

doing it so well. A more measured response concerns the lengths to which he is willing to go to find in Aquinas an answer to the question 'whither the Universe?' The answer to this question is clearly 'God', meaning by this something not in or of the Universe. So long as this merely refers to Alpha, there is no problem with the question (though the answer is necessarily incomplete). However, when it refers to one who is intelligent, willing, loving and virtuous, to a divine person, then there is a problem. For here we do not have merely an uncontrollable, Dionysian overflow of being, but a real person with thoughts, volitions, virtues and affections who chooses to make a (the) Universe. Creation does not just happen: it is chosen with intelligence, care, even enthusiasm. Why would the God of the theologians decide to create?

HAYDEN RAMSAY

THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE edited by Colin E. Gunton, *Cambridge University Press*, 1997, xix + 307 pages, £12.95 paperback.

The 'brainchild' of Alex Wright, to whom (as the editor says) 'the theological world is immensely indebted ... for his enterprise and initiative over recent years', this book takes us through the main Christian doctrines — Trinity (Ralph Del Colle), creation (Gunton), human being (Kevin Vanhoozer), redemption (Trevor Hart), church and sacraments (Robert Jenson), eschatology (David Fergusson), Christ (Kathryn Tanner), and Holy Spirit (Geoffrey Wainwright) — in quite a wide intellectual context (Stanley Hauerwas on doctrine as ethics, Gerard Loughlin on doctrine in the church, Francis Watson on biblical interpretation, Bruce Marshall on the Jewish people and Christian theology, Jeremy Begbie on Christianity and the arts, and an introductory survey of where theology now is by the editor). Karl Barth is cited more often than any other theologian except Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. Everyone assumes that the specifically Christian doctrine is belief in God as Trinity. There is disagreement: Hauerwas's Aquinas is much more of a Christian theologian than Gunton's seems to be, for instance. But on the whole this is a remarkably self-consistent exposition of traditional Christian doctrine, much of it by radically orthodox younger theologians, entirely immune to the temptations of liberalism, Catholic and Protestant. Highly recommended.

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY: AN INTRODUCTION, Second Edition, by Alister McGrath, *Blackwell*, Oxford, 1996, xxi + 604 pages, £13.99 Pb.

Expanded and updated this *tour de force* by the Principal of Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, is the most widely used textbook throughout the English-speaking world. Karl Barth is quoted with respect and affection in the opening sentence; the doctrine of God as Trinity is 'found in the pervasive pattern of divine activity to which the New Testament bears