

Occasionally, a contributor to this volume becomes guilty of an empty phraseology, fashionable with politicians and apparently infecting some scholars: "Thus the 'cold war' of the present time is the definitive struggle which will determine whether Western Judeo-Christian civilization with its concepts of freedom from despotism, whether foreign or internal, will continue, or whether the black night of atheistic nihilistic Communism will conquer" (p. 149). He seems to forget such elementary facts as that a John Stuart Mill and a Bertrand Russell have a share in Western Civilization and its tradition of freedom from despotism, that Communism is a Western product, and that Communism may to some extent be traced back to Judeo-Christian tradition (e.g., the eschatological element in Marxism).

The above criticism, however, should not detract from the fact that some of the writers propound sound and constructive views on important issues. Thus the Introduction, dealing with "Freedom and Human Knowledge," points to the dangers to freedom which stem from atomic physics, and to advertising and psychology in our times, both of which menace liberty of mind in their own ways (p. 24-28). The demand to harness modern technology to man's welfare and to prevent the atom from becoming "the tool of his Neanderthal inheritance" (p. 333) is as sensible and significant as anybody could make.

As a matter of fact, in passages like this the contributors come to agree with the stand of Bertrand Russell and other Liberal Rationalists, which suggests that the dividing line of social philosophy runs through the Catholic school, and that some Catholics, in things that matter, join some agnostics, while other Catholics find themselves in the camp of dogmatism together with some materialists - to the horror of both.

M. ROSHWALD.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA.

Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre. WALTER KAUFMANN. New York: Meridian Books, 1956. Pp. 322.

This is a very useful little book. Its Introduction, written with ease in a style familiar from literary reviews, presents the main existentialist themes and writers; and the more than 250 pages of selections vary the themes and mark the writers who, in literature, include Dostoevsky, Rilke, Kafka, Sartre and Camus and, in philosophy, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Jaspers, Heidegger and, again, Sartre. I know no other publication on existentialism that can serve so well as an introduction for the general reader, and as a text for the teacher.

Walter Kaufmann's interests and talents draw him toward existential-

ism; his intelligence and training keep him from surrendering to its anti-scientific and anti-logical siren songs. In his Nietzsche book he has stressed the empiricist and empirical aspects of Nietzsche. This he cannot do for Heidegger and Jaspers; but his tactful irony warns the reader that the valuable part of their philosophy is not to be found in their attitude toward science, reason and logic. The existentialists, he writes, have like Socrates "taken up the passionate concern with questions that arise from life, the moral pathos, and the firm belief that, to be serious, a philosophy has to be lived. The analytical philosophers, on the other hand, insist – as Socrates did, too – that no moral pathos, no tradition, and no views, however elevated, justify unanalyzed ideas, murky arguments, or a touch of confusion But if the feat of Socrates is really to be repeated and philosophy is to have a future outside the academies, there will have to be philosophers who think in the tension between analysis and existentialism" (p. 51).

This balanced attitude gives strength to the book and it explains, parenthetically, why Kaufmann allots to Sartre more pages than to anybody else. He defends Sartre not only against those academic philistines who suspect him simply because he has published novels and plays, but particularly against those who, justly annoyed by Sartre's dialectical apparatus and semantic confusions, refuse to see his Cartesian commitments and what may be called the picturesque insights of his psychology.

This very balance, however, may also account for Kaufmann's lack of interest in the religious aspects of existentialism. His estimate of Kierkegaard seems to me to show little justice and depth. Kaufmann, one is inclined to suspect, went through Kierkegaard's works with a list of certain existentialist themes before him, snapping to attention any time Kierkegaard writes something that fits the list and slumbering the more frequent times that Kierkegaard is Kierkegaard. Secondly, Kaufmann does not include any of the contemporary religious existentialists. I happen to share his preferences, but many of his readers will not, and some space could easily have been found by cutting the 70 pages given to Jaspers, this "whirler" and "soarer" who is so repetitive. Heidegger has only 16 pages, but they are most interesting. Translated by Kaufmann himself, they show the road Heidegger has taken since *Being and Time*, and they do so particularly when read together with *What is Metaphysics?* (available in Brock and also in McMurrin-Jarrett). They are, however, splendid targets for the analysts' guns, and a future edition should perhaps include an example of his description of man's being-in-the-world; for there lies Heidegger's real strength.

A final suggestion. In the early twenties, Carlo Michelstaedter published his doctoral dissertation, *Persuasione ed Rhetorica*. Though famous in Italy, this strange and keen book has never attracted abroad the attention

it deserves as a very individual expression of contemporary existentialism, antedating, I believe, both Jaspers and Heidegger. Besides, here is one existentialist who took his philosophy seriously. When he was still a very young man he killed himself, taking into his grave the finest hope of Italian philosophy. There would be purpose and justice in adding pages of his book to this intelligent and balanced collection of variations on existentialist themes.

WALTER CERF.

BROOKLYN COLLEGE.

Studies in Human Time. GEORGES POULET. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1956. Pp. 363.

This book, which quickly became celebrated in the French original, deserves continued success in an excellent translation. It deals with the attitude toward time in the literature of successive epochs, represented by Montaigne, Descartes, Pascal, Molière, Corneille, Racine, Madame de la Fayette, Fontenelle, L'Abbé Prévost, Rousseau, Benjamin Constant, Vigny, Flaubert, Baudelaire, Valéry, Proust. There is a rich and fresh study of each, especially of Proust. He is presented as recapitulating every notion of time in preceding French thought, ringing all the changes on time and the timeless. Likewise, in the appendix added for the translated edition, on "Time and American Writers," T. S. Eliot is credited with rediscovering and reliving "all the stages of the experience of time" in Emerson, Hawthorne, Poe, Thoreau, Melville, Whitman, Emily Dickinson, and Henry James.

When the reader has enjoyed the imaginative reaches deployed here, and admired the scholarship with which the generalizations are supported by specific passages, with chapter and verse in columns of references, he may begin to wonder why, when so much has been included, so much has been left out. Then he realizes that the title was intended to rule out a great deal that the subject of time would call for in our time. The adjective "human" in the title is ambiguous. It suggests that what is taken up regarding time is all that matters to human beings, with the traditional "humanist" assumption that scientific conceptions of time need not be considered seriously. The ideas of time in this book are mostly theological, or pseudo-theological (even when ostensibly non- or anti-theological), contrasting or relating time to eternity, the moment to the permanent, and discontinuous to continuous creation, with "human creation" considered as "endlessly aborted," and marked down in italics as "*Human, all too human*" (p. 37).

Time as treated by science, philosophy, and the philosophy of science, does not appear in this book, with some significant exceptions. Descartes