

for this reason, it seems at times rather dated since it could not take into account the later work of the Council and subsequent catechetical writing. It consolidates the present territory rather than explores new frontiers.

Van Caster's *Themes of Catechesis* on the other hand is concerned with the present and the future. It claims to be a sequel to his *Structures of Catechetics* (1965) and deals with many of the same themes as Jungmann—God; Jesus Christ; the Church; the Eucharist; morality; sin and penance; faith; hope; charity; eschatology. One wonders for whom this book is intended—surely not for teachers. For, although these themes are of vital importance to them I cannot imagine many teachers being able to get much from it. It is far too academic and abstract for their needs. It might be of use to compilers of syllabi or professors of catechetics. My main complaint is that it is too foreign. The approach is so analytical with each topic discussed under the rigid headings of Bible, liturgy, life witness, reflection and formulation, psychology, sociology and communicating the message. For most of the subjects the biblical and liturgical sections are thin and allusive and generally the psychological and sociological parts are more rewarding. There are some valuable ideas embedded in the book, but they are very deeply embedded. Most people, I fear, would be hard put to it to persevere to the end. The chief obstacle is the obscurity of the language. This may be partly van Caster's fault or that of the translator. Words such as 'statementive' and 'thusly' have an odd ring in English ears and one has to stop to wonder just

what is meant by 'Jesus presented himself in a very kerygmatic manner in Palestine' (p. 33). This obscurity of language continues throughout the book, e.g. 'the application of the theoretical point of view in our Christian lives is necessarily derived from a kind of "overview" approach' (p. 60), and what is 'the axiological point of view'?

All this is a pity since van Caster obviously is a leader in catechetical thought and has much to teach us.

Running through this book is the author's concern that while we may, and should, pay attention to earthly realities and real-life experience and start from these we must not fall into the trap of staying on the purely natural plane. He points out repeatedly the need for us to make the jump from human realities to an awareness of God's transcendence. This is a timely warning, for there are some people today whose concern for pre-catechesis seems to have made them afraid of ever arriving at explicitly Christian teaching. With Goldman they will explore themes of, for instance, shepherds and bread and never dare to speak of Christ and the eucharist. Conscious of the need to remain aware of the transcendent, van Caster gives a short but shrewd critique of the Bishop of Woolwich's *Honest to God* (pp. 186-190).

We in England need to benefit from the work of continentals like van Caster, but unless their thought can be made available in an understandable way we shall be denied it. Perhaps in a subsequent book van Caster might explore the theme Communication. DEREK LANCE

**THE USE OF LATERAL THINKING, by Edward de Bono. Jonathan Cape, 1967. 157 pp. 18s.**

The cuckoo, it is said, lays other birds' eggs in its own nest. And that is rather what I feel about this book. It's a fine collection of eggs, alright; but the author seems staggeringly unaware of their real parentage.

But then, that is partly what lateral thinking is about. Lateral thinking is defined by contrast with vertical thinking, which is the traditionally respectable approach to things; you take the most promising view of any situation and proceed logically, step by step, from there. Lateral thinking will rather start from the wrong end and work backwards, or will start from some random association, or mad brain-wave, or will toy playfully with six or seven more or less absurd ideas and see what happens.

There is nothing strange in this; this is how most new thoughts arise, how most inventions

have occurred. But what is new is the way in which Mr de Bono concentrates his attention on it precisely as a mode of thinking, as a technique to be cultivated, rather than as a weird though useful supplier of ideas, which become interesting only in so far as they are assimilated into the vertical system (though de Bono himself is keen that they should be so assimilated when they are ripe for it).

Now I think this is more important than is immediately apparent, and this comes out in two ways. First, practically, de Bono is preaching a gospel which, whether we like it or not (I do like it), seems to be saying something to the modern world. He has more fellow-preachers than he realizes, for example in the various publications associated with World Union and World Goodwill. And he has been accepted

personally as a prophet of the psychedelic generation; he was asked to contribute an article to the London *Oz*, and (this, too, is interesting), he thought it worth while to do so *free*. Furthermore, he has been offering a prize of £100 for the best lateral thinking.

This merely factual point must be taken in the theoretical context provided by Marshall McLuhan (whom de Bono does not seem to have read). Readers of McLuhan will have no difficulty in recognizing de Bono's message, for it is quite simply a call to us to acknowledge the passing of the Gutenberg era. Vertical thinking is precisely the sort of linear, serial, 'objective' approach typical of the Gutenberg era.

Now in view of this, we may see de Bono as himself evidence of the correctness of McLuhan's diagnosis. And, if we accept the diagnosis (as, with reservations, we probably have to), then we must also welcome de Bono's missionary zeal (his aim is patently kerygmatic): it is *important* that our ways of thinking should adapt to the new cultural age we live in.

But this is where one begins to lament de Bono's ignorance of the true parentage of his eggs. Because the position is far more complex than he seems to realize. It is no longer a question of new grist for the old mill; we need a new mill.

Already in 1914, Bertrand Russell advanced similar views in the first part of *Our Knowledge of the External World*. But there, the role played by lateral thinking is filled by logic, and this is surely important. De Bono still talks as if logic were the paradigm of vertical thinking, but this completely ignores modern symbolic logic and mathematics, which are largely an exercise in lateral thinking. Especially with the use of computers, it is possible to pursue all the vertical implications of any idea in no time at all; so that vertical thinking, far from waiting till we have finished toying laterally with ideas, has become ancillary to this very business of toying.

In fact, we have to recognize that we can, and must, get beyond the old problematic as we find it in Blake, for instance, of Logic v. Imagination. Logic has played traitor to its own side. The whole point at issue now is the role of logic in the post-Gutenberg world.

And we must be quite clear that the novel alliance between logic and imagination has changed the whole scene. Many of the prime virtues of the Gutenberg era are now obsolete. For instance, modern science and all types of modern philosophy are abandoning the serial, linear model of reality in favour of an approach which is both more holistic, and more diversified, in that it uses different models as the need may arise, even to talk about 'the same thing' (e.g. light-waves and quanta). Austin's analysis of the performative aspect of words (situational semantics), and Wittgenstein's concept of language-games both point the same way. Again, the concept of objectivity has been radically undermined both by the phenomenologists and by the scientists; as McLuhan insists, this is the age of involvement.

This calls for a much more radical critique of our ways of thought than de Bono has to offer. Non-European cultures which have never passed through our Gutenberg period may well come to be of crucial importance. For instance, the Zen doctrine of time can cast a great deal of light on the re-analysis of the subject which has been attempted, in different ways, by Wittgenstein, Heidegger and McLuhan.

So what are we to say, then? Perhaps we might adapt Wittgenstein's alleged comment on the *Tractatus*, and say that it is a bad book, but an important bad book. It is bad, in that it does not begin to tackle the really fundamental problems, but it is important both as a symptom, probably unconscious, of the new age, and as a call to action. Sumer is icumen in: lude sing, cuccu!

SIMON TUGWELL, O.P.

**LAW AND THE LIBERAL ARTS**, edited by Albert Broderick, O.P., *The Catholic University of America Press, 1967, 229 pp.*

This book consists of the edited transcript of the proceedings at a conference held in December, 1964, at the Catholic University of America in Washington. Those who attended came from the whole range of American higher educational institutions from Berkeley and Columbia to the Ancilla Domini College and the College of St Rose. Of varying disciplines and faiths, the

common interest that brought them together was the subject 'law and society'. Despite its title, the real subject of this book is law and the social sciences. The active and articulate participants, who read the papers and largely monopolized the dialogue, were mostly social scientists and academic lawyers, presided over by those who had a foot in both camps. The