

It is unfortunate that this member of the Harvard Political Studies should be marred by typographical errors (p. 24, 4th last line; p. 77, 1. 3; p. 78, 1. 15; p. 101, 1. 18; p. 140, 1. 21; p. 146, 1. 19; p. 180, 5th last line; p. 1. 99, 1. 22).

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***Insight and Outlook.* By Arthur Koestler. New York: Macmillan, 1949. Pp. xi + 442, with index. \$5.00.**

In *Darkness at Noon*, Old Bolshevik Rubashov had many cosmic difficulties as he meditated in the shade of the gallows. Arthur Koestler presented them admirably. In *Insight and Outlook* he sets out to analyze and resolve them. Like so many others, Koestler is adept at representing the darkness—and not to mistake darkness for light is certainly a merit—but his attempt at dispelling the darkness is less successful. Liberal materialism does not throw a very bright beam.

Koestler's insight is to show the fundamental pattern in man's creative activities: humor, art and discovery—symbolical of art and science. From this there should emerge, according to Koestler, the possibility of a system of ethics neither utilitarian nor dogmatic, "derived from the same integrative tendency in the evolutionary process to which the creative activities of art and discovery are traced."

Koestler's unquestioning point of departure is thus materialistic evolution, involving the designation of imagination as the supreme faculty. For practical purposes such as navigation any mental construct susceptible of producing a quick result, like the assumption that the stars move around the earth, is in order, whether or not the assumption is objectively true. But in the pursuit of truth one cannot expect to deduce eternal verities from purely hypothetical premises. This is the fundamental critique of Mr. Koestler's book. He does not start from either self-evident or demonstrated realities, and consequently his conclusions, ingenious though they may be, are at best—and in Koestler's own terms—the product of his imagination. The price thereof—pages of jargon of a neurophysiological nature—is likewise a little high, as in the analysis of the transition from the ancestral cortex to the newly developed pallial cortex in which one "thinks." (The quotation marks are Mr. Koestler's.)

The hypothetical conclusions themselves, arrived at through a tedious

welter of diagrams and esoteric terminology, are internally discordant. Koestler is indeed a seeker after the ultimate, but appears to be the victim of his own premises. While sensing below the surface of the multiplicity of existence and its apparent conflicts a unifying principle in which are located "all ultimate causes . . . eternity . . . infinity," he is held captive by his own materialistic preconceptions. He must vainly pursue in prime matter what is found in pure act, and in the formless the fountain of form.

Certain encouraging heretical tendencies are evident. Koestler is not a believer entirely at peace with himself, not entirely submissive to modern dogma. Could he dare to disentangle himself completely from the gospel according to Darwin and Hegel, his own native analytical gifts and his solicitude for the ultimate might well bring him from darkness to high noon.

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Barbara Celarent. *A Description of Scholastic Dialectic.* By Thomas Gilby, O. P. London: Longmans Green. Pp. xiii + 303, with index. \$4.00.

What Fr. Gerald Vann's enchanting *Morals Makyth Man* did for Thomistic ethics, this book attempts to do for Thomistic dialectic. And it is, if that be possible, an even more notable success. It is a popular book and a delightfully witty book, but it is nevertheless erudite and profound. Fr. Gilby has not only an encyclopaedic knowledge of St. Thomas and an admirable acquaintance with English letters, he has a rare appreciation of the modern temper, its insights and its short sights in matters philosophical, and he knows just how to bring to bear on the problems that perplex the contemporary mind the ordered vision of St. Thomas. Though the book was "worked up between action stations in H. M. S. *Renown*" on which Fr. Gilby served as chaplain in the recent war, the charm of the style and the appositeness of the hundreds of quotations and references bespeak much careful re-working. Only the saltiness and the nice regard for the proper balance between contemplation and action are there to remind the reader of life at sea in wartime.

This is not dialectic in the corrupted sense in which that term is taken as synonymous with formal logic, but the *logica tentativa* of an