psychologists, as well as for the more thoughtful reader interested in the human condition.

— Ronald Conway.

METHOD IN THEOLOGY *By Father Bernard Lonergan*
(Darton, Longman and Todd, 1972; pp. 405, £4.50 in England.)
FOUNDATIONS OF THEOLOGY *Ed. by P. McShane*
(Gill & Macmillan, 1971; pp. 257, $11.40.)

Editor's note: Daly has crossed through this second book in his copy of the review. The review only covers *Method in Theology*.

While the industrial revolution in England spread its crises of growth over a century or two, many nations in Africa and Asia have been faced with the problem of assimilating even greater changes over ten or twenty years. A good deal of the confusion in the Catholic Church in recent years has been due, in Bernard Lonergan's view, to a very similar situation in theology. Many issues raised in the last ten or twenty years were forced on us by new methods of scholarship, new views of science and new philosophical approaches that had been developing for a century or more in the field of secular, and to a large extent of Protestant, thought.

The confusion has nearly always centred around theologians, and when laity or bishops gave the challenge, "Hey, what do you think you are doing?", the answer was often too restricted in scope to be convincing.

A direct answer to this common sense challenge is required. The contribution of each theologian needs to be put in context, especially since there are many quite different sorts of contribution that can be made, and some of these have emerged too recently to be easily recognizable.

Those who, knowing what they are about can give an appropriate answer, easily disarm suspicion and create an atmosphere of common effort. But we don't always know what it is we are doing. Techniques of study or of teaching can be fascinating in their own right, and carrying them out can be exciting in itself without any reference to a goal or to complementary techniques.

Editor's note: Daly has replaced 'disarm' with 'allay' in his copy of the review.

For some thirty years Father Bernard Lonergan has been trying to do something about this, and finally we have his mature thought in *Method in Theology*. It is not a theological system, nor a suggestion on how to teach theology, but the fruit of a long examination of what theologians do and above all how they can collaborate with each other. A method in general "is a normative pattern of recurrent and related operations yielding

cumulative and progressive results" (p. 4). It is not "a set of rules to be followed meticulously by a dolt" but "a framework for collaborative creativity" (xi). The operations involved in theology are concerned with eight distinct tasks or "functional specialties", namely "research, interpretation, history, dialectic, foundations, doctrines, systematics, and communications" (xi).

The kernel of the book is to be found in the twenty pages of Chapter Five, in which Lonergan explains what he means by each of these specialties, how they are related to one another, how the division fits in with our various mental powers, why it is needed, and what can be expected when it is neglected.

One chapter is devoted to each of the functional specialties (two chapters for history). These chapters are not made up of sets of rules for working at each specialty, nor are they primarily illustrations of how the functions have been performed in practice. They are more concerned with points that should be kept in mind when working in each specialty, and with modern issues that are related to the specialty concerned. Indeed, the first four specialties (which together constitute mediating as opposed to mediated theology, research as opposed to teaching, harkening to the word before bearing witness to it) are illustrated more from secular disciplines than from theology. The last four (although also applicable to disciplines other than theology) are far more dependent on faith and so are illustrated by issues that have arisen within theology itself.

A background to theology is provided in the first four chapters. These deal with method, the human good, meaning and religion, and succeed in establishing a number of distinctions and coordinations that throw light on such matters as consciousness, experience, understanding, judgment, decision, the question of God, religious experience, faith and religious belief, as well as a large range of different types of meaning, and functions, realms and stages of meaning. These are drawn upon especially in the later chapters of the book and they help to make it self-contained, so that there is no need to skim through *Insight* or study such articles as "Cognitional Structure" or "Dimensions of Meaning" before tackling *Method in Theology* with profit.

Of course, anyone who has a fair acquaintance with *Insight* will need no encouragement to approach this theological stable-mate. He will no doubt be able to reconcile himself to the facts that it is only about a third as long and that the heroic "in the thirty-first place" gives way to a somewhat isolated sprint up to twelve.

He will find a number of the old themes still prominent, such as the distinction between experience and knowledge of self, the dynamic structure of experience, understanding and judging, the acceptance (now called "intellectual conversion") of "positions" as against "counter-positions", and the analysis of belief. Some of these themes, of course, have been polished and some extended. For instance, the cognitional structure of three levels (which is retained and used when knowledge itself is being analysed) is submerged most of the time in "the basic pattern of operations" (p. 13) by adding "deliberation", and this fourth level is called the "responsible level" instead of the clumsy "rational self-consciousness". Incidentally, some hints that were being thrown out a year or so ago that Lonergan was dissatisfied with his earlier work are simply not borne out at all. He may have sculpted out a limb here or there that we had not thought of, or thrown a new light on an earlier feature, but it is definitely the same status that he is working on.

Editor's note: Daly has corrected 'status' to 'statue' 'in his copy of the review. Clearly this fits the metaphor of sculpting better.

Two further, and much more familiar, types of conversion — moral and religious — are linked with intellectual conversion and all are explained as a self-transcendence which is actualized as the love of God — another term for sanctifying grace — whose conscious aspect is religious experience. Faith is distinguished from religious belief and defined as "the knowledge born of religious love". Reference is made at a number of points to Karl Rahner's *The Dynamic Element in the Church* and to William Johnston's *The Mysticism of the Cloud of Unknowing*. The altogether central position given to conversion could help to allay the fears Rahner expressed that while the scheme of eight functional specialties "correctly calls attention to many gaps and omissions in Catholic theology as it actually exists today", it is "so generic that it really fits every science, and hence is not the methodology of theology as such".

We can only hope that Lonergonians will not over-indulge themselves in this notion of conversion: "We don't have to take any notice of your arguments, since you aren't converted", "I am so", "You are not", "I am so". In fact, however, it is not reduced to a "funny inner feeling" and quite definite criteria are given for discerning the presence of each of the three types of conversion.

So much for those who have already been won to the master. But what of ordinary mortals? Is this new book hopelessly difficult to read? Is it of any practical use? Is it just an eccentric a priori personal "system"? Is the method itself so complex that no one could be expected to put it into effect?

To take the last question first, we must not imagine that each theologian has to work at all the eight functions. On the contrary, "a single contribution to one of the eight is as much as can be demanded of a single piece of work" (p. 137). What the theologian has to do is to "produce the type of evidence proper to the specialty. So the exegete does exegesis on exegetical principles. The historian does history on historical principles". Besides this, all he is asked to do is to recognize that his own specialty is functionally related to the others:

> It will serve to preclude misunderstanding, misinterpretation, and misrepresentation, if the specialist draws attention to the fact of specialization and gives some indication of his awareness of what is to be added to his statements in the light of the evidence available to other distinct specialties.

Much dismay in recent years could have been avoided if this simple precaution had been known and followed. Lonergan's method does not ask any theologian to do more than he has done before. It only requests him to allow for the value in what others are doing, and it gives some hints on how this allowance can be made:

> Thirdly, the distinction and division are needed to curb one-sided totalitarian ambitions. Each of the eight has its proper excellence. None can stand without the other seven. But the man with the blind-spot is fond of concluding that his specialty is to be pursued because of its excellence and the other seven are to be derided because by themselves they are insufficient. From such one-sidedness theology has suffered gravely from the middle ages to the present day. Only a well-reasoned total view can guard against its continuance in the present and its recurrence in the future. (p. 137)

Those who have been put off by the scotosis and the conjugate forms and the emergent probability and heuristic structures of *Insight* can be assured that *Method in Theology* is clearer and less jargon-ridden, though it too is demanding. A reader who wants full value from the book will have to make his own lists of the distinctions between such concepts as the cognitive, efficient, constitutive and communicative functions of meaning, or the realms of common sense, theory, interiority and religion disclosed by the systematic, critical and transcendent exigences. But the meaning of each such term is clearly pointed to or formulated, and there is a thirty-seven page index at hand to help anyone who gets caught later in the book. One can't help thinking of the mind of Aristotle, which — according to Douglas

Woodruff's Socrates — is "like a corkscrew, being tortuous but powerful and opening up worthy things for our satisfaction". It is only by attempting to apply such distinctions as those above that you come to appreciate their relevance, and recognize the study and thought out of which they have sprung.

It would be a great pity if we fell into the temptation to dismiss some of these distinctions — especially the distinctions of the eight functional specialties — as artificial or a priori. In fact they have been distilled drop by drop over the years through wide reading of theological and secular works as well as the experience of direct contributions to the theology of the Trinity, of Christ and of grace.

The distinctions between experience, understanding and judgment, outlined in six pages, were discovered through research into St. Thomas before 1946, but established more thoroughly in 1957 in the whole of *Insight*. Their value for method was pointed out there, but the relevance of the fourth level — deciding — and its dynamic link with the structure was not satisfactorily formulated until 1965. A systematic theology of the Trinity in 1957 contained a fifty-page introduction on the method of theology, in which the distinction between the analytic and the synthetic (or "positive") approach was stressed, but in 1964 a new edition of this and its companion volume put themselves into the different categories of systematic and dogmatic (both of which are now on the analytic branch of the eight-fold structure), while history — discussed at length as before — had not yet found its niche. Meanwhile a series of graduate courses on the method of theology delved into the long-term sources of confusion in theology, grappled with a number of key concepts and distinctions and tried to identify more clearly many of the "parts" of theology, before it was finally seen that nearly everything fell into place when the "parts" of theology became functional specialties distinct on the one hand from field specialties, dealing with research, and on the other hand from subject specialties, in which the results of research were applied to teaching. This left the way open to apply the four-fold structure on the discovery side and again on the teaching side, leading from the data of texts up through understanding, judgment and decision to prepare the ground for conversion, after which the grounds for decision could be expounded in the reverse order, starting with foundations, going on to basic judgments in doctrines and understanding in systematics and ending up by presenting more data in communications.

Theologians and other serious readers will find in this book a wealth of clarifications that could lead to profitable reorientation,

and theologians themselves should now be in a position to specify more accurately their tasks.

Most readers will be rewarded with a number of incidental theological insights, but almost in spite of the author. Lonergan shies away in this book from all particular questions of theology:

> It is up to the theologians to carry out both the first seven specialties and no less the eighth. The methodologist has the far lighter task of indicating what the various tasks of theologians are and how each presupposes or complements the others. (p. 355, cf. pp. 282, 312, 324)

He could well make his own the words of Wittgenstein, "the value of this work consists in the fact that it shows how little has been done when these problems have been solved". The methodologist has the therapeutic effect of overcoming tangles and lopsidedness — and without such work intelligent communication in the sphere of religion will become hopelessly atrophied — but he does not provide a machine that automatically spins out theology. Indeed, in a spirit not of threat but of invitation, Lonergan could endorse even more strongly Wittgenstein's later preface: "I should not like my writing to spare other people the trouble of thinking".

— T. V. Daly.

A SHADOW AND A WISH *By Anne Holman*

(Hawthorn Press, Melbourne, 1971; pp. 39; $2.95)

THE CAPTAIN AND THE BIRDS *By I. V. Hansen*

(Hawthorn Press, Melbourne, 1971; pp. 48; $2.95)

In *A Shadow and a Wish,* Anne Holman has produced a collection of poems of real distinction. The poems are beautifully shaped, with a sure feel for shades of language, rhythmic balance, and the natural development of a poem. Shape is the dominant sense one has of her lyrics — flowing, graceful and tenderly carved. The poems range from muted reflections on motherhood to sympathetic portraits of unusual places and people, on to domestic moments caught and gently analysed, with some incisive satire to spice the collection. Some are better and more considerable than others, of course, but a few seem to me worthy of our best poets.