

FOUNDATIONS OF JUSTICE. A Historico-Critical Study in Thomism.

By Jeremiah Newman. (Cork University Press; 12s. 6d.)

An excessive emphasis on the individual, in material as in spiritual matters, was a characteristic of the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. The individualism, otherwise called enlightened self-interest, which was the dynamic of capitalism appeared in another guise in religious attitudes and practices which seemed to exclude any corporate sense. Yet the communitarian ideas which should counterbalance any tendency to exaggerated individualism are most clearly present in St Thomas: in his concept of social solidarity in the body politic as in his understanding of our oneness in the Mystical Body of Christ. A keystone of his social doctrine was the general virtue of legal justice whose function is to order all actions to the common good. Unfortunately, just as the doctrine of the Mystical Body was in eclipse for centuries, so too the true idea of legal justice had been neglected. In this elaboration of a doctoral thesis defended at Louvain Fr Newman goes a long way to remedy this neglect by presenting an exhaustive analysis of all the texts in St Thomas concerning legal justice. Indeed he does more than this; he traces the concept of legal justice back to its origins, and analyses the concept of the common good. He shows how the later Scholastics narrowed down the idea of legal justice from being a general virtue which ordains all other virtues to the common good of society to a virtue that is concerned solely with the (temporal) common good of the State, and is secured through the instrumentality of civil law. He identifies legal justice with the social justice of the encyclicals of Pius XI, but in so doing does not deal at all adequately with the arguments for a somewhat different view put forward in Fr Ferrée's brilliant work, *The Act of Social Justice*. The more detailed consideration of these arguments which is promised (p. 53) never materializes.

Fr Newman concludes by presenting a new scheme for classifying the different forms of justice. It is largely a modification of the normal Thomist categories except that justice between individuals and the State is withdrawn from legal (now, in deference to Pius XI, renamed social) justice and is placed under commutative justice with the name of 'civic justice'. The chief defects of this work are (i) that the author has apparently given no consideration to recasting the whole structure of the virtue of justice where the *medium rei* is not made the hub of the whole system but rather the value and dignity of human personality; (ii) the scheme even as presented does not seem to cover all modern situations. Fr Cantwell, S.J., has suggested (*Social Justice*, June, 1954) that a further species of justice is needed to cover the case of the obligations of the 'haves' to the 'have-nots' in an economic system where a compara-

tively few men own or control the means of sustenance and the rest of the human race depend on them. The new developments in property holding seem to call for the consideration of a new species of justice. These are not meant to be carping criticisms but rather they are a tribute to the thoroughness of Fr Newman's treatment of the subject —having pushed his enquiries so far, it seems a pity that he did not push them a little farther.

JOHN FITZSIMONS

LOVE AND VIOLENCE. Translations made by G. Lamb. (Sheed & Ward; 18s.).

LE CHRÉTIEN ET L'ANGOISSE. By Hans Urs von Balthasar; translated from German by Claire Champollion. (Desclée de Brouwer; 57 fr.b.).

The title and the cover of this collection of essays published by Sheed and Ward savour of sensationalism, but the contents justify the claim on the flap that the problem considered is not tackled at a superficial level. The core had appeared in *Études Carmélitaines*, and now it is enlarged by four contributions from this side of the Channel. Fr J. B. Reeves, O.P., contributes an essay entitled 'Love and Violence in the Gospels', but in point of fact he is concerned almost exclusively with the Gospel of St John; what he considered as its characteristic may well be applied to his own essay, 'More like a sermon than a composition'. (p. 205.) Fr Victor White, O.P., considers the theme in St Paul's Epistles and reminds the reader that its essentials can be ignored only at his own peril. The longest and in some ways the weightiest of these studies is the essay on 'God of Wrath or God of Love' by Père Philippe de la Trinité, O.C.D. It is intended probably to be the central piece, but the amount of quotation and notes in it is at times overpowering. Among the shorter essays the two most outstanding are: Jacques Madaule's examination of love and aggressiveness in Dostoevsky's novels, since it shows well that literary criticism can be more than mere display of literary sensitivity; and the exposition by Père Lucien-Marie de St Joseph, O.C.D., of 'the remoulding of the whole human dynamism' (p. 112) by divine love as envisaged by St John of the Cross. Some of the statements in this lengthy examination of love and violence from several points of view appear inevitably rather debatable. For instance, is it the case that with Leonardo da Vinci 'curiosity takes the place of inspiration' (p. 16)? This is just one of several controversial opinions offered in this book which is sure to stimulate the reader if only to disagreement.

One would welcome even more an English translation of another study of the finite mind's reactions to the infinite. The work of the Swiss theologian von Balthasar translated into French for the 'Présence chrétienne' series would certainly prove as useful in this