

Book Reviews

Yet it is the World Controller, not the Savage, who might seem to be the champion of morality. The Savage's philosophy is, in fact, completely amoral. His asceticism is not ethical but aesthetic; if he claims the right to suffering it is only to enhance pleasure; if he claims the captaincy of his soul it is, not that he may preserve it in immortality, but that he may taste more fully all that this life has to offer; if he claims God it is not that he may serve Him, but that he may find in religion a source of further and deeper experience.

But, after all, we certainly like the Savage better than His Fordship and his Brave New World. It costs too much, not only aesthetically, but morally too. A soulless morality, mechanical external behaviour, is no morality at all.

They are both amoralists, His Fordship and the Saavge. And that is why they fail to teach us very much. Mr. Huxley's comminations will not help us very far in the task of saving our immortal souls. But at least he does remind us that we have souls to save. Though he is still far from the side of the angels, we may be thankful that he is so far committed to the side of men and fairies.

V.W.

PHILOSOPHIES OF BEAUTY. FROM SOCRATES TO ROBERT BRIDGES. Being the Sources of Aesthetic Theory. Selected and edited by E. F. Carritt. (Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1931. Pp. xxi, 334; 15/-.)

A valuable anthology of the sources, with a short introduction on the history of aesthetic theory, marking the return to the unity of Plato's idea of Beauty, which was split into different 'kinds' by later thinkers and torn between the formalists and expressionists. The selection is governed by the literary excellence of the extracts, more by their historical interest, and most by their philosophical importance. The quality of the brief statements of the position of some of the more considerable authorities which are prefixed to the extracts from their writings is reflected in the able summary of St. Thomas's aesthetic theory. This consists of Platonist and Aristotelean elements, and can only be gathered from his scattered but suggestive remarks. (But in fact it cannot be grasped apart from his theological teaching on mystical knowledge. *Prière*, as the Abbé Henri Bremond has shown, explains *poésie*). It is interesting to note that St. Thomas is the only authority cited between Plotinus in the third century and Sir Philip Sidney in the sixteenth. St. Augustine, the pseudo-Denis, St. Albert the

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Great (to whom the *Opusculum de Pulchro et Bono* has been attributed) are missing. The sympathies of the editor are shown by his avowal that if he had to choose the two authors who might give most insight into what is meant by aesthetic, he would choose one from each end of the series, Plato and Croce; and if he had to choose one it would be Plato. All the quotations are given in English. In most cases the translations are by the editor, and here also the version of St. Thomas, who can be rendered into English only with difficulty because of his tightness of phrase, is an index to their general accuracy and grace.

T.G.

MORAL THEOLOGY. A Complete Course. Based on St. Thomas Aquinas and the Best Modern Authorities. By John A. McHugh, O.P., and Charles J. Callan, O.P. (New York: J. F. Wagner. London: B. Herder. Two vols. Pp. xii, 691; viii, 802; 25/- each.)

Theology is the queen of the sciences, not the scold nor the fuss. Yet moral theology has been taken sometimes for a collection of do's and dont's grouped round the ten commandments, with special emphasis on the dont's, and cluttered with the opinions of ecclesiastical lawyers about particular cases of conscience. But the subject is more positive than negative; the matter more of perfection than avoidance of sin; the development more according to philosophical laws than to juridical forms. The natural instinct of moral action is more impelling, its play more free, and its goal more attractive than might be gathered from the pettifoggeries of some of the casuists.

The work under review deserves great praise for its spirit, method and style. Principles are preferred to precedents, the rational foundations of the teaching are uncovered without an accumulation of apparatus. The course is comprehensive and follows St. Thomas's order in the *Secunda Pars*. The first volume treats of general moral theology, the well-being of man and the means to it, and the special moral theology of the theological virtues; the second volume continues with the moral virtues, precepts, duties of particular states, and use of the sacraments. Special attention is devoted to modern problems. The style is terse, clear and quickened with transatlantic raciness; the frequent examples are to the point. 'Balbus sees Titus attacked by a hoodlum and realises that, unless assisted, Titus will be badly beaten up; but he is such an admirer of