

In a work of broad scope such as this there are bound to be occasional errors and omissions. For example, a date of death should be added to that of birth for Austin Farrar (p. 243). Also there might have been more attention to students of language such as Ian Ramsay. Do not they too belong under the broad umbrella of recent apologetics? Similarly we would have liked to see at least a brief treatment of John Macquarrie's philosophical theology. No matter where his thought ranges in the future, the first third of Macquarrie's *Principles* got through to much of confused young America in the sixties. The largest omission by far seems to be Dulles' inattention to a Christian apologetics for the redeemed earth. Some of the authors he treats have

leads for us in this critical need—e.g. 'Paul', Irenaeus, Newman, Coleridge, Chardin. In his forthcoming volume I hope he will draw on the insights of Joseph Sittler, the World Council of Churches and, for that matter, even the American Indian religions. Christian apologetics was almost mute when technocracy ravaged the new world. Let us hope the Church will speak out before England Los Angelizes with the motor car and the third world destroys its last frontiers. Finally, the printers seem determined to price themselves (and theology) out of business! Four pounds, as even Mr Heath must realize, is too much for 289 pages.

Despite the need for reflation, this book is highly recommended. EDWARD P. ECHLIN, S.J.

CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA'S TREATMENT OF THE PROBLEM OF EVIL, by W. E. G. Floyd, O.S.B. (Oxford Theological Monographs). Oxford University Press, 1971. xxiii + 107 pp. £2.10.

When I was a student of philosophy I solved the problem of evil. I can remember vividly the occasion—I was preparing for an examination—and the lawn I was pacing when I solved it. Unfortunately for the human race I have forgotten how I solved it.

Of course, the problem only exists for those who believe in an all-powerful, wise and loving God: why doesn't he put an end to it? There was no problem for the Manichees. They saw the world as a battlefield on which two equal and opposite gods, a good and a bad, struggled for mastery, while man was impotent, tossed by the rival forces, a spiritual soul helpless in the prison of a body that was evil simply because it was material.

But those who believe in a single, good God cannot answer the questions so easily. The Gnostics who were such powerful rivals to Christianity in the second century, found an answer in a system inspired by Platonist ontology: although there is a supreme, transcendent deity, there emanates from him a descending series of inferior spirits, each rank further removed from ultimate goodness. Somewhere in this chain the decline from goodness shows itself in the creation of material things, which was frequently described as the work of a hostile inferior deity or demiurge. The supreme God does not interfere with the evil in the material world, because it is his nature to be totally apart. Man cannot put an end to it, because he is not free: evil is an essential quality of the life of the human soul in its earthly prison, though a small number of predestined 'spirituals' are saved, because their

souls are capable of acquiring the knowledge which alone can release from matter.

Clement had been trained in the eclectic philosophical fashions of his day, and assimilated into his thought elements of middle Platonism and Stoicism. He spent his best years as a Christian educator in Alexandria, a city that was a centre of intense academic activity and a hot-house of intellectual novelties; Gnosticism flourished in such soil. His major work, the *Stromateis* or 'Miscellanies', is a detailed refutation of the Gnostic world-view. The supreme God is also the creator; therefore the material world is good. The first man introduced evil into the world by his sin, and it remains a fact of human existence for every generation. But although man is born with this inclination to sin, and is subject to temptation by the devil, he preserves his free will and therefore his responsibility for his own actions. The afflictions of life are not so much evils as an educative discipline applied to us by a wise and loving Providence. The theoretical problems of evil are thus solved; *practically* they are solved by the redeeming work of Christ and man's free will.

Dom Gregory Floyd knows his Clement like his own hand; he provides a thorough systematization of the Father's theories and compares them point by point with those of his Gnostic adversaries. He shows incidentally that Clement, for all his opposition to the Gnostics, follows them in the belief that salvation is knowledge. But the author is a modest man; for all his familiarity with his subject, he is reluctant to trust himself to

criticism of Clement, and feels safer when he can quote a secondary source in support of his views. Consequently this is a valuable source-book, but one would now like to see the author sail out into less sheltered waters. How do Clement and his Gnostic contemporaries fit in with the whole history of the Gnostic movement? Does Clement really solve the problem of evil? Is this not a problem which is solved by an appeal not to reason but to faith—faith in the goodness of God who loved the world so much that he sent his only Son to undergo evil and triumph over it through love; faith in the truth in Jesus' saying that the grain must die in order to be fruitful?

There are three especial points on which the reviewer disagrees with the author. First, it is surely an anachronism to depict the Gnostics as second-century existentialists who built their extravagant cosmogonies mainly to account for their Angst.

Secondly, Clement's teaching on original sin is interpreted through the spectacles of twentieth-century opinion, which tries to reduce original sin to 'social heredity conveyed through parental example and environmental influence', and sees this as a 'more optimistic alternative' to the (western) view that original sin is transmitted by the passion that accompanies the act of conception. But why more *optimistic*? And is the difference between East

and West as marked as is supposed? The author sees that this explanation does not tie in all the strands of Clement's thought. For although Clement does not teach inherited guilt, he does teach an inherited tendency to sin; and it is going beyond the evidence to reduce this tendency to 'social heredity', even if one accepts as genuine the passage from the doubtful Commentary on Jude, 'We are all subject to Adam's sin according to the pattern of his sin'; for heredity as well as environment can lead to the recurrence of a pattern of sin. It seems anachronistic again to suggest Clement links original sin with Adam 'so that he might give the impression of rendering lip-service to a doctrine which was part of ecclesiastical tradition even at this early date'.

Thirdly, since a discussion of the problem of evil inevitably applies modern categories to second-century thought, it would have brought clarity to the treatment if the different kinds of evil had been more sharply distinguished. For example, is suffering an evil in itself, or should the term be reserved for the moral attitude that reacts wrongly to suffering?

This is a valuable study, enlivened by quotations from modern literature. Can we look forward now to a deeper penetration by the author into some part of a field that he has so thoroughly prospected in this first work?

E. J. YARNOLD

SCIENCE ET THEOLOGIE—METHODE ET LANGAGE. Centre Catholique des Intellectuels Français. *Desclée De Brouwer*, Paris. 1969. 249 pp. 40F.

This book contains the papers presented at a colloquium held in Rome in November 1968, organized by the 'Secrétariat international pour les questions scientifiques' of Pax Romana. It represents a serious attempt to illuminate the lesser understood areas of scientific and theological thought and method and to compare them at a fairly deep level. Half of the papers are on science and half on theology, and each paper is by an expert in his own field.

The tone of the whole volume is honest, rigorous and highly unpretentious, at the same time as being genuinely stimulating. The papers are divided under two headings, 'Role of Hypothesis and Types of Certainty' and 'Problems of Language—Symbols and Concepts'. Then follows some notes compiled by study groups, which can be (and should be!) viewed as guidelines for further thought, and finally a 'Final Document'. Included in the same volume are some essays on research and a debate on the origin of the scientific mind.

One of the features of a subject as vast as science and theology is that there is still so much that needs to be said and to be understood. Even such a seemingly simple activity as research in fundamental physics is characterized, as Dr Peter Hodgson points out, by experimental surprises and conceptual uncertainties. The physicist is often forced to believe in apparently contradictory ideas, and, if he is to make any progress, requires a passionate involvement with and caring for his subject, grounded in a faith in the ultimate simplicity of the world. Faith for the theologian, on the other hand, is certain but non-evident knowledge (Mgr Carlo Colombo) and it is precisely this intellectual unsatisfactoriness that underlies the desire to re-search, and to see more clearly. There is a very interesting paper by Gustave Martelet, S.J., on the anthropological unity of science and theology, which arises from the impossibility of complete objectivity in theology and in the social, and even physical,