

omenalist. He sought to save himself from these doctrines by two distinct, though not by him clearly distinguished, hypotheses : the first, that what I truly perceive is given its relative permanence through its being perceived by the Divine Mind (though this hypothesis will not do the job, since—as Berkeley admits—God does not have sensations); the second, that what we perceive is ‘imprinted on the senses by the Author of Nature’ (but what has this to do with *esse is percipi*?). Professor Luce’s immaterialism generates none of these problems. It amounts to a continual insistence that objects are coloured, resonant and what have you, a continual attack upon all those who, from Aristotle to Locke, have had a theory of ‘matter’ which is by definition imperceptible, and a continual hinting that those who hold any of these—surely very different—theories are encouragers of atheism. The only truly Berkeleyian chapter is that dealing with cause and effect in which the author draws an interesting distinction between ‘true causes’ and ‘cue causes’ (pp. 73 ff.). The most curious chapter is that entitled ‘The Bible without Matter’. The author discovers the concept of matter, the *damnosa hereditas* of Aristotle, in the *Book of Wisdom*; but all is well, for the Church of England, unlike the Church of Rome and the Orthodox Church, regards *Wisdom* as apocryphal.

J. M. CAMERON

*Pain and Other Problems. A criticism of Modern Philosophies.* By J. C. WORDSWORTH. (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. 1954. Pp. 159. Price 12s 6d).

By ‘pain’ Mr. Wordsworth does not mean cosmic pain but the pain felt by ordinary human beings; and his point is that it is we who feel it: our aches are ours and they do not feel, and report on, themselves. The same holds of perception, knowledge, aesthetic appreciation and moral judgement. In them all the conception of a subject is indispensable. Any ‘chain’ theory, howbeit of consciousness, is invalid.

But we cannot, in Mr. Wordsworth’s view, halt here. The subject is in no sense a ‘unique personality’. If it were, we should have all our former difficulties repeated at another level. ‘Uniqueness’ means distinctness; and if each subject were in that sense unique, there could be no judgements or agreements. Just as the facts of feeling manifest a subject who feels, so the facts of meaningful discourse and purposive action manifest the unity of subjects in a common humanity.

The position urged, although unfashionable, is not unfamiliar. Yet its re-assertion is peculiarly valuable, because peculiarly necessary, at the present day, and Mr. Wordsworth argues it with cogency and over a wide field. He treats first of conventional naturalism. A candid naturalism, he urges, cannot account for pain unless it admits (and no candid naturalism can admit) the existence of an ideal standard. Pain is universally taken as the sign, or the result, of something having gone ‘wrong’; but if there is no ‘right’ condition for an organism, it cannot be said to have gone wrong. Again, naturalism can offer no account of the connection obtaining between a certain rate of vibration and a specific quality apprehended, or between one apprehended quality and another, or, for that matter, between one instance and another of the same apprehended quality. Further, since its world is completely regulated by the laws of macroscopic physics, all preferences and intentions are irrelevant additions to movements of molecules which are unaffected by them. These movements, once they have happened, disappear and survive only, so far as we are concerned, in neural tracks; but does a neural track know itself, or recognise itself and its contents for what it and they were yesterday? A consistent naturalism is in fact the timeless, causeless, quality-less and memoryless occasionalism of a Humian nightmare.

Mr. Wordsworth proceeds to weigh more closely some theorists of the nature of pain. He disposes quickly of the sheer nominalist, the all-intrusive mathematician and the biological mechanist. In nature as viewed by them there is no room for an order which can be violated or patterns which can be disturbed or impulses which can be frustrated. All talk therefore about pain as attending frustration or violated order is out of place; unless there is introduced surreptitiously the conception of an external commenting intelligence or a genuine agent seeking determinate ends, that is, either God or a Nature which has real likes and dislikes and preferences, and administers shocks and pains and penalties. ‘Without an absolute “ought to be” in Nature, pleasure and pain would be arbitrary and unintelligible’ (p. 51); and the same may be said of our emotional life with its hopes and fears, joys and sorrows. Can any physical account explain the joy which accompanies a hope, the grief which accompanies our fears?

Perception offers similar difficulties. Attempts have been made to reduce judgements of perception to the verbal witness arising from the data themselves; but such autobiographical testimony on the part of a colour or sound is not the judgement of similarity

or difference which constitutes the essence of perception. If we judge the green we saw to-day to be the same as the green we saw yesterday and to be different from other colours and from sounds and smells, the judgement is not the still small voice of the data themselves but a pronouncement of an external and stable mind capable of experiencing and recording and comparing, a mind which takes and weighs evidence and delivers a verdict.

Both evidence and verdict have a general validity and do not hold good only for the moment and only for ourselves at that moment. The final and pervasive heresy is that of atomism, and Mr. Wordsworth pursues it with zest and gentle badinage through the thickets of universals and causality (which is 'unintelligible if the world consists of a number of separate things that simply happen to be there', p. 109) to time and succession and other relations. There follows a special chapter on beauty in which evolutionary theories as traditionally presented are dismissed and beauty is shown to be no more a derivative from the 'rightness' of our nervous system than a bye-product of the theory of numbers. The final chapter applies the general conclusion to the now over-logicised subject of Ethics. It sees Virtue as 'the hard task of disregarding the obvious and always felt unity of the person, and acting consistently with the deeper unity in which all the world is one' (p. 148).

Mr. Wordsworth's style remains clear and pungent, and his polemics are both searching and urbane.

LEON ROTH

*La Société et son Environnement. Essai sur les principes des sciences sociales.* By EMILE CALLOT. (Paris: M. Rivière et Cie. 1952. Pp. 580. Price frs. 1400).

This essay on the principles of the social sciences demonstrates why British spectators—we number more spectators than practitioners of sociology in this still comparatively unshaken society of ours—are looking hopefully towards France for the golden mean between German-philosophical and American-empirical ways of thinking. M. Callot sees that the Americans are in a sense carrying out the plan, envisaged but never thoroughly executed by the French, of a sociology strictly limited to empirical investigation. Durkheim, fully intending to create such a method, was retarded (to his credit) by an ineradicable interest in the principles underlying the apprehension of 'social facts'. He could have been happy with Hume had he only been able to forget Kant. The Americans have no epistemological qualms (Talcott Parsons, and the remarkable German-American constructions of recent years, notwithstanding). Their vigorously empirical and practical methods are as different from the pomp and formality of German sociology (says E. L. Faris), as is an American Senator from an Austro-German emperor. But the resulting enormous stretches of description and survey, those vast summations of countings of bung-holes, yield only practical and immediate conclusions. For them to be of scientific value, says M. Gurvitch, these observations must be related to principles and conceptual schemes. This capacity for basic thinking, closely allied to systematic observation and so avoiding the seductions of metaphysics, is the forte of the French. There is a great deal in this. The French viewed geo-politically may appear to be in great difficulties. Judged by other measures, by their paintings, for example, or by their philosophy of science, they have lost nothing of their essential virtues of sanity and balance of mind.

The book sets out an ambitious programme. Society must be studied in its natural environment, the external forces which act constantly on sociological phenomena (p. 497). Moreover, sociology is not what is left over when the other aspects of social reality are pre-empted by biology, geography, social psychology, and numerous interstitial disciplines. It includes a synoptic and architectonic grasp of the principles and major data of these sciences in their rational inter-relations.

The method of procedure is primarily deductive. The constant reference to phenomena which it claims to practise in equal measure is necessarily inadequate. Reason may prescribe the conceptual scheme of the social sciences. Observation and experiment, confronted with the surd or irrational element of brute fact, find it harder to complete the scheme. M. Callot should read his Meyerson. If empirical content for his classification fails, he does not suspend the latter, but forages around for some kind of filling. The best example of this is Raciology, 'the only legitimate study of the varieties of the human species' (p. 384). Racial and social phenomena, we are told, are observed to interact in reciprocal causality. But this part of Anthroposociology, and indeed the latter as a whole, are only a rough sketch so far at a science, and consist of occasional remarks thinly scattered through the works of sociologists and anthropologists (p. 416). What kind of evidence is this? Classifications like these reveal