

usual assumption that the last two of the three shall never meet. On this basis the author is able to accuse Aquinas of turning Aristotle's conceptual analyses into psychological explanations. Should it turn out, however, that (as I think) Aquinas quite consciously renounces this divorce, at least in the form in which our contemporaries accept it, then the accusation needs to be modified. Incidentally, Aquinas' commentary (Lib. III, lect. 2) on *De Anima* suggests at least one way of removing Hamlyn's puzzlement (pp. 22-23) about Aristotle's statements on the mutual implication of hearing and sounding: 'actual' sounding would then be interpreted as *heard* sounding. True, the resulting conceptual co-ordinates are queer to our way of thinking, but this would be just another reminder of the necessity for that awareness of such distortions which Hamlyn is quite capable of displaying elsewhere.

The discussion on pp. 72-73 would have been improved if it had been made clear that for Descartes the divine guarantee applied to the Teaching of Nature (the instinctive impulse to believe) only insofar as it was incorrigible by the Natural Light (the faculty of clear and distinct ideas). As things stand, these pages suggest that Descartes held that God guaranteed the Teaching of Nature *tout court*, so that Descartes would be committed to holding that secondary qualities are in physical objects were it not for the fact that he considered God's veracity to be a 'weak consideration' (p. 73) at this point. In fact that veracity is, for Descartes, a *strong* consideration in showing that secondary qualities are *not* in bodies, and this insofar as the Natural Light, as opposed to the Teaching of Nature, is the object of divine guarantee. Again (p. 93), Berkeley did *not* reject the 'metaphysical notion' of 'substance', but only that of material substance, retaining spiritual substance. On the fifth line from the foot of p. x, 'perpetual' should surely read 'perceptual,' the 'fo' on p. 173 ought to be 'for,' and on line 28 of p. 195 one should, I think, read 'application of a scheme of concepts'.

DESMOND PAUL HENRY

THE WRITER'S DILEMMA, introduced by Stephen Spender; Oxford University Press; 12s. 6d.

This collection of essays originally appeared in *The Times Literary Supplement* under the non-committal title of 'The Limits of Control'. A number of writers were asked to assess their role in a society which values technological progress more highly than the good of the individual. The contributors included novelists such as John Bowen, Lawrence Durrell, Nathalie Sarraute, William Golding, Arthur Calder-Marshall, Saul Bellow and Alan Sillitoe; a philosopher, Richard Wollheim; a pontiff, Arnold Toynbee; and Gerald Heard, whose classification escapes me. The book is introduced with a rather limp essay by Stephen Spender (surely a more elegant way could be found of saying that one of the contributors writes both prose and verse than by calling him 'half novelist, half poet'), followed by a reprinted *TLS* editorial, written in the

deadest, most platitudinous language imaginable, though not, alas, at all untypical of that organ's pronouncements.

With such a variety of contributors, one would be entitled to expect a wide range of opinions and attitudes. Certainly there is great variation in the ability to communicate efficiently; the liveliest prose is written by Mr Bowen and Mr Bellow, and the dullest by Dr Toynbee. But most of the contributors seemed to have been afflicted with the same uncertainty about what was expected of them; about what, in fact, they were supposed to say. It is significant that the most original contribution came from Richard Wollheim, who, as a trained philosopher, has the kind of mental agility required to cope with such decidedly vague terms of reference. There is a curiously similar gesturing in several of the essays, and many of them exhibit basically the same structure of argument. Yes, they say, things *are* very difficult for the writer in a technological age, and they are likely to get more so; but never mind, we must treat it as a challenge, and after all, the human spirit is ultimately indomitable. True enough, no doubt, but it is tedious to find the same fundamental platitudes repeated one after the other in different guise. There are certain more concrete suggestions, it is true; Mr Bowen is hopeful about the larger implications of television as a means of 'keeping the lines open', while Mr Heard puts a lot of faith in a chemical called lysergic acid diethylamide, a valuable source of religious sensations, apparently. Arthur Calder-Marshall writes from an avowedly Christian standpoint; his contribution stands out impressively in this context, though his theological implications seem rather nebulous. Sillitoe and Wollheim, on the other hand, are resolutely anti-religious.

I won't disguise the fact that this collection of essays seems to me worthless, and I cannot imagine why it was thought worth printing. But I think I can see why the contributions are so poor. The compilers of the series were obviously less interested in the writer *as a writer*—i.e. as a man who writes—than as the *echt*-individualist, in the familiar though quasi-mystical sense in which he features in liberal ideology. This second sense is perhaps more apparent in other languages than English: *écrivain* or *scrittore* carry a heavier charge than 'writer'. The contributors to the collection may be admirable writers when left alone, but I think that the consciousness of their being expected to appear in the second role inhibited them from saying anything very memorable. After all, to write novels about this or that aspect of the actual world is one thing; to talk articulately and fluently about the 'writer's dilemma' is very much another thing, and calls for different talents. There are indeed people who do little else, but most of them are not interested in the serious business of writing, even if they once may have been. Lawrence Durrell obviously felt something of this unease, since he observes that what seems to be expected of the writer 'is to operate as a hardened committee man', who will present the world with values in capsule form. 'But', he continues, 'it is very doubtful whether he has anything to say which could be more original than the other pronouncements by public figures, for apart from his art he is just an ordinary fellow like every-

one else, subject to the same bloody flux of rash opinion, just as eager to lose a friend rather than forego a jest'. However, the sad truth is that in our society the writer may be sometimes exalted, sometimes neglected, and not infrequently persecuted; the one thing he will not be treated as is 'just an ordinary fellow like everyone else'.

BERNARD BERGONZI

MODERN LITERATURE AND THE CHRISTIAN FAITH, by Martin Turnell ; Darton, Longman and Todd; 12s. 6d.

Three lectures, making a book of 69 pages, scarcely provide sufficient elbow-room for a proper investigation of the formidable problem Mr Turnell has tackled. He travels rapidly over the literature of the last four centuries, and where he pauses—Donne, Crashaw, Hopkins, Patmore, Eliot, Forster, Lawrence, Woolf, Claudel, Greene, Mauriac—the ground is already well-trodden by visitors with more time at their disposal. Mr Turnell's examples never surprise, though his comments occasionally do. Donne, for instance, gets a black mark against his superb sonnet, 'Show me deare Christ, thy Spouse, so bright and clear', because 'there is an element of frivolity in the comparison between the believer and the "adventuring knights" pursuing a reluctant mistress'. Typical examples of Lawrentian abstraction and jargon,—'stability of nullification' and 'homogeneous amorphous sterility' are strangely identified as 'symbols'.

It is not, however, in such minor details alone that Mr Turnell is open to criticism. Beneath his urbane and graceful discourse there is a basic uncertainty of approach, which wavers uneasily between the historical and the evaluative. A sentence on the first page illustrates this well: 'It is a matter of historical fact that in ages of settled belief men have tended to write well, and that in ages of declining belief they have gone out of their way to discover some system of belief, or some philosophy, which would provide them with a framework and give unity and shape to their artistic experience'. Taken separately, both terms of this proposition would be acceptable, but juxtaposed as they are they imply that men do *not* write well in ages of declining belief, which is certainly not acceptable. Shakespeare is the obvious example that comes to mind, and it is significant that Mr Turnell finds an unconvincing excuse for not discussing him, while at the same time insinuating, *via* Santayana, that Shakespeare's work is weakened by its lack of an explicit moral framework. Mr Turnell protests that 'I am not primarily concerned in this work to prove that one kind of literature or one writer is better than another. I simply want to describe the effect on writers of changes of belief which have taken place during the past four hundred years'. The trouble is that in his view these changes have always had a *bad* effect, an assumption that inevitably involves him in evaluations that often seem unfair and irrelevant, e.g. 'the fundamental weakness of (Forster's)