

part of oneself; the gift is not 'inert', and many peoples believe that so to possess a part of another's personality may be dangerous to the recipient until a reciprocal gift is made. So habitually to exchange gifts is constantly to give oneself, to put oneself as it were in the hands of others, and so to increase one's social interdependence and membership one of another. The conclusion, as Professor Evans-Pritchard points out in an illuminating introduction, is the eminently moral one that one belongs to others and not to oneself: this is a truth which can bear reaffirmation.

A brief review cannot do justice to this brilliant study, which is a classical example of the sociological approach which regards the particular social field with which it is concerned as a totality, an approach particularly associated in France with the name of Mauss's great teacher, Emile Durkheim. Much detailed ethnographic research has been carried out in many parts of the world, particularly in Africa, since Mauss's essay was first published in 1925, but it is safe to say not only that this research has amply borne out Mauss's main theses, but also that his study has in fact guided and inspired a significant part of it. And it may be surmised that its force is not yet spent.

Dr Cunnison and Professor Evans-Pritchard are to be congratulated for having made this work available, in very readable English, to students and all who are interested in the familiar social institutions of themselves and other peoples. On one very minor ground only does the present reviewer take issue with the translator. The compendious footnotes (more than four hundred of them) were printed on the text pages in the French edition. In the present work they are printed together at the end of the book, and the translator suggests (p. xi) that this may make for easier reading. It may do so, of course, if the reader omits all reference to the notes at all (in which case why print them?), or if he reads them consecutively and separately from the text when he has finished the book (in which case they lose half their significance and all their relevance). But if the reader desires (as this reader at least does) to refer to each note as a reference to it appears in the text, just in case it contains something particularly illuminating or vital to the full understanding of the passage to which it refers, it makes, on the contrary, for very much more difficult reading. It may be necessary for reasons of economy to print the text and its notes separately, but at least let us not attempt to make a virtue out of it. This, however, is a small defect in a well-produced and very welcome volume.

JOHN BEATTIE

CHRISTIAN REALISM AND POLITICAL PROBLEMS. By Reinhold Niebuhr.
(Faber and Faber: 12s. 6d.)

The eleven essays which make up this book are arranged in an order

of increasing profundity. Those of the first half are concerned with our present social and political problems, and at times treat of them with an immediateness which is rare among modern professional theologians. But since the key to Professor Niebuhr's approach is what he calls Christian realism, i.e., a political prudence which being based equally on the doctrines of man's dignity and of his original sin, avoids both cynicism and utopianism, his comments are penetrating and sober.

Since none of our present problems can be correctly focussed without reference to the Russian Revolution of 1917, which commands the politics of the twentieth century just as the French Revolution those of the nineteenth, much in this first half of the book is reminiscent of Burke, who is, indeed, singled out for praise. Nevertheless, as already indicated, the present author's realism has deeper roots, and the essays of the second half of the book are concerned with its foundation in Christian theology. Professor Niebuhr is an independent in theology, but finds St Augustine the most satisfying guide although not one to be unreservedly followed. His essay on 'Augustine's Political Realism' has much of value to say.

It is natural, however, that a Catholic reader will find this theological part of the book less satisfying. He will, for example, not find it so much of a 'mystery how the Christian insights into human nature and history, expressed by Augustine, could have been subordinated to classical thought with so little sense of the conflict between them in the formulations of Thomas Aquinas'—precisely because he will deny any such subordination. If 'grace perfects nature' is one of the main themes of St Thomas's syntheses of natural and revealed truth, all the *subordination* is on the part of nature which grace certainly never contradicts but also infinitely transcends.

R. T.

A HISTORY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT IN THE ENGLISH REVOLUTION. By Perez Zagorin. (Routledge and Kegan Paul; 15s.)

Given such a subject, this book could hardly fail to be interesting. The only excuse that can be made for its faults is that Dr Zagorin is engaged on a social history of the English Revolution, for which the present volume should no doubt be regarded as a collection of notes. We are presented with a series of essays on rather more than twenty major and minor theorists of the Revolution who contributed to the vast debate touched off by the defeat of the King. The technique employed is that of seizing a writer, summarising his views, commenting on them, dismissing him and taking the next on the list. This