person.' Inevitably the British reader will regret this review's natural preoccupation with American politics, and its neglect of his own. Is it impossible to hope for, if not a British equivalent, then a British supplement?

SIRS, YE ARE BRETHREN.' Penguin has already alluded to the valuable contribution in a recent *Theology* in which the Rev. Thomas M. Parker, of Pusey House, Oxford, lays the bogey of alleged Catholic obscurantism regarding Biblical criticism. A word of grateful acknowledgement is now due to the same writer for a further eirenic effort in the current issue of the Anglican review *Reunion*. The writer sets out to show the injustice of the traditional Anglo-Catholic view of English Papists as 'schismatics' from the authentic Catholic communion of the country. He suggests that there should be 'no more talk of "Italian missions" or "schism shops," or use of similar expressions which not unnaturally irritate those of the Latin Obedience who remember the many heroic Englishmen who perished to maintain a belief in the nature of Papal authority which, if not universal in the pre-Reformation English Church [*sic*], was at least held by a great number of her theologians.' He deplores controversy on the rival claims of English Roman Catholics and Anglicans to 'continuity' as irrelevant. He proposes the theory that those respective claims are much of a muchness, and for the idea of schism *from* the traditional Catholic Church of the country, he would substitute the idea of a schism *within* the national Church, with the result that English Catholics today belong exclusively to neither 'denomination,' but are divided into Roman and Anglican Catholics: 'the true Church of England is as much divided as the true Catholic Church and its component parts are the Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic body in England.' This theory, as Mr. Parker recognises, is not one that we can be expected to accept; nor is it one that truth and charity will permit us to be content that our Anglican brethren

should accept. For us, the 'continuity' controversy is yet more irrelevant; the important thing being not continuity with the medieval *Ecclesia Anglicana* but communion with the *Catholica* under the headship of the See of Peter. This Mr. Parker well understands; but we are grateful to him for throwing overboard the 'Papist schism' theory which is so untrue to history and so serious an obstacle to understanding with fellow-Christians and fellow-countrymen who should have so much in common with ourselves, and it will be a big step forward if Anglo-Catholics will face the historic realities which he sets before them. Those realities are such that, though we cannot accept his theory nor recognise the claim of Anglo-Catholics to be visibly members of the one Catholic Church, we should do well to reciprocate them to the extent of ceasing to regard Anglo-Catholics as 'Protestants playing at Catholicism' and to see in them the successors of those who, in the confusion of the issues at the time of the English Reformation, and however mistakenly, believed that the Church by law established was the Church of Augustine, however tainted, and who preserved for their Anglo-Catholic posterity of to-day, and against tremendous odds, much of the tradition of the medieval *Ecclesia Anglicana*. Though we cannot agree that English Catholics to-day belong to both communions, yet we can believe (as indeed is evident) that the English *Catholic-minded* are unhappily so divided, and we may well pray and work that that division be soon destroyed. Mr. Parker's article, if it persuades his co-religionists that we are indeed English Catholics (a term too often monopolised by Anglo-Catholics for themselves) and not a foreign post-reformation importation, may prove an important step in the right direction.

CINEMA. Lack of space alone has prevented our drawing attention previously to the valuable number of *La Vie Intellectuelle* dated June 25th. The permanence of its value may be pleaded in extenuation of our delay. Half the number is devoted to a series of expert articles on the cinema which should be neglected by nobody who has any concern for it, even if only as a spectator. These articles are classified under the general rubrics of 'L'image ciné-

matographique et ses lois,' 'Le public,' 'Commerce et idéologie,' 'Le film et sa finance.' Under the first rubric appear three articles of capital importance on film-æsthetics. If duly pondered both by makers and beholders of films we might have reason to hope for a very much higher standard of production on our screens, whether professional or amateur, and a more exacting appreciation from our audiences. M. Maxime Chastaing disposes of the pernicious theory that the function of the cinema audience is, or even can be, purely passive. Such an assumption not only makes for many bad films, but brings the cinema into much undeserved contempt. Drawing on sources so various as Plato's analysis of imagination and his idea of participation, and on the findings of the Gestalt psychologists and the technique of the phenomenologists, M. Chastaing outlines a theory of cinema more comprehensive than any we have so far met with, a theory which we believe should prove exceedingly fruitful if allowed to direct practice. His analysis turns on an analogy between the film and the dream, and lays stress on the collaboration of the imagination of the spectator in film-appreciation. He maintains that the screen is a 'window' to the spectator's imagination rather than an 'object' for his eyes, while the function of the cinéaste is reduced from that of creator of an 'object' to that of guide of the imagination of the audience. He reaches the definition of the cinematographic image as 'un rêve dirigé par un homme qui sait juxtaposer des morceaux de pellicule.' Finally, he shows convincingly how the strength of the possibilities of the cinema and the weakness of much of its realisation lie in this fact that its appreciation resides formally in the imagination, and in the failure of cinéastes and audiences to respect this inherent nature of film. Pierre Barbier follows with an analysis of 'Le mouvement au cinéma,' and S. Kracauer with some brief but penetrating critiques of some famous early films. The articles under the heading of 'Le public' contain many familiar truths, but are rather too generalised and perhaps too insensitive to the appeal of the cinema to be very helpful. But those on the propaganda and commercial aspects of the cinema are very instructive, and the account of the

methods of the *Groupe ment des Salles Familiales*, with its powerful and comprehensive organisation now covering almost the whole of France, will be read with very great interest. Père Pie Duployé, O.P., sums up the number with some brief but very sound reflections on the function of Catholic Action in the sphere of the cinema.

(CONTEMPORANEA will be resumed in October)

PENGUIN.

REVIEWS

RELIGION

HINDUISM OR CHRISTIANITY? A study in the distinctiveness of the Christian Message. By Sydney Cave. (Hodder and Stoughton; 6s.)

This small volume reproduces six lectures, given as the Haskell Lectures at Oberlin College by Professor Cave and intended, in the words of the author, to contrast the teaching of Hinduism and Christianity. Four subjects are treated successively—*Karman*, *Braham*, *bhaktî* and *dharma*—and to these are added one introductory and one concluding chapter.

In his representation of Hinduism Professor Cave, who himself spent eight—pre-war—years in Travancore, takes very great pains to be fair to it. Yet I cannot think that any Hindu would consider that he has altogether succeeded—nor can I. Take Cankara's realization that the reality of God's being (which we could call His aseity) is such that by comparison nothing else can be deemed truly real; and who, believing that only one can be real, God or world, with superb abandon proclaims that the world in that case must be an illusion: Professor Cave states the doctrine, but he does not, as does for instance Fr. G. Dandry, S.J.,* thrill to it. Or take that famous passage in the *Bhagavad Gîtâ* (II, 47—48):

'For the deed only strive thou,
not for the fruits thereof;
Let not the deed's fruit thy motive be
nor be attached to inactivity.
In success, in failure the same thou be:
cquanimity this *yoga* is called.'

* See his *Ontologie du Vedânta*; Paris, 1932.