

thinks *in propria persona* that this is *all* the words express, I cannot find in his book an account of what else they do. And he sums up: 'Traditional Belief consists in (1) Assent to statements of past (historical) and future (eschatological) fact (and) (2) Present Christian behaviour as justified by (1), and present Christian religious experience as a by-product of the resulting hope and thankfulness'. This does not seem to leave sufficient room for the belief in the present existence and power of a transcendent creator and ruler of the world. Similarly, in the last chapter of the book, the truth-conditions of four Christian mysteries (the inspiration of Scripture, the Incarnation, the Real Presence, and the occurrence of miracles and visions) are set out in a way which manages to avoid giving offence to the empiricist seemingly only at the cost of making the believer feel misrepresented. But even those who cannot altogether accept Dr Meynell's conclusions will be grateful to him for his clear and honest discussion of the very great difficulties which await solution in the field of philosophical theology.

ANTHONY KENNY

ZEN CATHOLICISM, *A Suggestion*, by Aelred Graham, O.S.B.; Collins; 30s.

Dom Aelred, a monk of the English Benedictine Congregation, is the Prior of a foundation in Portsmouth, Rhode Island. His book is thus a response to a contemporary interest that is at the moment more prominent in America than in England. Over there, it seems, the most favoured Oriental antidote for the fevered, anxious, aimless superficiality of Western life is the Japanese derivative of Buddhism known as Zen. The author is in perfect sympathy with those Americans (and Europeans) represented by J. D. Salinger's character Franny Glass, who 'in total revulsion against the omnipresent ego, against the scramble to be successful at all costs . . . , turns in disgust from the only concept of a wise man ever presented to her at college—that of a wealthy stockbroker attaining the status of an elder statesman, being called to Washington to act as adviser to the President'. But, he asks them in effect, is there no balm in Gilead? He suggests that there is, and that the soothing draughts sought by world-weary Westerners in the wisdom of the East are to be had nearer at hand in their own Western tradition, which is preserved in Catholicism. There is indeed much to be said for the contention, for which he quotes Coomaraswamy in support, that the contrast between East and West which is made so much of nowadays would have been meaningless before Europe began to neglect its own ancient traditions in modern times.

It is not at all, however, as a rival competitor that Zen is examined in this book; nor is it the author's concern to 'sell' Catholicism as a better brand of balm. On the contrary, his appreciation of Zen, though critical on certain points, is entirely positive. He prefers it to other schools of wisdom from the East for extensive consideration, because he thinks it is the least difficult of them

to compose with Catholic orthodoxy. He is trying to see if this form of 'a philosophy of life which originated in India centuries before Christ . . . can be of service to Catholics, or those interested in Catholicism, in elucidating certain aspects of the Church's own message'. The immediate purpose is 'to enquire how the Church's inner resources can be made available to those who urgently need them. They are accessible to all; they are not "mysterious"; every school child, in a sense, knows about them. And yet there is plenty of evidence to suggest that they hardly influence the lives of the majority, even among the faithful. What seems to be required, to put it extravagantly, is that Catholicism should be able to turn itself inside out'. (p. 9).

Zen is the pin here used to winkle out these inner resources, to turn the inside out. The point where it is mainly, though not exclusively, applied, where these inner resources are found most conveniently arranged, is the teaching of St Thomas Aquinas. This is Dom Aclred's personal preference, and is in itself a most gratifying tribute to the Dominicans of Blackfriars, Oxford, under whom he studied theology in the thirties, even without the graceful acknowledgements he makes to them on p. 185. The affinity between Zen and St Thomas seems to lie in their matter-of-fact reasonableness, their gentle common sense. A few of the Zen principles and aphorisms which the author endorses may here be quoted. In its essence, he considers, it is simply 'unself-consciousness'. 'When I raised the hand, thus, there is Zen. But when I assert that I have raised the hand, Zen is no more there'. 'Try not to seek after the true; only cease to cherish opinions'. 'The Way is near, but men seek it afar. It is in easy things, but men seek for it in difficult things'. 'Every day is a good day; your every-day mind—that is the Way'. 'If you walk, just walk. If you sit, just sit. But whatever you do, don't wobble'. There is an excellent chapter *On The Importance of Not Being Earnest*, and another entitled *Playing God or Letting God Play?*, in which Dom Aclred expounds the spiritual aim of achieving 'the disappearance of the selfconscious me before the full realization of the unselfconscious I', these two expressions, elsewhere also called the objective me and the subjective I, being roughly equivalent, it seems, to the ego and the self of Jungian terminology. The same contrast, and the same aim are well stated also as follows: 'The doctrine that God disposes of us at his pleasure is disturbing, it could even be terrifying, to our individualistic ego, the separative self; for this is the human personality considered on its own, potentially in opposition to God. But the true self—which is not fulfilled until it can say, "I live, yet no longer I, but Christ lives in me"—finds no difficulty; in fact the opposite, since it feels safer in God's hands than in its own. From this point of view, nothing could be more satisfactory than that the Spirit should breathe where it pleases, or that grace be given by not merit but according to Christ's gift' (p. 126).

And so the author rambles serenely, unaffectedly on his way, often repeating himself with endearing unselfconsciousness, reminding Christians, and especially Catholics, not to make too much of that distinction between Martha and

Mary, to realize that both sisters are in principle to be imitated by everyone, and that even the busiest Martha has a capacity, to be used, of simply sitting and listening and loving with Mary.

EDMUND HILL, O.P.

TECHNOLOGY AND RELIGION, by Henri Queffélec; Burns Oates (Faith and Fact); 9s. 6d.

We are the children of the Industrial Revolution: only now are the consequences of man's breakthrough into a technological age becoming apparent on a world scale, as the revolution escalates into a world undreamt of even fifty years ago. Yet, man's 'coming of age' hasn't brought with it a radically better society: it is far too easy to concentrate one's attention on the elimination of poverty, and to take this as the sole criterion of progress, without considering the sort of society that has come to life. Of course, the Church has been criticised often for taking the opposite viewpoint, and seeming to equate poverty with Godliness. Today, I believe that a truly balanced and moral voice is urgently needed. The question of world-wide poverty must be solved as quickly as possible, but so must the problem of making Christianity relevant to society: by showing and helping to build a world where love and unselfishness prevail. Above all, theology must come to terms with a society of the future which will be materially rich. It simply will not do to ask men to restrain their progress: they won't.

Above all in this situation we cannot afford to be sentimental or vague. A non-Christian who happened to read M. Queffélec's book would probably be amused by such a statement as this:

May one not rightly be astonished to find in an otherwise excellent book: 'Interplanetary space henceforth belongs to man. The moon no longer has any secrets for him, now that he has photographed its other side . . . ?'

He would probably be more amused still to read:

Again, ought one not to be shocked by such a statement as this: 'It must be admitted that it is not prayer, but the progress of medicine and of economics which has freed mankind from epidemics and from famine?'

But he would most certainly, and rightly, be outraged to read this:

We all, I suppose, laughed heartily, or at any rate smiled broadly, when we read Huxley's *Brave New World*. We laughed with greater calm because we felt ourselves to be fore-armed by our Christian truths against the possibilities of such a gloomy future . . . If the rate of increase continues naturally . . . in five or six centuries there will be a million millions of living men . . . let us say that . . . the men of that future time must settle their own problems. Let us restrict ourselves to ours. (pp. 12-13.)

In the first pages of his book M. Queffélec manages to pack more platitudes and half-truths than many a writer does into a lifetime's output. In fact, he shows all the symptoms of a technologist himself ('one who knows less and