

## REVIEWS

JUSTICE. By Josef Pieper. (Faber and Faber; 12s. 6d.)

Those who read Dr Pieper's *Fortitude and Temperance* will welcome with much pleasure this essay. It is a careful analysis in the light of St Thomas's own teaching of his statement that 'Justice is a habit, whereby a man renders to each one his due with constant and perpetual will'. Each element of this simple statement is developed, and its applications to individual and social problems discovered, with amazing clarity and precision. This is all the more remarkable when we remember that St Thomas's treatise on Justice is one of the longest, the most condensed, and by no means the easiest in the *Summa Theologica*. But it is the author's peculiar gift not only to combine the abstract with the concrete, but to go right to the heart of every topic he discusses and write of it with a freshness and originality of expression that appears as effortless as it is intellectually satisfying. If we would understand human rights we must go to the metaphysics of created being and realize the implications of human personality. A thing is just, says St Thomas, not only because it is willed by God, but because it is a debt due to a created being by virtue of the relationship between creature and creature. To be just means to recognize the other to whom the debt is due *as other*. Man only reveals his true being when he is just. The act of justice which orders the association of individuals with one another is restitution, recompense, restoration; the act must reflect the characteristics of the virtue. Justice rules in a community wherever the three basic relations, the three fundamental structures of communal life, are disposed in their proper order: firstly, the relations of individuals to one another, as in commutative justice; secondly, the relations of the social whole to the individuals, as in distributive justice; thirdly, the relations of the individuals to the social whole, as in legal or general justice. Only by evaluating these basic forms of justice correctly can a right balance be kept between individualism and collectivism. When we think of government we have to realize the implications of distributive justice. Finally we have to recognize that, great and necessary as justice is, the world cannot be kept in order through justice alone. The condition of the historical world is such that the balance cannot always be fully restored through restitution and the paying of debts and dues. Room must be found for the virtue of religion and man's first and foremost relationship which is to God.

The foregoing sentences summarize all too briefly the main themes dealt with in this essay, but they are quite inadequate to give any real idea of the profound thought which has issued in lessons which need

to be learned in this age of appalling injustice, especially under the communist menace. The great merit of the book is the author's capacity to state in the simplest way and the briefest compass the basic principles on which all clear thought about justice must rest. All those who try to follow St Thomas's teaching without any previous philosophical training will find in this book not only an admirable guide to the understanding of the text, together with a wealth of most helpful references, but no less a model of how to approach the text so as to be fully repaid for their efforts.

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GEORGE BERKELEY AND THE PROOFS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD. By Edward Sillem. (Longmans; 21s.)

Philosophy would be a more attractive subject if all who practised it wrote as well as George Berkeley or his latest commentator. Fr Sillem gives a clear account of Berkeley's philosophy in relation to its central problem of natural theology; eventually exposition gives place to criticism, and to an interesting comparison with the work of modern theists, such as Farrer, Trethowan, Wisdom and Hawkins.

The first six chapters develop Berkeley's theory of the immediate perception of material things, against Locke's and the usual opinion that there is more to them than meets the eye. He insisted that the only way to avoid scepticism was to hold that ideas *are* particular things, not representative of them, and that this after all was only commonsense (one cannot read much Berkeley without appreciating the exasperation he caused his more fumbling opponents). By contrast a spirit comes to be known through the mediation of things; as we recognize our own souls in perceiving, willing, acting, and the souls of other people similarly, so too we know God through what he creates. For each thing conforms to an ordered pattern: all cherries, for example, are alike. Now this is not due to our perceiving them, nor to things themselves, since the Lockean legend of unknown substances has been refuted; it must therefore be due to a spirit other than ourselves.

This is a brief summary of a detailed account amply supported by quotation. In the last chapter Fr Sillem speaks in his own person. He convincingly defends Berkeley against the charge of idealism, pointing to the strong contrast always made between material and spiritual. To be material precisely is *percipi* and not *percipere*. Fr Sillem then defends the proof itself. It is open to all men, not only to those capable of subtle reasoning; and it leads them to know God as a person, not as an abstract notion. The Kantian objection that any such proof must involve illegitimate *a priori* reasoning can hardly apply, since Berkeley