

position solemnly enunciated by Benedict XII in 1336' concerning the intuitive vision of the divine essence. He writes of 2 Peter's description of the end of the world involving fire and destruction as if it were some prophecy of atomic war, thus ignoring all we have learnt about biblical themes of judgement and their imagery and which he could have found in so popular a book as Fr Charles Davis' *The Study of Theology*.

The book is a catena of rhetoric and tautology, of pious waffle and dogmatic opinion. Winklhofer has an assurance in his dealings with the details of the parousia second only to that of a primary school child who has gained full marks in a catechism test. An assurance which includes in its reference what a dying man thinks immediately before death, what the eye of a dead man focuses on, and falters only in answering the question 'where is heaven?'. The absence of an index might be more regretted if one could believe that a reader would derive much from consulting the book.

HAMISH SWANSTON

LA FOI ET LA THEOLOGIE, by Y. M. J. Congar, O.P.; Desclée. n.p.

This is a *canevas d'étude*, not a developed and well-rounded dissertation, on the faith seeking understanding, the bearing of God's Word in man's mind and heart and sense, which St Thomas calls *sacra doctrina*. It is very welcome as redressing the balance, for the contemporary and understandable reaction against a theology presented as a geometrical scheme of definitions, theses, and corollaries, divided between 'dogma' and 'morals', the last being parcelled out between moral theology treated as a catalogue of precepts, ascetical theology as the rules for those who would follow the counsels, and mystical theology as an investigation into miraculous psychology, has swung to the extreme of existentialist protests against logic in religion which reduce theology to little more than a sacred rhetoric, and for those who are already in the swim.

To the two main parts, first, a study of God's saving revelation through deeds and words in Jesus Christ and of the human response in the mind of the Church, and second, an introduction to the ordered body of knowledge that is built up in consequence, there is added a brief history of theology. It is the second part that merits the closest attention.

Here the test is whether the thought sustains the level of St Thomas and, in our century, of Gardeil. There grace and nature are not seen as two co-operating principles each doing a part, but in subordination, civil and free, not despotic and servile, each making the whole. Otherwise Christian theology becomes a mythology, or a hybrid of faith and reason, or an apologetic on the make, or a mere philosophy of religion exercising itself on alien data. Père Congar has been justly admired for his appreciation of the concreteness of Christian truths in the stream of history; nobody would accuse him of arid abstractionism or of gate-crashing into the temple with metaphysical analyses. So then his insistence on the continued vitality of scholastic theology is all the more impressive, also his

firm yet gentle criticism of some of our modern kerygmatics.

St Thomas himself well recognized that conceptual knowledge is in motion to the real union of contemplation, that the 'what' of essence is at most penultimate, that 'is' itself is surpassed by God, and that the act of belief goes beyond the statement to the thing. All the same he was not disposed on that account to smudge the edges of meaning, or to deny the continuity between vision and faith, or between faith and the articles of faith, or between the articles of faith and the universal language of rational thought. This volume is recommended as an admirable companion to the first question of the *Summa*, the English translation of which will be published by Blackfriars this autumn.

THOMAS GILBY, O.P.

THAT THE WORLD MAY BELIEVE, by Hans Küng; Sheed and Ward, 7s.

Mention Küng in almost any clerical assembly and you'll split it right down the middle, that's for sure. One half will say this: 'The man's a crook. Take his latest effort. He knows his theology, and so he knows perfectly well that the mass is a sacrifice. Also he knows that the eucharistic elements are changed really and truly into the body and blood of Christ. Yet in the chapter on the mass, he nowhere states the first of these truths, nor does he give to the second anything like the emphasis it deserves and in sound Catholic tradition receives. Not surprisingly, because his whole aim—in all his work—is to minimise to the point of insignificance the differences between Catholics and Protestants. In the interests of ecumenism he is prepared to jettison the Catholic tradition of the past four centuries, and indeed some central truths in a tradition much earlier, in fact the whole Catholic picture of the mass.'

The other half will counter: 'It isn't primarily a question of meeting the Protestants halfway or anywhere along the way. Quite apart from any advantages there may be from such a meeting, we Catholics have today a special need to state and ponder and rest with those propositions about the mass that are certainly and simply true and whose enunciation does not raise in the mind a cloud of controversial dust, of memories of ill-assimilated theology lessons, of theories. This Küng does. He states that the mass is a meal: that it is a meal commemorating the fact of our Redemption: that it is a meal of thanksgiving. We are hopelessly overladen with ideas, and this inhibits us from seeing anything really clearly and in such wise as to move our hearts creatively towards the renewal of Catholic life. Really to possess—that is, to possess unto edification—all that is in Catholic tradition, requires a rare and finely tempered theological intelligence. For most of us—certainly for the young people Küng is writing for—quantity is the enemy of quality.'

The debate is a real one. Indeed it shows, in a purely Catholic context, the need for ecumenical dialogue. It shows this need in its purest form. For if a belief in the other party's sincerity is the prerequisite of all ecumenical dialogue, what could be more difficult—for a Catholic reared on traditional lines and without