

the thesis is untenable.

The evidence is then reviewed. Examples of non-puritan capitalistic practice and theory are paraded for our inspection. It is shown that the puritan fathers, far from encouraging acquisitiveness and worldly success, hedged all commercial activity with many qualifications and warnings and that American businessmen who engaged in anterior philosophical reflection on their success were largely deluding themselves. Although Dr Samuelsson's treatment of Richard Baxter is rather unsatisfactory and J. D. Rockefeller is most unreasonably maligned, this evidence is otherwise impressive.

One of the most useful chapters in the book is that devoted to illustrating how tenuous the historical connection between Protestantism and economic progress really was. Dr Samuelsson shows that time and again where Protestantism and progress were concurrent there is no proof of causality and that indeed alternative 'natural' explanations are available. On the other hand he points out that Catholic Belgium was second only to England in producing a spectacular industrial revolution.

Although we are told on page two that Weber's starting point was Offenbacher's statistical work on education in German states of mixed faith, Dr Samuelsson reserves his analysis of these findings for his last chapter, where it makes a very fine, if somewhat theatrical, *coup de grace*. For not only is it shown that Weber uncritically accepted Offenbacher's tables, which in one instance contained an important arithmetical error which strengthened his case, but Dr Samuelsson also points out that the apparently disproportionate number of Protestants in the Realgymnasium can be explained by the fact that the Realgymnasiums tended to be situated in areas, usually towns, where Protestants were concentrated. Within these areas the proportion of Protestant children attending the Realgymnasium was almost exactly equal to the proportion of Protestants in the total population. Any number of accidental reasons could be adduced to explain why some German Protestants in these states tended to live in towns.

It may well be that historians will continue to juggle with the nebulous concepts of Protestantism and capitalism till the world's end. From the statistician's point of view Weber's theory stands revealed as an image with feet of clay.

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MAN AND METAPHYSICS, by Régis Jolivet; translated by B. M. G. Reardon; Burns and Oates (Faith and Fact Series); 8s. 6d.

It cannot be said that this book has much relevance to the English philosophical scene. On the first page of the first chapter the science of being is described as 'the science of the *unknowable*', and although the statement is immediately qualified ('so far at least as its object, as we shall see, is not *an object*') a positivistic analyst is likely to shut the book at this point. On the next page we are

told that it is 'because metaphysical philosophy has as object the whole of our experience that it lacks an object' which clears things up a bit, but then one wants to know why its object should have been described as unknowable. The answer to that seems to emerge on p. 33: 'Appearance is appearance of being: the visible is the invisible manifested . . . It is spoken of as "invisible" simply in order to signify that it is not visible as a *thing* and that it is offered only to the perception of the mind'. But our analyst, even if he gets so far, will not make much of this as it stands. On p. 35 metaphysical realities are described as the 'meaning or reason' of sense-objects, and on p. 38 we find: 'Being—to risk speaking about it analogically—is not a thing but the immanent meaning of everything which in some manner or other exists . . .' From this one might suppose that Mgr Jolivet is talking about an 'experience of the absolute'. But on p. 54 he explicitly disallows this explanation ('very many modern thinkers consider themselves unable to meet the objections of positivism except by invoking an "experience" or "intuition" of the absolute such as we ourselves decline to admit . . .'). Our analyst, rightly or wrongly, will probably find this talk of 'meaning' incomprehensible. He may accept Mgr Jolivet's strictures on the Vienna Circle (p. 69), but he will observe that this is ancient history and has little to do with contemporary English attitudes to metaphysics.

This is not to say that the book is without its uses—far from it. Such books are seldom read, presumably, by the unconverted. And the converted who want to know what has been going on in France will find much to interest them, especially in regard to Sartre and Merleau-Ponty (although it must be confessed that we run into unnecessarily heavy weather over the latter's 'essential relativism'). There are illuminating quotations from philosophers of very diverse tempers, Bergson and Blondel, Brunschvieg and GUSDORF, and the Platonic-Augustinian tradition is drawn upon extensively and effectively; the usual arguments against philosophical agnosticism are presented in a modern dress, and there are valuable *obiter dicta* scattered throughout the book. It is rather rambling and repetitious, but in a book of this kind there are advantages in that. It may be recommended for the public for which the Faith and Fact books are primarily intended—with one important reservation, if I may be allowed to raise a controversial issue. The matter in question comes to a head on p. 110: 'what is called a "proof" of God's existence is less a proof, in the scientific meaning of the word, than the expression, in a technical and more or less complicated form, of an *intuition*—in the sense of a spontaneous and, in some sort, immediate inference—whereby every man, by virtue of the rational necessities which he cannot but admit, grasps in his experience of being itself a relationship to God which defines it . . .' It seems to me that Mgr Jolivet does not succeed in distinguishing the 'intuition' which, as we have seen earlier, he rejects and that which he accepts, and that he tries to use at the same time both the arguments of those who adopt an inferential approach to the question of God's existence and the arguments of those who adopt an intuitional one. I have argued at length in my own contribution to the Faith and Fact series (with

particular reference to Mgr Jolivet's earlier book *The God of Reason*) that this cannot be done, and this is not the place to pursue the topic.

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PROSPECT FOR METAPHYSICS, edited by Ian Ramsey; Allen and Unwin; 25s.

PERSONS IN RELATION, by John Macmurray; Faber and Faber; 30s.

*Prospect for Metaphysics* is the title given to the collection of papers read at Downside Abbey in 1959. It is perhaps a rash title, which must surely produce disappointment, for very little prospect appears—at least in this milieu. It would seem that if one is going to contribute in any way towards showing the prospects of something, there must be at least some unity of mental attitude towards it. Most of the papers in this collection exhibit a definite uneasiness with regard to the very possibility of metaphysics, and none of them show any indication of an explicated awareness of its nature—a sine qua non for a dynamically directional, and therefore humanly relevant, metaphysics: those qualities in fact which would make the word *prospect* significant. The papers by Professor A. H. Armstrong (*Platonism*) and Professor H. D. Lewis (*God and Mystery*) give us however genuine expressions of metaphysical thought in action, although the paper on Platonism is unfortunately slight and somewhat casual and has even to be printed with what amounts to an apology as post-script. Professor Lewis' paper is very interesting, showing as it does how the relationship to God in metaphysics has an essentially 'trans-rational' element. This is most important; but unfortunately his paper is such, I should have thought, as only to be really appreciated in a context where the possibility and nature of metaphysics is well established and its prospect is being questioned (reflexively) rather than merely queried. The general impression given by these papers is that the subject, though certainly not intentionally, is hardly being seriously treated. Is this book then to be taken seriously as a contribution to English thought? It would be almost inconceivable by contrast for any book with such a title to be produced on the Continent with such an essentially amateurish content.

*Persons in Relation* is a very different matter. This is the second volume of the Gifford lectures delivered in 1954. The contents are written with both seriousness and living spirit, and the work can be considered as a valuable contribution to psychological-metaphysical thought (with all its sociological relevances.) The aim of the author is largely to eliminate the vast content of unreal abstraction which so frequently enters into such considerations, and to show personal being as essentially rooted in, and drawing its life-sap from, its contact with other persons. Professor Macmurray at times lets his vigorous iconoclasm get too much the upper hand and condemns many a traditional concept which would in fact probably serve him if he were to re-evaluate it in terms of his own philosophical outlook. This is however but a small criticism.

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