

according to its use, nor a non-natural property, but is irreducibly a 'grading label'.

There are two topics dealt with shortly in this fifth chapter which may be of special interest for theology. First, Hartnack considers 'performatory utterances' (cf. Austin, *Other Minds*), like 'I swear that . . .', which effect what they seem to state (115–116). It might be useful to ask how far the words spoken at the administration of a sacrament are of this kind ('I baptize you . . .'). Secondly, he mentions Geach's paper *Russell's Theory of Description*, which deals with what he calls 'the fallacy of many questions'. 'Suppose somebody is asked if he is happier since his wife's death. In order for a man to be able to answer this question with a yes or no, two other questions must already have been answered affirmatively, namely, whether he has been married and whether his wife is dead. If the answers to these questions are negative, the answer to the original question is neither yes or no, because that question cannot be asked at all' (110–111). Now, there seem to be relevant

questions about statements of faith which have some resemblance to the question about the dead wife. It is agreed that the fathers of the Council of Trent did not intend to canonize Aquinas' philosophy when they defined the chapters and canons on the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. But one may still ask the question: 'Did those fathers intend to imply in their definitions *some* philosophy (the one presupposed in a meaningful use of such terms as "substantia" or "species"), or did they not?' This question seems to imply an alternative. But there is no real alternative unless we can give an affirmative answer to the question: Did those fathers (even implicitly) realize that there was such an alternative? (And we must not think that the religious beliefs of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries may not be liable to future interpretations whose possibility or impossibility are not prejudged even by our tacit assumptions.)

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MAN AND SIN by Piet Schoonenberg, S.J., Eng. trans. Joseph Donceel, S.J. *Sheed and Ward*, 1965. pp. ix + 205, 12s 6d.

' . . . within our evolutionary view of the world and of man Christ's first function is that of fulfilling. This is sometimes so strongly emphasized that little attention remains for his other functions: restoration, salvation, and the destruction of sin. Such oneness is one of the few things which may not be charged against the present book' (p. 194). Sad to say, it is precisely this sort of charge which must be levelled against this attempt of the Nijmegen dogma professor to confront the theology of sin with the world view offered by Teilhard de Chardin, whose influence is apparent throughout. Clearly the acceptance of an evolutionary (which is not to say a Teilhardian) world picture makes imperative a reconsideration of the scope and significance of the Church's teaching on original sin, for example in the meaning of the 'state of innocence' as a historical state; *Humani Generis* too by the very caution of its wording seems to invite theologians to examine again the relation between the universality and transmission by propagation of original sin and the biological history of mankind. The suggestions put forward here, however, seem to entail too many further difficulties really to point the way forward.

In the first half of the book Schoonenberg considers sin in the individual, first in its essence and

then in its results. He makes a number of worthwhile points. His threefold distinction of sins into Sin unto death, Mortal sin and Venial sin is a timely warning against the increasingly common opinion that it is almost impossible to commit a mortal sin. The still not uncommon practice of allocating degrees of seriousness to sins solely on the basis of gravity of matter (despite what even the Penny Catechism has to say) is corrected by the author's insistence on sin as the negative response from the heart of a free person to the offer of God's grace, a response that may take shape more or less adequately in external behaviour. Most welcome is the contention that sin may often be a matter more of refusing to help in establishing and building up new norms of moral behaviour, of eluding one's responsibility for shaping the future of society, of being anti-historical, than of refusing to toe the line of ready-made norms. Much of this first half, though, is frankly dull.

It is in the third and fourth chapters that the book becomes exciting. Here is its real theme, the explicitation of the Biblical concept of the sin of the world and the ecclesiastical concept of original sin. Central to the discussion is the notion of *situation*, 'the totality of the circumstances in which somebody . . . stands at a certain

moment', one's *Umwelt*. Passive original sin is the being-in-situation resulting from the sinful free decisions of men from the beginnings of human history to their filling up the measure of their fathers' sins in the killing of Christ, 'the final ratification of the Fall'. After this event, and only after it, are all men necessarily born into a world, a situation, in which the offer of God's grace in Christ has been removed from the natural order, for the Author of life has been thrust outside the community of men; only after this 'second fall' is the source of the restoration of grace absent from our world and original sin strictly universal. Every man now born into the world is in a state of lack of grace before any personal decision on his part; propagation is thus an indirect cause, a condition, with respect to the situation. Much of what Schoonenberg has to say here is valuable, his analysis of the interrelation of freedom and situation, his exegesis of Rom. 5, his remarks on the dependence of the Church's awareness of sin on her belief in redemption. But his concern to avoid the old non-historical approach and to show an intrinsic 'link between the history of sin and of redemption' seems to have led to a position from which the fittingness of redemption through the cross cannot be shown and according to which the saving power of the death of Christ is extrinsic to that death: 'Only from the point of view of God, to whom nothing is impossible, salvation comes to us through the cross of Christ, in connection of course with the Resurrection . . .'. What place can there be in this account for the cross 'as a satisfaction for sin, a making atonement', what place for the theology of *Hebrews*? At the least this question is too big to be ignored in a book of this sort. The treatment of Christ's

'other functions: restoration, salvation, and the destruction of sin' is far too undeveloped (if development is possible in this scheme) to correspond to that dependence of the theology of sin on the theology of salvation on which the author so rightly insists.

Nor is the treatment of Mary's immaculate conception satisfactory. In any theological elaboration of the theme of original sin that departs as notably as does this attempt from the traditional theology within which that dogma was defined, much more consideration must be given to the light which that grace, and precisely as a singular privilege, casts on the treatise. It is not enough to say that ' . . . in the history in which the Fall took shape, Redemption may bring about through (the coming of) Christ a space free from sin'. The closer approach of Schoonenberg to the theology of the Greek fathers and the Eastern tradition generally was pretty certain to raise just those problems which make it impossible for the Orthodox to make sense of the 1854 definition. There are no real hints as to how these difficulties can be met.

It is because the rest of the book leads so directly to these conclusions on original sin that they must be carefully examined. But the author is at pains to point out how tentative are his suggestions in this final section. These suggestions may be unsatisfactory but there is much that is good and stimulating in the book which is not vitiated by them. This is a work which will deservedly be much read and discussed in the next few months. There are only occasional real infelicities of translation; some names on p. 1 are in a dreadful muddle.

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CHARITY AND LIBERTY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT by Ceslaus Spicq, O.P. *Alba House, St Paul Publications*, New York, \$2.95, pp. 112

Fr Spicq's book demands comment not for its merits, which are few, but for its twofold representative significance. One of the worrying features of the conciliar period, with so much still to be done, is that publishers should feel compelled to fill their lists with the names of eminent theologians writing anything which is passably 'new'; if they are continental so much the better. The concern with quantity of translation and publication is in danger of obscuring any discrimination in what really needs to be published or even what needs to be written. The

concern with volume easily becomes a devious way of avoiding the real challenges of the new situation of the church; so long as great quantities of books are forthcoming on every conceivable aspect of theology and Christian life, there is a satisfying feeling that things are really moving at last; everything is functioning in an efficient and up to date fashion.

This touches the second representative quality of the book. The author's thoroughness in scriptural exegesis is unexceptionable, and phrases like 'the achieved realisation of life', 'a