

would say that if essence and existence are in God identical, and if by reason we cannot know God's essence, it follows that reason cannot demonstrate his existence. The saint's reply may be rendered thus: 'It is not a valid objection to point to the identity of essence and existence in God. For this is the existence whereby God subsists in himself, which is as unknown to us as his essence. It is not that existence (*esse*) which expresses an affirmative judgment in the mind. This latter existence, as in the judgment *that God is*, is patient of demonstration inasmuch as, by probative reasons, our mind can be led to form a proposition about God expressing that he is.'<sup>21</sup>

Confusion about human knowledge is likely to cause confusion in one's doctrine about God. But I cannot pursue the matter here. Enough to suggest that a certain withdrawal into, or remaining in, one's awareness of the divinity adumbrated in the intuition of being and of its 'unconditional elements'—a refusal to analyse, rationally, 'Godness' into a clear and distinct concept—that all this is bound to leave our idea of God imperfectly distinguished from our idea of whatever is not God. And this is certainly the case with Paul Tillich, as the final chapters of *Systematic Theology* clearly show. Perhaps, after all, what this great book offers us is not theology at all, but a magnificent essay in religious anthropology.

<sup>21</sup> *Contra Gentiles* I, 12.

#### NOTICE

The next (October) issue of BLACKFRIARS will include 'Hinduism and Christianity' by Bede Griffiths, O.S.B., 'The Idea of Reform' by Yves Congar, O.P., and surveys of Ecumenical Theology and recent German opinion.