

what I would see as the distorting spectacles provided by James Conant), while barely mentioning Kant. In Part Two, Jerry Gill and Jamie Ferreira, agree on seeing Kant and Kierkegaard as both “making room for faith” without denying reason, but differ on exactly how they do so. In Part Three R.Z. Friedman and Hilary Bok agree on seeing Kant and Kierkegaard as sharing a common concern for the place of the individual in their ethics.

Part Four opens with an ingenious dialogue by Ronald Green in which a reanimated Kant and Kierkegaard meet in Denver Airport in 2027, and find themselves less far apart than one might have thought on the issue of the need for a historical faith. Jack Verheyden suggests that Green manages to bring the two thinkers together only by “over-Kantianising” Kierkegaard (see p154). In Part Five John Whittaker and Mario von der Ruhr discuss Eternal Life, agreeing (though without much in the way of good argument, that I could see) on the rejection of “temporal immortality,” while disagreeing on how else and better one could understand the notion of eternal life. In the final Part, rather than a debate, we have three different opinions on “Philosophy of Religion After Kant and Kierkegaard.” Stephen Palmquist gives a useful sketch of the post-KK options; John Hare argues for the attribution of a Divine Command theory of morality to Kant (while barely mentioning Kierkegaard) and Anselm Kyongsuk Min suggests ways in which both our philosophers could be taken up in the contemporary socio-political context. Each Part ends with a section, contributed by D.Z. Phillips, “Voices in Discussion,” based on but not an exact transcript of the debates that followed each session.

As one would expect with such an anthology, some of the papers are better than others, and different readers will find some topics of greater interest than others. But overall this collection demonstrates the value of discussing Kant and Kierkegaard together and there is much in it to stimulate anyone interested in either or both philosophers, or in the central questions of the philosophy of religion which they both address. And one hopes that it may persuade some Kantians to take more interest in Kierkegaard and some Kierkegaardians to take more interest in Kant. Both scholarship and contemporary thinking about the Philosophy of Religion could only benefit.

Utilitarians and Religion, by James E. Crimmins Bristol, England: Thommess Press, 1998. Pp. x and 502. \$84.00 (Cloth) \$35.00 (Paper)

ANDREW GUSTAFSON, Bethel College

This book presents a valuable historical selection of the critical writings of nine utilitarians on religion as well as two very helpful introductory essays to the topic of utilitarianism and religion.

Noted Bentham scholar James E. Crimmins divides the book into two parts: religious utilitarians and secular utilitarians. Crimmins provides very helpful essays at the beginning of each of the two sections, which do a great deal to help illuminate the different opinions regarding the relation-

ship between religion and the utility principle, and the men behind these positions. Crimmins also provides a helpful biographical note at the beginning of each utilitarian's selection which he presents.

This biographical note is especially useful for introducing some of the six religious utilitarians he presents, many of whom are not quite as well known as their secular counterparts. These are: John Gay, John Brown, Soame Jenyns, Edmund Law, Abraham Tucker, and William Paley. Gay, Brown, Law and Tucker were all ordained clergy, and all of the six except Tucker were educated at Cambridge. Each of them saw the happiness of all (including God) to be the ultimate foundation of morality. If we seldom think of religion as being yoked with utilitarianism, this might be explained in part by the failure of these six to gain a long-lasting audience. This book provides an opportunity to give their positions a second look.

Utilitarians and Religion provides a great deal of fodder for thinking about the possibility of religious utilitarianism. These religious utilitarians highlight the advantages and difficulties which a Christian utilitarianism encounters. For example, Crimmins point out that Edmund Law said works were done without regard to God could not be moral (in accord with Article XIII of the 39 articles of the Church of England), yet many would expect such a claim from a divine-command theorist, not a utilitarian. But could one be a divine command theorist and a utilitarian? Most of these religious utilitarians would apparently answer affirmatively since God's *willing* is what *makes* it right, but happiness, since it coincides along with obedience, is the motivator. Jeyns and Tucker focus on the rewards in the afterlife as a moral motive based upon one's own happiness. Paley perhaps provides a more subtle conception of a Christian utilitarianism in his definition of virtue: "the doing good to mankind, in obedience to the will of God, and for the sake of everlasting happiness." (p. 21) Moral behavior is to act in accordance with God's will—and we do it for the sake of happiness.

There are only three secular utilitarians included, but they are much better known: Bentham, James Mill, and his son, John Stuart Mill. Their selections make up half of the book. Three selections from Bentham are presented, including his noted criticism of the Church of England. But Bentham did not merely criticize organized religion, and this fact is well demonstrated in the second Bentham selection, *Analysis of the Influence of Natural Religion on the Temporal Happiness of Mankind* in which he clearly claims that religion of any sort, not only organized institutionalized religion, is not only useless to happiness, but harmful to it. The third selection of Bentham, in which he provides a critique of all of Paul's accounts of miracles entitled *Not Paul, But Jesus*, had not been published since 1823.

James Mill was a close friend of Bentham's, and his son John grew up in a household where Bentham was a regular fixture. John Mill had strong criticisms for the Church of England as well. John Stuart Mill says in his *Autobiography* that his father had an "aversion" to religion and saw it not merely as a result of "mere mental delusion" but as "a great moral evil." Speaking of priests he says, "Have not those who were interested in the work got men to submit to whatever was most repugnant to their nature and feelings? to fall in love with propositions incredible? to practise tiresome, and endless, and often painful tricks, in supposed service of the

Deity, which sink the performers of them to the level of monkeys?" (p. 457)

John Stuart Mill is often remembered for claiming that his utilitarianism is indeed not a "godless" doctrine, and so it may seem strange for him to be stuck in the secular section of the book. The very important J.S. Mill selection presented in Crimmins' book is entitled "The Utility of Religion." Here Mill provides us with arguments that the demise of intellectual respectability for religious belief is of no great concern for ethics, since most of the religious dogmas are unnecessary for the happiness of mankind. In fact, Mill says that there is an evil consequence of claiming morality has supernatural origins—namely, that this closes any discussion regarding the efficacy of particular moral beliefs. Mill goes on to argue that immortality is not necessary for moral motivation, and that nurturing the noble sentiments within us is enough to motivate us towards ethical behavior.

I make only two critical suggestions. First, I wish Crimmins would have included Bentham's last work, a pamphlet about the uses of auto-icons (dead corpses) for the public benefit (Crimmins does mention this work on page 263). I do realize that there is still some question about the actual authorship of this text, but as Crimmins admits, there is some debate about the selection he included on Paul. The pamphlet provides an interesting glimpse into Bentham, since he suggests ways of using corpses to provide afterlife motivation despite the impossibility of immortality.

I also wish that some of J.S. Mill's more positive comments about the social function of religion would have made it into this book. J.S. Mill was taken with Auguste Comte's idea of a secular religion, and wrote about the usefulness of a secular religion in his long essay *Auguste Comte and Positivism*. Mill says of Comte's book, "I think it has superabundantly shown the possibility of giving to the service of humanity, even without the aid of belief in a Providence, both the psychical power and the social efficacy of a religion; making it take hold of human life, and colour all thought, feeling and action . . ." Of course Mill denounced Comte as Comte's thinking devolved into a rigid and bizarre set of rules later in life. We cannot say that Mill was certainly an atheist, although his critical views of traditional Christianity are clear in *Nature* and his *Whewell On Moral Philosophy*. Mill claims in his lengthier essay *Theism* (1868-70) that skepticism (agnosticism), not atheism nor belief, was the best approach to take. In his essay on Coleridge Mill also applauded Coleridge's attempt to bring religion and philosophy together. Religion can, according to Mill, help nurture and inspire the noble sentiments in us which in turn provide motivation for moral behavior. Mill certainly dislikes religion which motivates through threats, but appreciates the role religion can play in motivating social sympathies. My point is simply this: Mill supported the instrumental role which religion can play in fostering social sympathy. Mill was essentially interested in religion—particularly Protestant Christianity's power to help mold social sentiments. These sentiments of Mill for religion are mentioned in Crimmins' own essay, although Mill's texts which demonstrate this positive view of religion aren't provided. Fortunately, they are all in volume X of Mill's *Collected Works*.

I know of very few confessing Christian utilitarians. But perhaps a Christian utilitarianism could be developed which might incorporate ele-

ments of reformed or Aristotelian thinking in this sense: we might say in fact that utilitarianism can only work adequately when it is employed by a properly-functioning human being. A Christian utilitarian need only say that the principle of utility is the principle by which she identifies the good, but need not accept a metaethical claim that the good is good *because* it brings pleasure. I think this is in accordance with Mill's own view. So perhaps there is still some opportunity for cooperation and hybridization between Millian and Christian thought. It's not that pleasure is the causal factor of goodness, but rather, that pleasure is the constant coincidental along with goodness. So aim for pleasure, and you will get goodness, *so long as* you are properly functioning (and this is why for Mill, as for Christians and Aristotelians, proper training and habituation is so important).

Fundamentally, as Mill said in *Utilitarianism*, Christians do believe that God is working to bring about the greatest happiness possible for the most, or at least that that is what God wants. The idea that God uses apparent evil for greater good, and that we see only through a mirror dimly are Christian concepts which indicate a hope that ultimately, despite our limited capacities, God is working to bring about a best possible state of affairs out of the apparent pain of our world. This tendency, at least, seems very much in line with a utilitarian optimism, and a coinciding view that happiness and morality coincide.

Overall, Crimmin's book is a great resource for those interested in the utilitarians of the 17th and 18th century, and it is essential reading for anyone seriously interested in the possibility of a religious utilitarianism. He has done us a great service in making it available, and providing his always insightful essays.

NOTES

1. J.S. Mill, *Utilitarianism*, Edited by Roger Crisp (New York: Oxford, 1998) 3.10.65, 79.

Natural and Divine Law: Reclaiming the Tradition for Christian Ethics, by Jean Porter. Eerdmans Press, 1999, 340 pages. Paper \$28.00.

DAVID C. WILLIAMS, Bethel College

Jean Porter characterizes her overall project in *Natural and Divine Law: Reclaiming the Tradition for Christian Ethics* as "constructive as well as historical" (p. 16). The latter project reconstructs the moral arguments of 12th century scholasticism, while the former attempts to take these arguments and bring them to bear on contemporary ethical issues. The justification for undertaking such a project is, according to Porter, that contemporary natural law ethics have come to be associated with the "purely rational and non-theological status of the natural law" (p. 16) leaving natural law insufficiently grounded in a distinctively Christian world view. In order to challenge this dominant perspective Porter claims that "medieval natural