

historiographical tradition has rather overlooked, is well told here, with an even-handedness and generosity of spirit that enables one to recover and appreciate their achievements without losing sight of their limitations. In an age where determination (and perhaps even doggedness) may well be necessary for ecclesial institutions to survive, it is not only monks and nuns who might find something important for their own self-understanding here.

LUKE BECKETT OSB

THE THOUGHTFUL HEART: THE METAPHYSICS OF JOHN HENRY NEWMAN, with a fully annotated reader's text of Newman's *Discursive Enquiries on Metaphysical Subjects* by William F. Myers, Marquette Studies in Philosophy No.85, Marquette University Press, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 2013, pp.331, \$29.00, pbk

Newman's *Discursive Enquiries on Metaphysical Subjects* is a difficult text to present. It was never published in his lifetime and consists of notes and comments gathered over many decades in what for most of his life he called *The Philosophical Notebook*. (In this review it will be referred to simply as 'the *Notebook*'.) A dossier of citations, references, and fragments, often amended and cross-referenced, with some entries being later corrected or even deleted, it is rough work in which we can discern the shape and contents of a book on metaphysics that never appeared. The earliest entry is from 1859 and the latest is from 1888 (Newman died in 1890). One tends to think of Newman as a historian of thought and an apologist for religious faith rather than a philosopher in the 'professional' sense of the term. But this work shows that he was keen to engage with the thought of Kant and Descartes, as well as with that of earlier and contemporary English and Scottish philosophers, in developing his own arguments about God's existence, about miracles and about freewill, and in arguing against the views of John Stuart Mill.

In 1970 Edward Sillem published a transcription of the *Notebook* (*Nauwelaerts*, Louvain) but it is both difficult to find now and, because of the meticulousness and integrity with which the text is reproduced, difficult to use. Myers offers instead an organization of the material that is hypothetical but which, he hopes, will help the reader to make sense of Newman's thoughts and to appreciate the 'brilliance and originality of Newman's thinking even if that thinking is technically naïve at times and not always well-informed or accurate' (p. 9). Where Sillem respects the *Notebook* as a resource, Myers wants to respect it as a process.

Part One consists of Newman's main entries with a first set of footnotes, followed by explanatory notes from Myers and textual notes placed separately so as to allow a more straightforward access to the main entries. These are introduced by a Preface (from 1866) and an

Introduction (from 1859) but a comment (from 1888) has been placed before the Preface: 'what I write, I do not state dogmatically, but categorically, that is, in investigation, nor have I confidence enough in what I have advanced to warrant publication' (p. 31). There follow entries on fourteen topics, a list whose order and titles have sometimes been changed or even added by Myers for reasons he explains in his notes and commentary. The topics are: faculty of abstraction; elements of thought; proof of theism; moral objections to miracles; formation of thought; objects of consciousness; beyond reason; imagination and conception; the unseen world; on economical representation; metaphysical objections to miracles; free will; analogy; on conviction and devotion.

Links with other and better known parts of Newman's writings are frequent. So he defends here a (Cartesian) argument for the existence of God from the existence of moral obligation, a defence based on his understanding of conscience. It is the argument for the being of God, Newman says, 'which I should wish, if it were possible, to maintain'. It is his own chosen proof to which he is led 'not only by its truth, but by its great convenience and appositeness in this day' (p. 59). In familiar apologetic style he speaks of miracles, and the possibility of faith. What does it mean for something to be 'above', 'beyond' or 'against' reason, he asks. If supernatural truths involve contradictions his reader should not be scandalized: he is referring to contradictions in words, not in doctrines. Other questions from the agenda of the philosophy of religion figure here: free will, analogy, conviction and devotion. One thing becomes very clear: familiarity with Newman's *Notebook* is essential for anybody undertaking a serious study of *A Grammar of Assent* since many of its ideas and arguments are turned over here.

More purely philosophical questions are treated when Newman speaks about the formation of thought, the objects of consciousness, the difference between imagination and conception, and 'economical representation'. It is in the latter that Myers sees some originality in Newman's *Notebook*. He argues that overall Newman's goal in the *Notebook* was not to prove the existence of God but to justify what he (Newman) calls 'economical representation'. This refers to the relationship between human experience and the material universe, questions about space and time, being and action, all aspects of Descartes's question, how can the soul act on the body? It would be wrong to say that Newman developed a full philosophical response to this question: the evidence here shows that he sees the difficulties and that he is thoughtful in responding to them, particularly as they affect divine action in miracles and the freedom of human action.

Part Two is entitled '*Discursive Enquiries and the Philosophical Tradition*' and consists of four chapters: the first gives the general biographical and intellectual context of the *Notebook* (Newman began it at a difficult moment in his life, 1859); a second explains the more

immediate philosophical context (Kant, Victor Cousin, Alexander Hamilton, John Stuart Mill) – this chapter is important for keeping a balanced sense of Newman’s actual study of earlier and contemporary philosophers; a third is a commentary on each of the fourteen topics of Part One; and the fourth argues that Newman’s mode of argumentation can hold its own in contemporary philosophical speculation. In defending Hamilton against Mill, Newman shares common ground with Walter Pater and Gottlob Frege.

In that fourth chapter of Part Two, Myers seeks to relate Newman’s work with contemporary phenomenology, cognitive philosophy and physics. He cites Husserl, Turing, Gödel, Dennett, Fodor, Searle, Penrose, and Galen Strawson. It means his final chapter becomes a bit like the *Notebook*, giving us enough information and reflection to be suggestive and intriguing.

We should be grateful to William Myers for his clear and very helpful presentation of the *Notebook*. This book is a valuable addition to the bibliography on Newman, and further confirms the great cardinal’s status as one of the greatest religious thinkers of recent centuries.

VIVIAN BOLAND OP

NO TURNING BACK: THE FUTURE OF ECUMENISM by Margaret O’Gara, edited by Michael Vertin, *Liturgical Press*, Collegeville, 2014, pp. 253, \$29.95, pbk

Attempting to envisage what might constitute the content of a course of lectures on ecumenical theology in a Catholic institution, a graduate student in a non-theological discipline at a secular university recently suggested to me that such a series would perhaps consist of eight discrete hour-long discourses on ‘how to be nice’ to members of various non-Catholic churches and ecclesial communions in turn. No turning back is not, in that sense, a ‘nice’ book, though it does contain a good deal of niceness in an older and richer acceptance of the word, being marked by a stimulating subtlety and precision of thought. It is also a notably gracious and irenic text which would provide an ideal initiation into the ethos as well as the issues of contemporary ecumenical dialogue.

It is all but inevitable that the constituent parts of a collection of essays will be of varying weight, perhaps especially in a work such as this, drawn together by friends and colleagues as a posthumous tribute to its author, and those responsible for seeing this representative and retrospective sample of Professor Margaret O’Gara’s work through the press are clearly aware of its attendant imperfections and idiosyncrasies. The author of the foreword explicitly draws attention to the occasional nature of much of the material – a feature, he notes, especially characteristic of ecumenical theology whose typical milieu is the dialogue meeting