

In dem sich an diesen Beweis anschließenden dritten Teil, der auf den ersten, „beschreibenden“, und den zweiten, „spekulativen“, als „metaphysischer“ angeführt wird, zieht B. die Konsequenzen aus dem Voraufgegangenen: Der erwiesenen absoluten Freiheit gegenüber kann sich die Metaphysik noch verschieden verhalten. Entweder sie sagt von Gott keine positiven Bestimmungen aus (theologia negativa); dann wird Gott zum unbestimmten Absoluten, in das hinein die menschliche Freiheit aufgehen will, was zur praktischen Negation Gottes führt und damit zu einer Haltung, die wenigstens in der Praxis gegen die Logik unserer Existenz verstößt (184—219); oder sie nimmt an, daß in Gott Aussagbares ist, das absolute Wort; dann ist es der absoluten Freiheit auch möglich, zu uns zu reden, und nur auf Grund dieser Annahmen gelangen wir über das Reden über Gott hinaus zu einem Reden zu Gott, und dann wird unsere Existenz Sprache für Gott, praktische Gottesbejahung (219—283). Darauf sind wir angelegt. Daß diese Anlage realisiert, daß die volle „Logik unsrer Existenz“ verwirklicht wird, das vermag die Philosophie nicht zu bewirken. „Um die Erwartung zu erfüllen, die Anrufung zu entwickeln, muß Gott sich offenbaren, unser Geschick festlegen und den Sieg des Strebens garantieren“ (283).

Man vermag schon aus dieser zusammengedrängten Inhaltsangabe zu sehen, welche Fülle von Problemen und Anregungen in dieser Schrift vorliegt. Es läßt sich aber aus dieser kurzen Skizze auch schon erahnen, daß die Aneignung seines Inhalts auf Schwierigkeiten stoßen kann, nicht nur wegen der bei aller Lebendigkeit schwierigen Sprache, sondern noch mehr, weil die kunstvolle Dialektik, in der die menschliche Grundausrichtung dargestellt und die Konsequenzen aus dieser Logik der Existenz gezogen werden, wahrscheinlich bei nicht wenigen den Verdacht aufkommen läßt, daß hier weniger die Begriffsstruktur aus der Realität entwickelt als vielmehr die sicher nicht schlecht beobachtete Wirklichkeit in eine vorgegebene logische Ordnung eingepaßt worden sei. Es wäre schade, wenn sich dadurch jemand abhalten ließe, die reichen Anregungen des Buches aufzunehmen.

A. K. Keller, S. J.

Levi, Anthony, S. J., *Religion in Practice. An Outline of Christian Religious Teaching in the Light of Human Standards of Conduct*. Kl. 8^o (XII u. 208 S.) London 1966, Oxford University Press. 30.— Sh.

The aim of this interesting and original book is well expressed in the subtitle. People today often fail to see the relevance of Christianity to the leading of a good life: L.'s purpose is therefore to show the connection of religion with ordinary moral experience. He aims to show, in the words of his Preface, that „Christian perfection is unattainable without purely human excellence, and that the highest standards of human behaviour, even when they are divorced from any formal religious belief, are in fact constitutive of Christian sanctity“. In carrying out this programme, as he himself emphasises, L. owes much to the writings of Karl Rahner; but this does not by any means detract from the basic originality of the theory advanced in this book taken as a whole.

Grace, derived of course from our redemption through Christ, is operative outside the visible Church as well as inside it. All men are called to a supernatural destiny, and it is in virtue of this call that they experience that desire of human perfection which, in the author's view, is the root of morality. The salvation of every man, whether Christian or unbeliever, depends on his fundamental moral option. Explicit belief in Christianity does not make it easier to attain salvation, but what the explicit Christian revelation does do is to make clear and to spell out the real structure and conditions of human perfectibility, and to place that movement towards perfection, which all men experience, in its proper light and context as the gift of God through Christ.

L.'s view of morality is essentially Aristotelian. Moral values are correlative to man's desire for self-perfection, and it is only as the term of this desire that God can be discovered in a morally and religiously relevant way. Even if God is known, for example, as Creator, one cannot accept his dominion until he is known also as the term of one's own aspirations. This basic aspiration for human perfection is, however, a fruit of the redemption. Since theologians hold that grace is necessary

in order to keep the moral law in serious matters and for a prolonged period, anyone who does in fact keep the moral law in this way must be in a state of grace; and since the state of grace requires the presence of faith, and „it is a fact of common experience that there are people who keep the moral law, but who also profess not to believe in God, there must be people who think they do not believe in God, but nevertheless possess the virtue of faith“ (20). The act of faith therefore would seem to be implicit in that fundamental moral choice by which one accepts the binding nature of moral values.

After this fundamental part of his theory, L. goes on to consider what the Christian faith actually holds about how the human race is redeemed. Heaven and hell, as he well explains, are in a true sense already implicit in man's own moral choices: they are not extrinsic or arbitrary rewards or punishments. L.'s view of conscience is dependent on his general theory of morality: the judgement of conscience is the judgement as to whether a certain object is or is not conducive to one's ultimate perfection. In rejecting an object which is seen to be necessary to this ultimate perfection, one rejects that perfection itself. But the integration of one's life in terms of one's fundamental choice of the good is hindered by that concupiscence which, along with all forms of suffering and death, is one of the effects of Original Sin. The Redemption was worked essentially by the Incarnation, the personal union of the two natures in Christ: „The source of our redemption is in the personal union of the two natures of Christ, and not in any punishment inflicted by God. The drama of Calvary has to be understood as the acting out of the full implications of the incarnation of the second Person of the Blessed Trinity in sinful human nature“ (45).

The objective redemption of mankind was completed by the resurrection and ascension of Christ and by the sending of the Holy Ghost. L. is inclined to attribute a symbolical character to the last two of these events: the ascension, to whose real occurrence he holds fast, was probably the outward manifestation of a full glorification which was already actually complete with the resurrection on Easter Day. The visible descent of the Holy Ghost was deferred till after the ascension in order to manifest the dependence of this gift of the Spirit on the completion of Christ's saving work, but in fact the Holy Ghost had been communicated to men since the beginning of time, since the effects of the redemption were retroactive and there can be no justification without the gift of the Holy Ghost. It seems however that L. could perhaps have overcome this last difficulty with the aid of principles which are contained in this very book: was not the gift of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost primarily charismatic? Its aim seems primarily to have been to strengthen the apostles and give them understanding, in order to equip them for the work of the foundation of the Church. The analogate of this pentecostal gift in the Old Testament would not, in this case, be that general gift of the inhabitation of the Spirit which is an essential part of all justification and which the apostles themselves, along with all the justified since the beginning of time, had doubtless already received before Pentecost, but rather the gift of inspiration granted to the prophets and the special charisms granted to such figures as Moses for their work of leading the people of Israel. L. concludes this portion of his book with a section which examines the seven Christian sacraments and their relationship to the salvific work of Christ carried on by his Church.

After this section devoted to the objective redemption worked by Christ, he returns to the question with which he had begun, and seeks to analyse the ways in which this redemption takes effect in the lives of men. Christian life can only consist in the progressive appropriation of the effects of the redemption. But this full supernatural perfection can also be achieved outside the visible Church, and it is characteristic of the Author's approach that he first considers how those outside the Church attain their sanctification, and then uses this insight as a means of illuminating the nature and meaning of sacramental sanctification within the Church. Salvation is achieved by the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Spirit, for those who have not received the sacrament of baptism as much as for those who have. The Church is the sacrament, the visible sign of the saving, sanctifying activity of God in the world: its members are obliged to receive through the sacraments the

graces which others receive without them, in order to bear testimony to the true origin and nature of those graces. Only through this view of the Church as the sacrament of the world's salvation can the necessity of the Church and of its sacraments be reconciled with the possibility of salvation outside it.

The author then goes on to consider the nature of sanctity. This is sometimes confused with singular, paranormal phenomena, or identified with those extreme forms of heroic sanctity which are not called for in the lives of most people, but essentially it can be identified with the highest forms of human moral excellence. Prayer is a powerful means to this self-fulfilment, since it develops in the man who prays a sensitivity which enables him to discern what is truly perfective; basically it consists in a quiet attention to that self-revelation of God in man which is identical with His drawing man towards Himself. This drawing of man towards God, which is the same as man's own quest for final self-fulfilment, should be a harmonious process. Christianity is not a religion of fear, nor does it exalt suffering: It demands, of course, a readiness to undergo suffering if need be, if there is no third alternative between that and the abandonment of what one sees to be right, but that is a different matter. If Christianity inculcated fear or demanded suffering to appease an angry deity, it would be „opposed to our experience of human perfectibility to which any authentic religious revelation must *a priori* correspond. A religion of fear is contrary to the exigences of redeemed humanity, and any revelation which justified it could not be true“ (155). Revealed religion, then, must measure up to the empirical criterion of human moral consciousness. This is a consequence of that view of morality and religion which L. affirmed at the beginning of the book, for God can only be discovered, in a way that is meaningful for religion, as the term of man's aspiration for perfection.

But the human moral consciousness is not something that is given once for all; it is an essential part of L.'s theory that this consciousness evolves in the course of history. „The emergence of fresh philosophical and scientific truths and the emergence of new moral values is part of the historical process“ (115—6). L. is strongly opposed to those who think they detect a widespread decay of moral standards in the contemporary world: one cannot say that there is proportionally either more or less sin at present than in the past, but there is a sense in which it is possible to affirm „a steady moral progress throughout the recent centuries in the history of Western society“ (171—2). This progress is seen, according to the author, in an increased sensitivity to the malice of acts of violence, an increased concern for individual freedom, a greater concern for the fate of the deprived and the unhappy. The emergence of these new human values has been responsible for such reform movements as those for the „abolition of slavery or hanging, prison reform or disarmament“ (157), movements in which Christians have commonly failed to take that prominent part which one might have expected of them. One might remark in passing that this last judgement is hardly true in the case of the abolition of slavery, provided one does not restrict „Christians“ to „Catholics“, since the successful movement for the abolition of slavery was very largely the work of Evangelical Christians such as Wesley and Wilberforce. And L. suggests that the new emphasis on marital love and the increasing doubts felt about the morality of a „just war“ may well reflect a further evolution of moral sensitivity in these spheres. This emergence of new moral values in society is not to be attributed, in the Author's view, to any inherent powers of evolution in the human spirit: rather it is its comparative insulation from physical need which makes contemporary society more sensitive to the exigences of human perfectibility. Such developments always present a certain problem to the Church, since on the one hand authentic progress in human moral insight is always the fruit of the Holy Spirit, while on the other hand the Church is rightly concerned to be faithful to the revelation she has received, and has thus to exercise a true discretion. It is not always easy to distinguish true progress in moral sensibility from concomitant aberrations rooted merely in sentimentality. On the whole, however, L. considers that the contemporary humanist ethic corresponds closely with Christian moral teaching. And this, of course, is what one would necessarily expect on the author's whole theory of morality. The aim of his book is to show the harmony that obtains between man's natural

aspirations, themselves the fruit of the Redemption, and supernatural perfection. There can be nothing arbitrary in this latter: in the last resort it is identical with the fulfilment of the former. Christianity ultimately coincides with a fully developed humanism: but due to original sin, humanism can scarcely reach its full development without the aid of revelation. The Church's rôle, apart from this guidance on points where unaided moral consciousness does not see clearly, is „to demonstrate how human perfectibility arises from the redemption worked by Christ, and how its satisfaction involves participating in the fruits which flow from that redemption“ (194).

L.'s book undoubtedly marks an important attempt to commend Christianity to the Liberal Humanist, and to explain it to the Christian who leans towards such Humanism. The Author acknowledges his closeness in spirit to Erasmus and the humanists of the renaissance, and this Christian Humanism is undoubtedly the dominant note of his book. In a sense, the central assertion of L.'s book is, that it is possible, with the aid of grace, to make an implicit act of faith, and to be justified by that faith, in the absence of any explicit belief in God. Such an act would be implied in the determination to try in all circumstances to live in accordance with what one saw to be one's duty, and in sorrow when one failed to do so. And this assertion would seem to be true. When we come, however, to the more detailed question of how L. envisages this process of justification through the acceptance of the moral law, a number of questions arise. It might, for instance, be questioned whether the Author's analysis of morality in terms of human perfectibility is correct; indeed, L. himself recognises (Chap. 2, note 5) that this view would not be universally acceptable. It might be said, for example, that knowledge of moral values and ethical norms does not depend on one's knowledge of one's own perfectibility, but rather precedes and conditions it: that the moral value of justice, for instance, the obligation to act towards everyone and everything in accordance with their real value and nature, first imposes itself upon us, as truth does, and that only then do we realise that there can be no perfection for us which does not involve submission to and realisation of this value.

But in this case, it might be said, what one's moral judgement tells one ought to be done will depend on what one judges things to be. The root of the widely different moral judgements implicit in, say, Communism on the one hand and Liberalism on the other, will be found in differing views of the nature of man and of his relationship to society. And if this is true, the changing moral evaluations of recent centuries (like those that have taken place in the more remote past) will be attributable, not to an objective progress of moral insight as such, but to changing ideas of what man is. The present day, in western countries, is indeed marked by a more sensitive horror of violence than were former times (though it has also committed more violence than most), and by a greater concern for social security; on the other hand, it would also seem to be marked by a lessening of esteem for personal independence, as well as for marital fidelity and for those virtues, such as reverence, which have to do directly with man's relationship to God. Whether one judges that advance or decay preponderates in this picture, it might be said, depends on which values one thinks the more important, which in turn depends on one's basic views about man's nature and his relationship to God and to society. The advance is perhaps less evident than L. claims.

L., as has been seen, holds that it is not possible, in the concrete order, to discern the natural from the supernatural, and that, since the only perfection possible for a fallen-and-redeemed human being is a supernatural one, the desire of perfection which we experience (and which he regards as the root of morality) is itself the fruit of the redemption. But this seems far from certain. It might be argued that what necessarily flows from the possession of intellect and will, from the power to know and to desire what is known, is strictly natural; but every created spiritual being necessarily knows and desires God at least implicitly, so that this implicit desire of God, which flows from the very nature of a spiritual being, cannot be a fruit of the redemption or dependent on grace, except of course in the very broad sense that the continued existence of humanity, after sin, is, in God's plan, solely with a view to its being redeemed. What doubtless does depend on grace is the

consistent and really wholehearted effort, going beyond that velleity which is natural to any rational being, to live according to the moral law which is naturally known, to fulfil the whole of one's duty. But it seems certain that it is possible to live in accordance with many of the moral norms which nature proposes without the aid of grace: even apart from external sanctions and pressures, it is more natural to love one's wife or children than not to do so, and all men prefer justice to injustice when their own interest is not involved. It would seem certain, therefore, that St. Augustine was right in holding that such actions do not necessarily presuppose either grace or faith.

But in this case, it would seem, a more fundamental difficulty arises. According to L., as we saw, „it is a fact of common experience that there are people who keep the moral law, but who also profess not to believe in God“ (20). If what has been suggested is true, however, it is only the keeping of the whole of the moral law which would be a necessary sign of grace. And in this sense, it might be said, it is far from evident that anyone, whether Christian or unbeliever, keeps the moral law in its entirety. The prayer of the Psalmist: „Enter not into judgement with thy servant, for no man living is righteous before thee“ (Ps. 143 [142], 2), and the insistence of St. Paul that he is not justified even by his own clear conscience (1 Cor 4, 5), seem to point to the contrary. The common experience of the saints, who still see their own sinfulness even when their lives surpass the moral ideals of most men, seems to confirm the view that justice is a transcendent value which we are always called upon to realise, and which always imposes itself upon us as obligatory, but which we can never fully attain in this life. It is clear that we all observe many particular precepts of the moral law, and that we rightly judge that many other people do so too: but this, for the reasons given, does not seem to be a clear sign of justification. The complete fulfilment of the law would require that one should love God „with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might“ (Deut 6, 5); it would require, in the case of someone who did not consciously believe in God, an overriding love of justice, of rightness, an absolute adhesion to the good. And this, it might be said, is something that we should hesitate to claim for ourselves or to recognise in others. We are all ultimately dependent on the mercy of God.

L. has undertaken a subject of the greatest importance in this book, and he has treated it with considerable originality. His central view, that acceptance of grace is implicit in the determination to live according to the moral law, would seem to be both true and important. On the other hand, his view of the nature of the moral law, and of its relationship to the redemption, seems to be questionable, and he seems to be unduly optimistic about the possibility of fulfilling the moral law in its entirety and of recognising that other people are doing so. The ideal of morality, as of sanctity (with which L. rightly sees that it is identical), is a transcendent one, never fully attained in this life, and sorrow for sin (in the case of a theist, reliance on the mercy of God) would seem to be as essential a part of justification as is the determination to strive to fulfil one's whole duty. Be that as it may, it is the great merit of this book that it raises these fundamental problems and brings them into discussion. The Author has shown, without doubt, that the consideration of how an „unbeliever“ can be saved is capable of throwing considerable light on the salvation of the believer as well. L. would not claim to have said the last word on this subject; but if his book excites a lively discussion of the matters he has raised, it will have been of the greatest value.

R. J. P. A C W O R T H, S. J.

Krämer, Edgar, *Der Mensch und die Geschichte*. 8^o (473 S.) Flensburg 1966, Karfeld. 16.80 DM.

Der Verf. beginnt mit der Frage, ob Geschichtsphilosophie, d. h. die Frage nach dem Sinn der Geschichte, überhaupt möglich und zulässig sei. Und dann geht er über zur Methode, bzw. zum Ansatzpunkt dieser Frage.

Sicher hat die Geschichtsphilosophie zunächst den historischen Stoff als vorgegeben ins Auge zu fassen. Kann sie nun von „Erfahrung“ ausgehen, von einem geschichtswissenschaftlich gesicherten Material, oder setzt Geschichtsschreibung bereits eine philosophische Idee voraus, eine Leitidee, um die sich der empirische Roh-