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Subjective Metaphysics: The Philosophy of Gabriel Marcel

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281), there is a serious linear error in word arrangement. While small in themselves, these constantly recurring mistakes annoy the reader, who would wish that so helpful a book might not be marred by so many grammatical and typographical imperfections.

This book can be recommended as very useful for professors of methodology in any seminary. It should find its place on the reference shelf of all seminary libraries and indeed it would be a handy and time-saving tool for every student who seriously contemplates beginning the study of Catholic philosophy and theology.

SAMUEL R. WILEY, S.J.

SUBJECTIVE METAPHYSICS

THE PHILOSOPHY OF GABRIEL MARCEL. By Kenneth T. Gallagher. New York: Fordham University Press, 1962. xvi, 179 pp.

Gabriel Marcel is a unique philosopher, unique in his method as well as in his message. To the uninitiated reader, Marcel's works can be baffling and discouraging. Synthesis is not his forte. The majority of his pivotal insights are contained in unorganized "Metaphysical Journals," and even his most systematic work, *The Mystery of Being*, often engulfs the reader in a morass of phenomenology and seemingly illogical digressions. As a result, it is easy to miss the deep, central insight which Marcel possesses and lose interest in him completely, or come away from him with a few mere catchwords and peripheral ideas. In short, his philosophy needs interpretation. In view of this, it can be seen why Professor Gallagher does a great service to modern philosophy with this well executed study on the philosophy of Gabriel Marcel.

Although Marcel is a philosopher who would eschew the very idea of having a philosophical system, there is a fundamental unity of insight in his works. This axial insight is his concern for participation. In his interpretation, Professor Gallagher cuts through Marcel's phenomenology to present a balanced synthesis of the metaphysics of participation according to Marcel. As the author sees it, Marcel's central insight is participation, a multi-leveled, non-objectifiable co-existence of a subject in a world of other subjects. The main question that engages Marcel is how to think concrete participation without destroying it in objective thought. Marcel's answer is that participation is reached by means of a "secondary

reflection," a free act of the whole person as incarnate spirit. In his presentation, the author is clear and logical and at the same time true to the original. He elucidates Marcellian terminology in a way that cannot but be an improvement over the original and an indispensable key to understanding Marcel. He does not, however, fall into the trap of making an oversimplification of the delicate areas of subjectivity wherein Marcel philosophizes.

Extremely helpful are the chapter on the "mystery-problem" distinction, which the author thinks will perhaps become classic, and the chapter on Marcel's notion of "being," where the author disagrees somewhat with the slightly too neat interpretation of Fr. Troisfontaines in his monumental work on Marcel, *De l'existence à l'être*. There are chapters on fidelity, hope, and love, on creative testimony, and on the philosophical relevance of Marcel's dramatic works. In the final essay of the book, Professor Gallagher discusses certain criticisms of Marcel, and then presents his own favorable evaluation of Marcel's idea of philosophy. He admits—as must anyone who reads the primary sources—that Marcel's subjective philosophy is a limited approach, and that it is not all there is to philosophy. At the same time, however, he suggests that reality is certainly not fully explained by the kind of objective approach that Scholastic philosophy has generally assumed; and that subjective metaphysics, in the wake of men like Marcel, has much of ultimate value and significance to add. It is a point well taken.

For those who are familiar with the works of Marcel, this book cannot but deepen their understanding and appreciation of him. For those who approach Gabriel Marcel for the first time, this will not be an easy book to read, but it will serve as an indispensable guide to understanding his philosophy. We might conclude by saying that Professor Gallagher's interpretation of Marcel is not only an extremely important secondary source, but stands in its own right as a very enlightening work for anyone who wishes to probe into the still not fully charted areas of subjective metaphysics.

MICHAEL C. REILLY

SYMPOSIUM ON LEO

LEO XIII AND THE MODERN WORLD. Edited by Edward T. Gargan. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1961, 246 pp.

When Leo XIII ascended the papal throne, "liberty" and "science" were making "progress". Republicanism was sounding the death knell of monarchies. Religion was becoming widely regarded