reading public is seemingly effortlessly achieved, without avoiding difficult concepts or argumentative precision. In this respect he is not unlike his great Scottish Enlightenment predecessors.

There is a breadth to this collection that is highly impressive: bioethics, aesthetics, the legacy of the Scottish Enlightenment, the British Union, the problem of evil, the intellectual achievement of Elizabeth Anscombe and the change of opinion on the existence of God of the erstwhile atheist, Anthony Flew. Yet, there is arguably something missing. Haldane's writings on the state of contemporary Catholicism, applauded by some and dismissed by others, are surely the part of his journalistic *oeuvre* that has elicited most comment and controversy, and distinguishes him most from other conservative commentators writing for the quality press. Publishing those pieces in a separate collection may make this one more acceptable to the general public, but simultaneously undercuts its *raison d'être*: to acquaint us properly with an outstandingly lucid voice whose Catholicism is central to the perspective from which he views the world. It is an acquaintance well worth making. He is a man of conviction who respects the reader enough to lay his cards on the table, presenting his own beliefs to the same scrutiny to which he submits those of others.

JOHN D. O'CONNOR OP

NATURE RED IN TOOTH AND CLAW: THEISM AND THE PROBLEM OF ANIMAL SUFFERING by Michael J. Murray (*Oxford University Press*, 2008) Pp. 224, £50

This book offers a fine example of the way in which analytic philosophy has opened up its imagination. After decades in which its practitioners feared to venture beyond a very narrow compass of subjects, its careful precision and clarity is now being applied to major theological and ethical topics. Michael Murray has chosen a problem that is fundamental for Jewish, Christian and Islamic thinkers at least: how could a good and powerful God allow so much suffering of non-human animals?

He begins with an overview of the general debate about the problem of evil, concluding with a careful explanation of the standards of proof that a defender of theism requires. He argues that for God to have a 'morally sufficient reason for permitting an evil' (p. 14), the evil must be necessary to secure a good the value of which sufficiently outweighs it, and it must be within God's 'rights' to permit this. If an explanation shows this in a way that the believer is not justified in rejecting in the light of the *overall* claims that he or she justifiably accepts, that explanation will count as adequate. Although Murray is too subtle to resort to crude utilitarianism, the language of weighing total goods and harms may make anti-consequentialist readers uneasy.

Murray next treats neo-Cartesian accounts of apparent animal suffering that see it as either illusory or morally insignificant. He concludes that these are difficult to disprove categorically, but will convince few people. He then looks at arguments based on the idea of the Fall of 'Adam', or of Satan; the latter, while more weakly attested by tradition, has the advantage of offering an explanation for 'pre-Adamic pain'. The next chapter discusses the positive usefulness of pain for individuals and for animal life in general, making use of very interesting medical evidence. Murray then goes on to examine various arguments for the value of stable, ordered, regularity in the world. He cautiously concludes that a world that moves from chaos to order via 'nomic regularity' could be sufficiently worthwhile to outweigh the totality of animal suffering that is its by-product. Finally, he draws on elements of possible defences from all his chapters to

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conclude that a combination of these can provide a sufficient defence, as it were, to clear God's name.

Murray explores the possibilities of each argument with exhaustive care; he is cautious and judicious in his judgements, often appealing to sceptical or agnostic intuitions, in an even-handed but occasionally arbitrary way. He is genuinely open-minded, being willing to examine with respect the logic of, for example, the case for creationism. He is also extremely sensitive to the way in which different arguments will have more or less persuasive power depending on the other commitments of one's interlocutor. The consequent hesitancy of his conclusions will disappoint some readers, but the journey to them will be constantly thought provoking.

Within the parameters of his chosen strategy, Murray leaves no argumentative stone unturned. Yet there are puzzles about the way he sets up his argument. It is taken for granted that Darwin greatly exacerbated the theological problem of animal suffering. This is curious. Before *The Origin of Species*, every literal believer in Genesis, every Aristotelian, and every ordinary observer knew that many animals suffered pain and that every single one of them would die. They knew that many lived by eating others, that the stronger outlived the weaker, and that very often non-human creatures (as most human beings at the beginning of the nineteenth century) did not live to maturity. Darwin's theory did not alter the plain evidence. In terms of individuals, all it did was explain that animals with certain characteristics are more likely to breed successfully and pass on those characteristics. It did argue that some *kinds* of animals were lost over the millenia (as fossil evidence already showed), but that is not a fact that increases the amount of animal suffering. It is true that the geologists, reinforced by Darwin, showed that there was a long span of time in which animals had suffered before human beings appeared. On certain interpretations of the Fall this might be apologetically significant. In general, however, if animal suffering is a problem for theism, it is not obvious that it becomes a problem of a different order simply because it has been going on longer than we once suspected.

A second difficulty: given what we know about human suffering, what does the suffering of animals add? Even if much of the earth's misery is caused by human beings whether directly or via the Fall it seems obvious that many of the human victims are themselves innocent. When we know of women and children being gang-raped in the Congo, how can reflection upon eagles killing lambs make our problem harder? Murray cites Marilyn McCord Adams, who insists on the significance of the difference between relatively minor hurts and what she terms 'horrendous evils'. It is arguable that the latter can affect only human beings, with their enhanced capacities of memory, imagination and sensitivity. Adams argues that Christianity cannot respond to such evils without recourse to the Passion and Resurrection. One might wonder why Murray himself is happy to discuss the Fall, but ignores Christology and Trinitarian theology in his own account.

Can the suffering of animals be 'horrendous'? Murray hints that it will be limited by their capacities for thinking and feeling (in very different ways across the spectrum of animals); however, he does not develop the thought that this could mean that even from the point-of-view of the animal (insofar as we can make sense of that), its suffering might be worth it for the goodness of its life. As Chapter 2 very plausibly argues, neo-Cartesian claims that no animals suffer are implausible, but a serious examination of the relevant scientific evidence can lead us to a more cautious and nuanced sense of the differences as well as the similarities in the ways in which other animals might experience the world.

Finally, a project like this raises interesting questions about the philosophy of religion itself. How far are reasons persuasive? Can arguments of this sort change hearts as well as minds? Again, how far is it appropriate to speculate about the

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mind of God in order to 'defend' God against human 'charges'? Few readers will be persuaded by every step of Murray's case; all, however, should find here serious food for thought.

MARGARET ATKINS

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN – A MIND ALIVE by Roderick Strange (*Darton, Longman and Todd*, London, 2008) Pp. 264, £10.95

In early October 2008, Cardinal John Henry Newman's grave at Rednal near Birmingham was opened. Brass, wood and cloth artefacts from his coffin were found, but there were no remains of the body of the Cardinal who, if the impending cause for his beatification is successful, could become England's first canonised confessor since the Reformation. While this discovery does not affect the progress of his cause, it is a shock and, in some respects, a disappointment for those who have a deep devotion to Newman and who, in keeping with the Catholic tradition of the veneration of relics, might have travelled to the Birmingham Oratory to venerate the relics of such an influential man, convert, priest, Oratorian and cardinal. Nevertheless, it does remind us that while Newman may not have left us his body, he has left a corpus of writings, and indeed it is this corpus that has generated such interest in the man and thus in his cause. Newman devotees already think of him as a "doctor" of the Church, although only time will tell whether that is a title the Church will bestow on him. His immense corpus of writings came from a "mind alive" and in search of God.

At this exciting time of the expectation of Newman's beatification, Roderick Strange, the rector of the Pontifical Beda College in Rome, and former Catholic Chaplain at Oxford University, the university so loved by and so much a part of Newman's formation and life, gives us a very touching and personal reflection on the influence Newman has had on his own life and thought. The book is intended and useful for anyone curious about Newman and is in the first place a biography. As such it is extremely readable while also providing good introductory and systematic glimpses into the thinking of the Cardinal. Not claiming to be exhaustive, Mgr Strange hopes that those "who only have time to read one book about Newman will find this one". I would recommend it not only for such people but also for those seeking to consolidate their knowledge of Newman's life and thought.

After the biographical sketch the book goes on to illustrate the "interplay of dogma and theology" in Newman's writings, using as examples the issues of infallibility, Mariology, the laity, and ecumenism. It is perhaps somewhat of a cliché to say that Newman's ideas about such things as the importance of the laity in the Church, the limits and role of infallibility and ecumenism, Mary's unique privileges, and the development of faith and doctrine, were all unappreciated in his day, and Mgr Strange does attempt to illustrate once again how Newman's treatment of these issues, which to a greater or lesser extent were to feature in the documents of the Second Vatican Council, shows that his "lively mind" was ahead of its time. Newman was not a man who never experienced persecution for his beliefs, as even the briefest sketch of his life must illustrate, and yet he continued to live by conscience and with the passion that gives his life and works their immense value.

One might offer a short personal reflection in response to Mgr Strange's reflections. Cardinal Newman is not often thought of as a "pastoral" (to use a popular term) priest. He is thought of as simply an academic, an Oxford fellow, cardinal and theologian. Yet this perception is not entirely justified. Newman was most definitely a pastor, both as an Anglican and as a Catholic, something that

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