Miscellaneous Critical Comments on The Logic of Perfection

Hartshorne speaks here, variously, of different "aspect or kinds of existence"; of different "forms of existence"; and of different "levels of existence"—all of these phrases presumably meaning more or less the same thing. He also speaks, confusingly enough, of two forms of "divine actuality": "a concrete form," and "another form . . . which . . . is abstract" (63 f.).

What leads to "giving the theistic case away" is the "reduction of all existential statements to a single modality, whether they be partly, wholly, or not at all exclusive of possitive possibilities" (cf. 89 f.).

What Anselm discovered is that "perfect" must refer either to more than a logical possibility or to even less (cf. 95).

"Nothing is real but individuals—on the human level, conscious individuals" (122).—There would be two obvious difficulties if this statement, just as it is, were true: (1) abstracts/possibilities could not be real; and (2) consciousness could not be the "cosmic (or universal) variable" that Hartshorne implies it is whenever he speaks (as he never ceases to do!) about the "consciousness" of God, and so on. I take it that what he means to say is not simply "real," but "concretely real," or "actual."

Hartshorne rightly recognizes that theism can hardly be the key to the world's beauty—to facts as well as values—if it itself is "[a]n ugly, illogical mess, which is what many theists as well as atheists see in the views of various other theists" (129).

"Anselm's Principle" is "the necessity [or impossibility] of the divine existence." Any language whose implicit or explicit rules validate this principle may be termed pious in principle. On the contrary, any language that treats all existence as contingent is impious in principle. There can be no "religiously neutral language" except through vagueness about "the rules of existential assertion" (131).

The precise meaning of "necessary" is "common to all possibilities." What is common, not to all, but to most, possibilities is "probable" (173 f.).

"[A]part from spatio-temporal structure or behavior, and modes of experience and feeling, there is nothing positive with which we can be acquainted whereby phenomena may be explained" (212).—This, of course, is false if Hartshorne is correct that there are "formal," even "purely formal," as well as "material" predicates, and that not all formal/purely formal predicates are negative (cf., e.g., 134 f.). Nor am I in the least disagreeing with his claim that "any concept, to have meaning, must somehow be related to experience" (100). The issue is only *how* a concept is related to experience: by *generalizing* some experience, or by *analyzing* it.

"How can cells cause me to experience a certain quality, save by themselves having this quality, which becomes mine as they become immediate content of my experience?" (228).—My answer to this rhetorical question is straightforward: "Cells can cause me to experience a certain quality by themselves being or having something that becomes that quality for me as they become immediate content of my experience."

"Where, then, is security to be found? My answer is the old one: security is found more in principles than in conditions. It consists, not in the absence of

danger or in banishing the unsettled status of the future, but in the ideas and ideals whereby danger and the ambiguities of the future can be faced with courage and with joy" (239).—No! Security is no more to be found in "ideas and ideals," or in metaphysical and moral "principles," than in scientific knowledge and the technology it makes possible; security is to be found only in the *reality* whose meaning for us necessarily implies valid metaphysical and moral principles. This is clearly yet another place where Hartshorne's rationalism betrays him into precisely the wrong answer.

"[T]o be a fact, and to be known to one who also knows all other facts, are but two aspects of the same thing" (296)—No! To be a fact and to be included in a fact that also includes all other facts are but two aspects of the same thing.