

A COMPANION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT. By John E. Steinmueller, S.T.D., S.S.L. and Kathryn Sullivan, R.S.C.J., Ph.D. New York: Wagner Publishing Co., 1946. Pp. 406. \$4.50.

In contrast with Father Steinmueller's earlier three-volume *A Companion to Scripture Studies*, but in harmony with the authors' *A Companion to the New Testament*, this volume is concerned mainly with the contents of the sacred books. An introductory chapter disposes of the usual topics of general introduction, and after a chapter on the contribution to Old Testament lore made by archaeology, five chapters tell the history as presented in the Bible from Genesis to Machabees with additional information bringing the account down to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. After some general remarks on the work of the prophets there is a detailed treatment of the messianic prophecies arranged under two main headings, the messianic kingdom and the Messiah, the second being subdivided into six sections ranging from the origin of the Messiah to His exaltation. Hebrew poetry is then illustrated with copious examples of its varied forms and figurative expressions. A separate chapter is devoted to Job and the problem of suffering. A discussion of wisdom in the Old Testament books forms the final chapter of the main body of the work. There follow a summary of the contents of each book, lists of principal periods and dates, and a seven-page bibliography divided according to the chapters of the book.

A rich store of biblical information is here placed at the call of the reader, and it is neatly and clearly arranged so that he can readily find needed guidance for most of the ordinary problems of the Old Testament. In disputed matters probable solutions are offered, and of course that leaves an opening for disagreement by those holding other views, but the authors forestall criticism by making it clear that the solutions they offer in such cases are based, not on certainties or on agreement among Catholic scholars, but merely on a balancing of probabilities. A pioneer work of this kind must be pardoned for falling short of perfection; among its shortcomings may be listed wearying repetitions, overloading with details, condensations degenerating into dry phrasing, and frequent vagueness in divisions and transitions and in the use of pronouns and temporal expressions. It is strange to find the last two chapters of Daniel described as resembling "apocryphal works in content and form" (p. 368).

Such defects are minor, and this *Companion* is well fitted to carry out the authors' purpose of promoting intelligent appreciation of the Old Testament. The authors deserve high praise for this notable contribution to the work

of spreading interest in God's written word and in His Incarnate Word who is the center of all the sacred writings.

*St. Mary of the Lake*

WILLIAM A. DOWD, S.J.

THE DISTINCTIVE IDEAS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. By Norman H. Snaith, M.A. (Oxon.). Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1946. Pp. 251. \$2.75.

In a considerable number of non-Catholic books and periodicals there has been evidenced in recent years a refreshing revival of interest in the theological treatment of the Old Testament. While this movement has not lacked critics among those who adhere to the now classical historical and literary criticism associated with the name of Wellhausen, the theology of the Old Testament seems to promise a vigorous renewal. The chief reason for this movement, already proposed by other authors, is repeated by Mr. Snaith in the present volume; it is the religious bankruptcy of the classical approach to the Old Testament, the futility of scientific studies which have issued in nothing better than a very questionable reconstruction of Hebrew history and religion according to the principles of comparative religion as proposed by Tylor and Frazer. For Mr. Snaith this is rationalism, and he thinks it is best met by a study of the distinctive ideas of the Old Testament, those which are peculiar to itself and not found in other religions.

Mr. Snaith, a Methodist clergyman, neither conceals nor apologizes for his Evangelical beliefs. For him, the Bible is the Word of God, and the great doctrine of salvation by faith alone is the central doctrine of the Bible. But it would be an error to conclude that Mr. Snaith is a fundamentalist in the ordinary unpleasant sense of the word. He is well acquainted with the scientific work on the Bible which has been done in recent times and uses it well. He is a fundamentalist in his assertion that merely historical and literary criticism of the Bible is barren without theology, and with such fundamentalism we have no controversy.

Mr. Snaith has another and more original reason for insisting on the distinctive ideas of the Old Testament. Traditional Christianity, he says, has attempted a synthesis of Greek and Hebrew thought which is impossible. Greek thought looks to man, Hebrew thought to God. To interpret the New Testament by Plato and Aristotle rather than by the Old Testament is to misinterpret it. And if the Church has been divinely guided in thus yielding to Greek ideas, "then let us cease to talk of the Bible as the Word of God." Here is a challenge without equivocation. It is impossible in a

review to discuss Mr. Snaith's thesis of the irreconcilability of Greek and Hebrew thought, especially since his own presentation is brief. Conceding, however, that the intellectual and moral atmosphere of the Old Testament is worlds removed from that of Greek culture, we must point out that difference does not involve essential contradiction. Nothing is irreconcilable with truth except falsehood. Neither the Old Testament nor Greek philosophy can stand by itself as a system of life and thought. But we may notice that his criticism is valid to this extent, that New Testament exegesis and theology which builds upon Greek metaphysics and ethics to the neglect of the Old Testament is certain to be faulty. The New Testament—and we may as well say Catholic Christianity—grows from the Law and the Prophets, not from Plato and Aristotle.

The distinctive ideas of the Old Testament, according to Mr. Snaith, are the distinctive ideas of God as He reveals Himself in the Old Testament. These distinctive ideas Mr. Snaith finds to be holiness, righteousness, salvation, covenant-love, election-love, and spirit; these give Mr. Snaith as many distinct chapters. We cannot deny any one of these a place in the book, although we may wonder whether the catalogue is complete. In each chapter Mr. Snaith begins with an etymological explanation of the root meaning of the word, followed by a fairly complete exposition of its biblical use, from which he draws his conclusions about the distinctive idea which the word conveys. The chapters are not equally well done. The chapter on holiness gives too much space to etymology and primitive ideas of holiness. The treatment of righteousness objects—wisely, we think—to the prevailing emphasis on the ethical character of the eighth-century prophets. "Primarily, they were religious prophets; only secondarily were they ethical teachers." But the treatment of righteousness precisely as a *divine* attribute is somewhat unsatisfactory, although in many ways this is the best chapter in the book. In almost every chapter there is some weakness in synthesis, a greater or lesser failure to weld into unity the abundant citations which Mr. Snaith gives.

The final chapter deals with the distinctive ideas of the Old Testament as they appear in the New Testament. This is a frankly theological and controversial exposition. The distinctive ideas of the Old Testament converge in Evangelical doctrine. "The true development of the Pauline theology is to be found in Luther and John Wesley. . . . This is Scriptural Christianity. It comprises what is distinctive in the Bible." St. Paul teaches no righteousness, either "imparted" or "imputed." Salvation is by faith alone.

The reviewer thinks that Mr. Snaith has not entirely succeeded in his

plan; that the truly distinctive character of the Old Testament ideas which he has selected is not adequately exhibited; and that the reason for this insufficiency is that Mr. Snaith has attempted to synthesize these ideas in Evangelical doctrine. In spite of these defects the book will be useful to those who are interested in Old Testament theology. The book is not merely sectarian, and is free from any controversial acerbity. In details Mr. Snaith does illuminate the ideas he has chosen as distinctive. His scholarship is generally sound, and his treatment clear-cut and original.

*West Baden College*

JOHN L. MCKENZIE, S.J.

**HOW TO READ THE BIBLE.** By Edgar J. Goodspeed. Philadelphia and Toronto: The John C. Winston Co., 1946. Pp. ix + 244. \$2.50.

Professor Goodspeed continues his active retirement by adding one more book to the long list of his publications. The spirit and purpose of this work are set forth in a quotation from Richard Green Moulton which precedes the first chapter: "Whatever other uses men may wish to make of the Bible, our first and paramount duty is to *read it*." And Professor Goodspeed has turned out an admirably inspiring guide-book to that library which is Holy Scripture.

Rightfully he leads the stranger into the Scriptures through the portals of the Gospels; for their interest, value, and simplicity are surpassing, and they prepare the mind for all the other books (ch. 1). Some biographical sections, dealing with the great characters of the Old and New Testaments, and with our Lord, are next introduced (ch. 2). The great biblical masterpieces of eloquence are then considered (ch. 3); this section is especially interesting because II Corinthians, Galatians, Hebrews, and James appear as examples of oratorical composition.

In the section devoted to the historical writings of the Bible (chs. 4 to 7), as throughout this work, Professor Goodspeed follows the reconstructions of the modern critics.

Eight chapters are devoted to the poetry of the sacred books. After a few general remarks, the author presents the fragments of poetry which are scattered throughout the historical books, including the hymns of Luke (ch. 8). He justly allots three chapters to the poetry of the prophets (chs. 9-11). The Psalms and the hymns of Luke are treated under the head of popular religious poetry (ch. 12). Lamentations and dirges are next treated (ch. 13), then didactic (Wisdom) poetry (ch. 14) and finally, as dramatic poetry, Job and the Song of Songs (ch. 15).

Ruth, Jonah, Tobit, Daniel, Esther, Judith, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon,

and the parables are presented as examples of fiction (ch. 16). I Esdras (apocryphal), Maccabees, and Luke-Acts are discussed as "later histories" (ch. 17). There follow treatments of the epistolary literature of the New Testament (ch. 18), the vision-narratives and the apocalyptic sections (ch. 19), passages (especially of the Psalms) of particular devotional value (ch. 20).

The remaining chapters are in the nature of an appendix, giving a brief summary of the background of biblical times (ch. 21), an arrangement of the books according to (critical) chronology, so that the books may be read in that order (ch. 22), and a brief survey of the English translations of the Bible, with their relative merits (ch. 23).

Professor Goodspeed brings to his writing an enthusiasm for the Bible which cannot fail to strike an answering spark in the reader of his book. He tells enough about the background or content of a passage or book by briefly citing passages to stir up in his reader a desire to turn to the Bible itself, and then he suggests what to read. For the time-conscious modern reader he occasionally mentions how long it will take to read the matter he suggests.

As has been indicated, Professor Goodspeed supposes throughout the validity of the modern critical theories on authorship, date, etc. One might be tempted to complain that at least a 'probably' might have been inserted into some of the statements of these theories. Professor Goodspeed would doubtless answer that too many have been kept from penetrating to the religious and literary treasures of the Holy Scriptures by the forest of 'probables' and 'problems' that the unwise have planted in the path of the uninitiated. In a book that seeks to attract new readers to the Bible, brevity and simplicity are necessary. Still, one may say that simplicity can be bought at too great a price. There is one especially surprising direction given to the prospective reader of Isaia: "New light will fall upon the pages of Isaiah if you first read chs. 1 to 12 (excepting 9:1-17 and 11:1-9), as from the days of Isaiah . . ." (p. 79). Professor Goodspeed gives no reason for the suggested omission of these beautiful sections, which contain two Emmanuel prophecies; nor does he elsewhere—so far as the reviewer could find—suggest that they be read.

In conclusion, however, we must say that even those who already know the Bible can gain much inspiration from this book, especially those who may 'be seeking methods of presenting the Bible as literature—religious literature.

GENESIS. By W. H. Griffith Thomas, D.D. Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdman's Publishing Company, 1946. Pp. 507. \$3.50.

The subtitle of this work, "A Devotional Commentary," is an accurate description of its nature; and to non-Catholics, for whom it was written, it will prove a treasury of useful material. The author's treatment of his subject is nowhere technical, though he shows himself well-informed on the multitude of theories and problems which have grown up around the Book of Genesis and all but obscured its content. Unity of authorship is accepted, and the Documentary Hypothesis is rejected as wholly foreign to the Book's obvious unity of design. Historicity is also admitted not only for the book as a whole, but also for its individual sections such as the first three chapters, the Flood narrative, and the like. True, the author attempts to shy away from the notion of historicity as he understands the term, and in a choice among such terms as history, myth, invention, revelation, he inclines toward revelation; in actuality his opinion is in accord with the technical meaning of historicity. On the subject of evolution he admits the possibility of bodily evolution, but holds that the soul is the result of a direct, divine creative act.

From the Catholic viewpoint the chief objection to an otherwise admirable work lies in an occasional theological opinion. The symbol of the rainbow, in the covenant with Noë, is equated with the effects of the sacraments in the New Law; justification is by faith alone; the priesthood, as in the case of Melchisedek, is watered out to practically nothing; righteousness is a matter of imputation; sin is discovered where no sin seems to be, and runs head and head with faith as one of the two constantly recurring ideas in the book. The style throughout is simple, pleasing, flowing; and without being too pietistic, a spirit of calm piety, confidence in God, pervades the entire work.

*Woodstock College*

F. X. PEIRCE, S. J.

THE APOSTLE JOHN. By W. H. Griffith Thomas, D.D. Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdman's Publishing Company, 1946. Pp. 372. \$2.50.

This devotional commentary on the writing of St. John was prepared several years ago by Dr. Thomas, who is described on the jacket as "one of the great English divines of the last fifty years" and "in America and Canada" "recognized as a great teacher, lecturer and preacher." When it first appeared it evidently enjoyed such popularity that a reprint was considered necessary, and this the Wm. B. Eerdman's Publishing Co. has undertaken to prepare, apparently without any changes in the text.

The work, which is really in the form of an outline, was intended for

preachers and teachers, and not for either the ordinary man-in-the-street, who would be mildly irritated by the almost mathematical preciseness of its divisions, subdivisions, and further subdivisions, or the scientific student of the New Testament, who would be disappointed at its superficial approach.

Almost one-fourth of the book is given to the presentation of the life of St. John, in which the reverence of Dr. Thomas is manifest in every paragraph. Over one hundred pages are devoted to the Gospel, over one hundred more to the Epistles and a scanty twenty-three to the Book of Revelation.

The author is generally content to offer his interpretation of the Johannine texts as found in the English Bible, only seldom going back to the Greek. This is in keeping with his purpose of giving a popular, devotional exegesis for spiritual meditation and teaching. His approach is reverent and inspiring, clearly that of a man who loved Christ and the Book in which He is portrayed.

Dr. Thomas considers the Fourth Gospel historical; he implies that it was written by John himself, as also the three Epistles and Revelation. Jesus is truly the Son of God and actually rose from the dead. The Bread of Life in John 6 and at the Last Supper is not Christ's Body but a symbol only. The Kingdom of God is not the Church but "is far wider and means God's rule over the whole universe." He is opposed to Russellism, Christian Science, Theosophy, and Romanism. "Many great, honored" scholars believe that the papacy is described in Rev. 17 and 18. Mary probably was not affected by the miracle at Cana; moreover, she had had other sons. The conferring of the power to forgive sins on Easter Sunday is not described, and evidently the author does not believe in apostolic succession. In the limited bibliography no Catholic books are listed.

Sincere preacher of Christ though he was, Dr. Thomas could not have come into frequent contact with the Catholic Church or with the vast literature produced by her scholars on John.

*St. John's Seminary*  
*Brighton, Mass.*

MATTHEW P. STAPLETON.

ST. PAUL, APOSTLE AND MARTYR. By Iginio Giordani. Translated by Mother Clelia Maranzana and Mother Mary Paula Williamson. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1946. Pp. xviii + 286. \$2.50.

The author states in the introductory note: "Because it was our intention to produce a work easily read and enjoyable, recreational in the Pauline sense, there has been no attempt at a show of profound erudition; nevertheless, it has taken much serious research to produce it. Plenty of it."

The narrative of St. Paul's apostolic labors follows closely the biographical data of the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles, and a digest of the principal teachings contained in each Epistle is inserted in the story at the proper place. The style is very condensed and abrupt. The sentences are mostly short and packed with ideas, containing few superfluous words. There are many allusions to first-century conditions, to Jewish and Hellenistic customs, that call for a lengthier explanation than is given in the book. Consequently, I fear that the average reader will not find the book easy to read, and that it would prove more enjoyable to him if he had some explanatory notes to clear up points of erudition with which he is not familiar.

There are a number of trifling inaccuracies to be found in almost every part of the book. The author does not tell us when he thinks St. Paul was born, but usually biblical chronologists identify the year with the beginning of the Christian era. If that date is accepted, then Caiphas was not yet high priest, nor Pilate the procurator of Judea when Paul came to Jerusalem at the age of twelve, as is stated on page 2. It is also not accurate to say that the high priest lived in the Temple, or that the Temple and Antonia stood facing each other, or that they stood high above all the rest of Jerusalem. These are minor details, it is true, but similar trifling misstatements occur elsewhere, which could be cleared up by a footnote or two.

The book, however, has its good qualities. The last two chapters, on Paul's character and the works of St. Paul, are admirably done. The great-hearted Apostle was both intensely human and deeply spiritual. His was a strong, determined character that could melt down to tenderest affection. His frankness in speaking out straight and emphatically against misconduct and wrong-thinking was counterbalanced by a delicate consideration for the feelings of others. He could sympathize with every form of suffering and distress; but he had no use for mediocrity, compromise, or tampering with the truth. His heart was so aflame with love for Christ that his one endeavor was to win all men to Christ. "Having given himself to Christ," says the author, "he sees only the glory of Christ: Christ and souls."

The deep and lasting influence of St. Paul on Christian theology is clearly pointed out in the final chapter of the book. The Apostle of the Gentiles might justly claim the title "First Christian Theologian," because every branch of theology owes a debt to him—not only dogmatic, but moral, pastoral, and ascetical theology as well. His early training eminently fitted him to organize, develop and apply in a practical way the truths which Christ had taught. He saw more clearly than the other Apostles the relation between the new truths and the old. His writings have been the



written source of so many of our outstanding articles of faith that St. John Chrysostom says: "Paul's Epistles are mines and wells: mines, because they provide riches far more precious than gold; wells, because they never fail—the more you draw from them, the more they give out." The author indicates briefly the chief doctrinal and social teachings advocated by St. Paul.

Because St. Paul's relations with Seneca are so often inferred from certain superficial similarities in thought and wording, the author devotes an entire chapter to a thorough investigation of this point. Four leading Stoic principles are contrasted with Paul's doctrine, to prove that Seneca and his great Christian contemporary had little in common. Hence quotations from the Stoic philosopher that have a decidedly Christian ring must be carefully examined in their context, from which it will appear that the fundamental question is one of semantics. After each one has defined his terms, they stand poles apart on basic principles.

*St. Mary's College*

HENRY WILLMERING, S.J.

REVELATION IN JEWISH WISDOM LITERATURE. By J. Coert Rylaardsdam. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946. Pp. x + 128. \$3.00.

This is a well written book, obviously the product of much patient research, study, and reflection. It deserves attention for two reasons: it contains much valuable material and it presents an interesting development of Protestant theology. Some of the opinions of the author on Ecclesiastes and Job must be discounted, and the thesis of the book is untenable. There can be no doubt that the attempt to prove this thesis has subconsciously swayed the author's interpretation of the evidence, even though it has not led him to a deliberate distortion of the facts.

In agreement with the great leaders of Protestantism, the author thinks that the Divine Spirit should be the final norm for the human soul in the search of truth (p. 121). In his opinion the early Christians were guided in their apprehension of the truth by this Spirit and not by a clearly defined book or institution. They tested the validity of their own experiences of the Spirit by the consciousness of the Christian fellowship as a whole.

This influence of the Spirit is conceived as creative—not merely as leading to the correct understanding of truth already revealed but as productive of new truth. Christians, unfortunately, have not recognized that the ultimate standard of thought and action is this immediacy of individual and group experience of the Spirit. After each outburst of the Spirit, such as manifested itself in Luther, Fox, and Wesley, they have returned to an institution

with its system or to the literal book and the officially accepted statements about it. The Church may have accepted some of the new truths brought to light by these eruptive streams of the Spirit, but on the whole her role has been repressive; she seeks to prevent the Spirit from stirring up the souls of men and teaches that the Bible is the final statement of revelation, making further thought superfluous.

The author is naturally troubled by the problem arising from the difficulty of diagnosing the objective value of the individual's experience of the Spirit. After the manner of his Protestant forebears, he believes that this difficulty can be solved by subjecting the individual's experiences to a group examination. He admits that it will be difficult to reach a definitive result by this method; the masses seldom know that spiritual things must be spiritually discerned. Nevertheless, he clings to his subjective standard, regardless of the fact that this subjectivism has made Protestantism a mass of discordant opinions.

This concept of the role of the Spirit as a progressive source of revelation dominates the author's exposition of Hebrew Wisdom, to which the major portion of the book is devoted. Using the Books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, IV Maccabees, and the Pirke Aboth as his sources, the author endeavors to show that the Hebrew sages began searching for wisdom merely through human means. Then in the days of Jesus Ben Sira, wisdom was identified with the study of the Law; this is supposed to have crippled or eliminated the element of personal experience which guided the search for wisdom in its first phase. Finally, came the Book of Wisdom, which equated wisdom not only with the Law but with the Divine Spirit, thus bestowing upon wisdom a new lease of life as an agency of revelation. This notion of a creative Spirit then passed over to the Christian Church. Much that the author says in this book is true but much also is interpreted in the light of a preconceived thesis.

*St. Mary's College*

MICHAEL J. GRUENTHANER, S.J.

THE EPISTLES OF ST. CLEMENT OF ROME AND ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH. Translated and annotated by James A. Kleist, S.J., Ph.D. Ancient Christian Writers: I. Westminster, Md.: The Newman Bookshop, 1946. Pp. ix + 162. \$2.50.

A much needed and long desired series opens with this volume. Hitherto most of the texts available for Catholics who wished to read the Fathers in English had been made by non-Catholics and had to be used with caution. The number of translations was limited and the versions stood much in need of revision.

The new enterprise appropriately begins with the works of two of the Apostolic Fathers. In a short general introduction, the editors of the series state the nature of the translation which they present: "Since in any good translation of patristic literature philological precision must go hand in hand with theological understanding, the new collection sets itself the task of meeting both requirements." The editors do not disguise the difficulty, but refuse to concede the impossibility, of realizing such qualities.

To these aims the present translation measures up in a high degree. The task of casting these writers, especially Ignatius, into clear and readable English was not an easy one. The version is idiomatic, flowing, and spirited; it conveys in a marked degree the feel both of the judicious Clement and of the ardent Ignatius.

In a short introduction to the Epistles of each of the two writers, the translator sketches briefly their character and significance, the occasion and nature of their work, and the characteristics of their style. The notes to the translation are critical, philological, doctrinal, and historical. There is a carefully made alphabetical index. The format and typographical set-up are excellent. If there is anything we would criticize, it is that the notes are not placed on the same page with the text they accompany. All in all, Father Kleist has set a high standard for others to aim at, both in his translation and in his notes.

*St. Mary's Collège*

AUGUSTIN C. WAND, S.J.

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY. Translated by Raphael Collins, B.A. Introduction by Joseph B. Collins, S.S., D.D., Ph.D. Westminster, Md.: The Newman Bookshop, 1946. Pp. xiv + 352. \$4.00.

This volume presents a translation of the third Turin edition of the Roman Martyrology and should find a hearty welcome, especially in communities where the daily custom of public reading of the martyrology is in use. The last American edition appeared in 1907; since, two Popes, Pius X in 1913 and Benedict XV in 1922, have approved new editions embodying new material. The present work, therefore, satisfies a real need.

In the Turin edition there is a rather lengthy introduction containing two important documents: the Apostolic Letter of Benedict XIV written in 1748, which explains the changes made in the Roman Martyrology under his authority; and Baronius' treatise *De Martyrologio Romano*, a truly classic discussion of the subject. A translation of these documents would have been a valuable service to English readers, but would have taken up some one hundred pages and seems to have been considered beyond the scope

of the volume in hand. Father Joseph Collins has contributed a brief introduction, in which the history of the Roman Martyrology is outlined.

The translation adheres closely to the text of the Turin edition. Occasionally there are omissions of descriptive notices. Those accustomed to the former English texts will find that the order of the entries for each day is much changed, and of course the feasts of saints and blessed who have been elevated to the altar in recent years are all mentioned in their proper places. Some may object to the translating of "Gallia" as "France" in describing events which occurred centuries before that name came to be used. Among the entries for March 24, the reader may be somewhat jolted to learn that a number of beheadings took place "under the *idiot* Urban." Just how the translator derived this extraordinary meaning from "sub Urbano Praeside" is a little difficult to fathom. But on the whole the translation is carefully made and mistakes are rare.

Throughout the volume an effort is made to present in modern English dress those familiar descriptive and historical passages which have long been heard by thousands of American clerics and religious in a form that cried out for revision. Father Collins deserves high commendation for the excellent way he has performed an exacting, and none too exciting, task.

*Weston College*

F. O. CORCORAN, S.J.

LA DOCTRINE TRINITAIRE DE S. HILAIRE DE POITIERS. By Pierre Smulders, S.J. Romae: Apud Aedes Universitatis Gregorianae, 1944. Pp. 300.

In the year 350, four years before the birth of St. Augustine, Hilary, now a mature man, was made Bishop of Poitiers. From his previous marriage he had a daughter to whom later he addressed an exhortation on virginity. It is generally presumed that he was a convert. At all events, it was as a man fully developed intellectually that he began his ecclesiastical career.

Only after assuming his bishopric did he learn of the definition of Nicea and of the controversy surging around *homooousios*. During these calm years, before engaging in the Arian dispute, St. Hilary wrote his *Commentary on St. Matthew*. As Père Smulders points out (p. 38), the great value of this work lies in its presenting the Trinitarian doctrine as it was held in the West before the invasion of Arianism and Greek theology.

Before his exile to Phrygia in 356, Hilary showed the bishops assembled at Béziers that the Arian controversy was not merely a question of whether one should support Athanasius or not; rather, it involved the very faith of Nicea itself. Some months after Béziers, Hilary published his *Liber historicus*, containing documents from the Councils of Rome (341) and

Sardica (343). These, together with Hilary's annotations, were spread abroad throughout Gaul and Spain. Extant only in fragments, the *Liber historicus* is precious today as a source for post-Nicene Arianism.

During his four-year exile, Hilary began and finished *De Trinitate*. Written according to a pre-conceived schema—a unique case in the whole of patristic literature, according to Père Smulders (p. 41)—it presents in twelve books the first synthesis of the doctrine on God. In this sense, Hilary is truly the founder of systematic theology in the West. And, despite the troublous period during which the work was written, on its every page there is complete serenity.

In the first quarter of his book, Père Smulders traces historically the rise and fall of Arianism after Nicea. He maintains that up to the "Blasphemy of Sirmium" (357) the quarrel between East and West (with the exception of extremists on both sides) was not precisely doctrinal, but political and personal, in short, *pro* or *contra* St. Athanasius. At Sirmium both *homooousios* and *homoiousios* were rejected, and a formula of faith was drawn up which Arius himself could have supported *in toto*. From now on, the issue was for or against Arianism.

It was immediately after this (358) that a group of bishops, gathered together at Ancyra under Basil, formulated the "Exposition of the Faith of Ancyra." In their desire to avoid every semblance of Sabellianism, they rejected, not only *tautousios*, but also *homooousios*, because, in their opinion, both terms seemed to signify the identity of Father and Son. A copy of their formula was sent to Constantius at Sirmium. Ancyra was the occasion for Hilary's writing his *De synodis* (winter of 358–359), addressed to all the bishops, clergy, and faithful of Gaul. His sole object in this work was the reconciliation of the faithful Eastern bishops with his own fellow bishops of the West. Hence, in anything that did not directly regard the deposit of faith, Hilary omitted his own theological explanations and had as his goal only to show that the bishops at Ancyra did not hold fundamentally false doctrines. This accounts for the great differences between *De synodis* and the theological analyses of *De Trinitate* of similar questions.

Père Smulders concludes his historical treatment, leaving the reader convinced that reconciliation of East with West was, in no small way, the work of St. Hilary of Poitiers.

The author then gives a brief synopsis of the *Commentary on St. Matthew*. The next chapter (pp. 91–106) presents the doctrine of the heretics (Arius and Sabellius) as Hilary understood it. This synopsis, garnered from all of Hilary's works, shows the common foundation of the heretics to be pure rationalism. Incidentally, very many of the stock objections contained in present-day manuals *De Verbo* and *De Trinitate* were already gathered

1600 years ago by the Bishop of Poitiers. And it must be admitted that his solutions are just as sound and much more interesting. The second section of the book concludes with a chapter on the faith of the Church, again based on all of Hilary's writings.

The remainder of the book is devoted to the theology of the Blessed Trinity (and Incarnation) as such. The treatment of the doctrine of the Old Testament may seem somewhat overdone—if not naive—to modern theologians. But, even from the exegetical point of view, it is well worth study.

Perhaps, the best chapters are the fifth and sixth: "La naissance divine" and "Le propre du Fils de Dieu." They will repay serious study by the student of the Blessed Trinity and the Incarnation. In his beautiful treatment of the Incarnate Word, Hilary did not (in the eyes of Père Smulders) safeguard the distinction of natures perfectly in every respect (p. 205 f.).

Up to this point, the doctrine of Hilary on the unity of the divine nature has been outlined. The next three chapters explain his teaching on the distinction of Persons. Finally, there follow chapters on the Holy Spirit and on the terminology of St. Hilary, and then general conclusions.

In the space allowed here, it is quite impossible to single out all the fine qualities of this book, which we highly recommend. Nevertheless, it is regrettable that such truly worthwhile content is presented in such an unworthy format.

One minor comment: After quoting a passage from the *Commentary on Saint Matthew*, the author says: "Là encore Hilaire distingue un double état du Verbe: celui qu'il avait dans le Père et celui qu'il avait par sa naissance en procédant de Lui. L'éternité du Fils consiste en ce qu'il est éternel par celui qui l'a engendré, c'est-à-dire du fait que lui a été communiquée la nature éternelle du Père. Ainsi donc, même ici, le Fils ne semble pas éternel par sa propre personnalité, mais parce que le Père lui a donné une nature qui, en lui-même, est éternelle" (p. 79).

Père Smulders argues that St. Hilary held some kind of progression in divine generation and begetting. If one compares the doctrine of St. Hilary with that of St. Thomas in *De Potentia* (q.10, a.3 c.; q.8, a.3 c., and especially *ibid.* ad 7m) and *In I Sent.* (d.18, q.1, a.4, sol.), one will see that the two Doctors do not disagree on this point. As the author himself admits (p. 87), it can at most be said of Hilary that in this respect he did not always find the most perfect expression of his faith. However that may be, there is no real difference between him and St. Thomas in this particular point.

AUX SOURCES DE LA SPIRITUALITÉ DE GUILLAUME DE SAINT-THIERRY. By Dom J.-M. Déchanet O.S.B. Bruges: Beyaert, 1940. Pp. xii + 87.

GUILLAUME DE SAINT-THIERRY: L'HOMME ET SON OEUVRE. By Dom J.-M. Déchanet, O.S.B. Bruges: Beyaert, 1942. Pp. xiv + 214.

Thirty years ago William of Saint-Thierry and his doctrine were almost unknown in theological circles. Historians of theology generally confused some of his works with those of his more prominent contemporary, St. Bernard of Clairvaux, and then with a few grudging lines dismissed him as a rigidly conservative Augustinian theologian of the pre-Scholastic period. From what we now know of him and his thought, that label is very close to being a libel.

As early as 1908, Poncelet had called attention to this "man of God"; Rousselot had pointed to him as "un des docteurs classiques de l'amour au XII<sup>e</sup> siècle"; and a little later Grabmann was impressed with the modernity of his views on faith. But it was not until the 'twenties that real interest began to be shown in this hitherto neglected theologian. In their limited studies, A. Adam, Wilmart, Le Bail, Shewring, McCann, and Berlière stressed chiefly his holy life and spiritual doctrine. In the 'thirties, Malevez, Davy (not too exactly and solidly), Debouxhtay, Mersch, Maréchal, Ott, de Lubac, Reypens, van Mierlo, and a few others, penetrated somewhat more deeply into his strictly theological thought. Perhaps the best brief synthesis of his spiritual theology made during this time is the sixteen page Appendix V to Gilson's *La théologie mystique de saint Bernard*.

That William of Saint-Thierry had considerable influence on subsequent spiritual theology is now clear. Reypens shows that he directly affected the Flemish school of spirituality—Ruysbroeck, Gerlach Petersen, Jean de Schoonhoven, and Denis the Carthusian; van Mierlo finds his teaching in the writings of the Dutch and Rhenish mystics; and Heerinckx traces it in the new Doctor of the Church, St. Anthony of Padua, in St. Bonaventure, in Bernard of Besse, and above all in David of Augsburg. William's doctrine is, therefore, important and its influence relatively widespread.

What were its sources? Malevez and Gilson had already raised the question and given it a tentative answer, not entirely correct. It remained for Dom Déchanet, to answer it definitively in a slender volume published in 1940. Two years later, in the midst of World War II, he followed up his initial essay with a scholarly study of William's life and works. And there is more to come.

William of Saint-Thierry was born in Liège, probably in 1085, of parents who belonged to the lesser nobility. His early student years were spent at Laon where Anselm, a disciple of the Abbot of Bec, was teaching and where

John Scotus had formerly lectured. There is good reason to believe that he also attended Abelard's classes, at least for a short period. In 1113, along with his younger brother Simon, he took the Benedictine habit at the Abbey Saint-Nicaise, in Reims, where he soon was immersed in the study of the Fathers of the Church, especially of St. Augustine. Six years later, at the age of thirty-four, he was elected Abbot of Saint-Thierry, an abbey situated on an eminence to the northwest of Reims. At the climax of the monastic struggle, Cluny *versus* Cîteaux (1120-1125), William, suggesting the outline, urged Bernard of Clairvaux to write the famous *Apologia* (PL, 182, 895-918) which did so much to clear the atmosphere. His government of the monastery of Saint-Thierry for sixteen years was efficient and fruitful above the ordinary both spiritually and materially.

During these busy years as Abbot, William wrote the following works whose composition dates Dom Déchanet has tried so carefully to fix. Between 1119 and 1122, probably in 1120, he wrote the *De Natura et Dignitate Amoris* (PL, 184, 379-408), a resumé of spiritual conferences on the Benedictine rule given to his monks at Saint-Thierry. In the same year he finished the *De Contemplando Deo* (PL, 184, 365-379), which is a series of soliloquies after the manner of St. Augustine. These two youthful works were well received, but in the thirteenth century were unfortunately inserted among the works of St. Bernard with the titles *Liber Beati Bernardi de Amore* and *Liber Soliloquiorum Sancti Bernardi*. Hence, Bonaventure and others cite them as the work of St. Bernard. In 1128 appeared the *De Sacramento Altaris* (PL, 180, 345-366), one of the first successful attempts at a synthesis of doctrine on the Eucharist. Between 1130 and 1135 William completed, or almost completed, five volumes: *Meditativae Orationes* (PL, 180, 205-248); two compilations *Super Cantica Canticorum*, one from the works of St. Ambrose (PL, 15, 1851-1962), the other from those of St. Gregory the Great (PL, 180, 473-546); and two further compilations from various Fathers of the Church: *De Natura Corporis et Animae* (PL, 180, 695-726) and *Expositio in Epistolam ad Romanos* (PL, 180, 547-694).

William of Saint-Thierry was a man who loved solitude, prayer, and study. His active life as abbot of a large monastery with dependent farms and properties to look after did not leave him much time for the contemplative life, and so he began to cast longing eyes in the direction of the Order of Cîteaux. There was, too, another incentive to join the Cistercians—his regard for Bernard of Clairvaux. As early as 1118 he had paid a visit to St. Bernard, and a most charming, life-time friendship was formed between the two men. William had expressed a desire in 1124 to join Bernard at Clairvaux, but the latter would not hear of it and told his friend to remain in his monastery



and continue to do his duty as abbot. However, eleven years later, in 1135, he resolutely decided to take the white habit of the Cistercians, and since Clairvaux was peremptorily closed to him by Abbot Bernard, he went to the Cistercian monastery at Signy in the diocese of Reims to begin his novitiate. His own monks of Saint-Thierry made a determined effort to fetch him back, but he persisted in his resolve. That very year 1135 he was chosen Abbot of the Signy monastery.

William had now that *pingue otium* for study and prayer, for which he had so ardently longed. He made good use of it. In 1138 he was working on another commentary on the *Canticle of Canticles*, the *Expositio Altera super Cantica Canticorum* (PL, 180, 473–546), in which he seems to be relating his own experience of mystical prayer. He was interrupted in this work by an urgent call to defend the faith against Abelard.

Abelard had been condemned for his *Tractatus de Unitate et Trinitate Divina* in 1121 at the Council of Soissons, at which William had probably assisted. In 1136, after an unhappy interlude, he was again teaching at Mont Sainte Geneviève in Paris and soon published two works, *Introductio ad Theologiam* and *Theologia Christiana*, in which he repeated substantially his previous errors. When these treatises came to William's attention, he sounded the alarm by drawing up a list of thirteen ambiguous propositions with their refutation (*Contra Petrum Abaelardum*, PL, 180, 249–282), which he sent, together with an accompanying letter (PL, 182, 531–533), to St. Bernard and to the Bishop of Chartres. Bernard was able to effect some corrections privately, but Abelard's final condemnation occurred at the Council of Sens in June, 1140, this verdict being confirmed by the Holy See in July of the same year. Abelard submitted, but his too enthusiastic followers continued the mischief.

Questions on the delimitations of faith and reason in theology being now debated in a wider circle of theologians than ever before, it is probable that at this time William published his *Sententiae de Fide*, a marshalled array of pertinent excerpts from the works of Augustine and Boethius. The work is now lost, but seems to have been planned as a calmer continuation of the *Disputatio contra Abaelardum* just mentioned. There followed between 1140 and 1144 the *Speculum Fidei* (PL, 180, 365–398), a notable treatise on the act of faith, and the *Aenigma Fidei* (PL, 180, 398–440) on the mystery of the Trinity, his only work of theology in the strict sense of the word.

Perhaps William of Saint-Thierry's most important and original work is his long *Epistola ad Fratres de Monte-Dei* (PL, 184, 307–354, a poor text), which won him fame in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries as a spiritual master. In 1144 he had paid a protracted visit to the Carthusian monastery

of Mont-Dieu in the diocese of Reims. The monks of this monastery wanted a souvenir of his stay among them and so in 1145 he wrote the famous letter, called the Golden Epistle, which for a long time was attributed to the Carthusian prior Guigues I. It is an inspiring treatise on the religious and solitary life. In the same year 1145, he began—*senex et deficiens*—his *Sancti Bernardi Vita Prima* (PL, 185, 225–268), but did not complete it.

After a short malady, William died at Signy, September 8, 1148, at the age of sixty-three, five years before his good friend, Bernard of Clairvaux. He is venerated as “blessed” in the Cistercian Order and in the diocese of Reims.

William of Saint-Thierry in his capacity both as Benedictine and later as Cistercian abbot, revealed himself a monk of progressive mind. He fearlessly promoted a monastic spirit of high quality, which in many instances really meant reviving the strenuous spirituality of the early monastic founders, yet prudently adapted to the obvious exigencies of the day. In a time of some monastic decadence this was progress of the best sort.

But what of his theology? Was William of Saint-Thierry the narrow reactionary that some would have us believe? In an age of theological advance through rational argument was he the ultra-conservative guardian of the past, the unrelenting critic and condemner of the new? Was he only the bitter enemy of the adventurous Abelard? Did he reject the new wine of dialectic theology just because it had turned sour in a few instances? Was he merely a strait-laced follower of Augustine? In the opinion of those who, like de Regnon, have studied him somewhat superficially, he seemed to be just that. Dom Déchanet rightly disagrees, and he backs up his dissent with telling proof, the result of a thorough study of the man and his works.

Dom Déchanet shows that William was abreast of all the theological discussion of his day and, being keenly interested, wrote on every one of the mooted questions—the Trinity, grace, the Eucharist, faith and reason, charity. Certainly he was the conservative theologian when he fought against the reckless dialectics of Roscelin, Abelard, William of Conches, and Gilbert de la Porrée, but that does not make him the enemy of true theological advance. He was rather the “vigilant sentinel,” the defender of a healthy tradition, against rash innovators who, wittingly or unwittingly, were undermining solid doctrines of the faith. Hence, he was a combative, conservative theologian when conservatism really meant orthodoxy.

But he was also progressive. He was no mere compiler of texts from the Fathers. A deeper study of his patristic argument reveals that in many instances he clarifies and even completes the thought of the Fathers in a

very original way. He had a mind of his own which he never hesitated to use, and hence, as Dom Déchanet believes, was as progressive a theologian as he was a progressive monastic superior. Granted his independent, forceful character, it could not have been otherwise.

William's chief interest was spiritual theology, which Dom Déchanet promises to synthesize in a work ("en préparation" in 1940): *La théologie spirituelle de Guillaume de Saint-Thierry*. Meanwhile he informs us that the chief source of William's "anthropologie mystique" is Gregory of Nyssa, whom William knew mainly through his early translator and interpreter, that erratic genius, Scotus Eriugena. Dom Déchanet disengages William from St. Bernard, and shows that he can stand on his own feet, despite the fact that he owes much to Bernard and also to Augustine, especially as regards terminology. But most of all was he influenced by the Greek Fathers with their sublime doctrine of man's deification, and specifically by St. Gregory of Nyssa and his theory of man as the image of God.

Dom Déchanet has also begun to translate into French and to edit critically the individual works of Abbot William. Of these it seems that the *Epistola ad Fratres de Monte-Dei* and the *Meditativae Orationes* have already appeared in print.

With these volumes Dom Déchanet inaugurates a new series of theological works whose general title is *Bibliothèque médiévale—Spirituels préscolastiques*. The collection is to have three sections: (1) life, works, and doctrine; (2) special studies on particular points of interest; (3) translation and critical edition of texts. It is planned to study and edit the works of little-known pre-Scholastic theologians, e.g., Rupert of Deutz, Hélinand de Froidmont, Isaac de l'Étoile, Gueric d'Igny, and others. Eminent scholars have promised their collaboration.

Dom Déchanet has made a good beginning. Despite a few minor flaws—some discrepancy in dates between the two works, a few inexact references to Migne, some excusable over-enthusiasm regarding a hero who has been treated so cavalierly in the past—the two works at hand show careful scholarship and competency. He has presented a most satisfying study of Abbot William of Saint-Thierry and his spiritual works, which Grabmann calls "Perlen mystischer Innigkeit und Innerlichkeit." If the forthcoming volumes of this welcome collection are as reliable and readable as the first two, real progress will be made toward a better understanding of a hitherto neglected and almost unexplored period of Catholic theology.

TRACTATUS DE LEGIBUS. By Josephus Brys, J.C.D. Brugis: Car. Beyaert, 1942.

In spite of invasion and war, the Belgians have managed to publish books, and from Bruges comes a treatise on law written by the professor of law in the seminary there, Joseph Brys, J.C.D. The book was written especially for the use of his students, and is about the size of the treatise on law found in such manuals as Noldin, Merkelbach, Prummer, and Vermeersch. The author follows van den Berghe, a former professor and rector of the seminary, whose pre-Code treatise now needs complete revision.

The book has the usual divisions into sections on law in general; eternal and natural law; positive, divine, and ecclesiastical law. It ends with a discussion of precepts issued by power of jurisdiction and by dominative power, and this section is somewhat longer and more thorough than is usually found in manuals. \*

The trend of the author's teaching may be indicated by his stand on some of the controversial issues in his subject: the Church cannot impose purely internal acts, either by legislative or by dominative power; penal laws give rise to the moral obligation to pay the legally imposed penalty; baptized non-Catholics are bound by Church laws, even those which concern individual sanctification; excommunicated persons are not obliged to hear Mass on Sundays, since they are prohibited by canon 2259, §2; authority to dispense does not contain authority to commute; *peregrini* are not subjects of the ordinary's power to dispense, unless power over them is expressly granted; and contrary custom does not abrogate a law unless there is at least an implicit intention to attain this effect.

Four sizes of type, the use of bold face and italics, and well marked divisions and subdivisions set off the logical development of the articles and make it easy to find any particular point in the exposition. A good alphabetical index also facilitates the use of the book.

The book makes no pretense of new contributions to moral theology or canon law. It is well adapted to its purpose as a manual for theological students, but would be improved by more frequent illustrative cases. It will be found useful to priests as a quick reference work for all ordinary questions of laws.

*Alma College*

H. R. WERTS, S.J.

LES EXERCICES PRATIQUES DU "SÉMINAIRE" EN THEOLOGIE. 3<sup>e</sup> édit. By J. de Ghellinck, S.J. Paris: Desclée-DeBrouwer, 1945. Pp. xx + 278.

The present edition of Father de Ghellinck's classic work, enlarged and enriched by fourteen additional years of experience in conducting the seminar in theology, is timely. Scholarly research, controlled and of necessity slowed down by the demands of painstaking accuracy, hardly fits in with the spirit and the accelerated tempo of a post-war period. The war has brought new problems and has aggravated those already old. Research will be welcomed, but only in those fields which promise an immediate solution to the more practical problems that confront us. In all this there is danger that the science of theology will suffer, that the tremendous effort expended by the great theologians of the last fifty years will be fruitless, that the tradition of patient and accurate research, only newly regained, will again fall heirless. To meet this danger, expressed by the author with the earnestness of a man writing his last testament, Father de Ghellinck edits anew his practical guide for the directors of the seminar in theology.

The book is pre-eminently practical, although Father de Ghellinck's habitual erudition will not permit him to pass over entirely the history of the origin and the development of the seminar in the secular sciences. He notes that the seminar in theology is a comparatively late arrival. However, thanks to the directives of the Holy See, it is here to stay. The sole problem is how to conduct it. And it is to this problem that the author sets himself in the second and following chapters, reserving the last chapter to a discussion of what he calls the "pro-seminaire." The author's long experience in conducting the seminar both at Rome and at Louvain enhances the value of his suggestions on such practical questions as the number of students who should comprise the seminar, the frequency and the length of their gatherings, the type of library that should be at their disposal, etc. On this last point, the author stresses the need of a special library or section of the main library reserved for the members of the seminar, insisting that the books should not be allowed to circulate.

Perhaps the most instructive and helpful chapter for the director of the seminar is the third; here, Father de Ghellinck suggests and outlines a number of topics that lend themselves to group research and discussion in the seminar gatherings. Well-versed in patristic theology and in the history of theology during the Middle Ages, the author naturally shows a preference for these fields in his choice of subject matter. However, the method of dividing a single topic for seminar work can be easily transferred to the other sacred sciences.

Throughout the whole work, Father de Ghellinck frequently returns to the objection that a successful seminar will necessarily distract from the regular course in theology. He feels that the opposite has proven to be the

case. Where the seminar has been successful the general tone of the regular course has been raised. A student who has been initiated in the art of consulting the best reference works and periodicals will hardly be content with the assimilation of a textbook or a digested set of notes. Finally, it must be remembered that the purpose of the degree course in theology is not merely to indoctrinate the students with a number of conclusions to be retained through life, but to give them a method of study that will allow them to follow with profit the progress of the sciences of theology, and even to contribute to its progress. It was to realize this latter purpose that the Holy See made obligatory the seminar or *exercitatio practica* in theology.

Woodstock College

PAUL F. PALMER, S.J.

TRAITÉ DE PSYCHOLOGIE DE LA RELIGION. By Georges Berguer. Lausanne: Librairie Payot, 1946. Pp. viii + 367.

The author, once professor of religious psychology at the Protestant School of Theology at Geneva, died shortly before the publication of this work, which is the last of a long series of studies in theology and religious psychology. He wrote the book, as he tells us, to fill a gap; there is no such work in the French language. He does not claim any originality, but rather desires to present a summary of what is known in this obscure field.

For a proper evaluation of the book, one must keep in mind these two facts: (1) that the author is a Protestant theologian, and (2) that he has written mainly for the student of theology, who, he feels, is not sufficiently instructed in these matters. The first fact explains not only the particular approach, but also why certain problems pertaining to religious psychology are not discussed; thus, the sentiment of guilt, the awareness of sin (apart from some general remarks on the sinful nature of man), confession, examination of conscience, and a mental attitude toward the sacraments are not treated. The second fact explains why the author is satisfied with secondary evidence and rarely goes back to original sources. It is, of course, probable that a Protestant student of theology can find more easily the works of W. James or Leuba than the writings of St. Teresa, St. John of the Cross, or of the Schoolmen.

It must be pointed out, however, that the author, despite his antagonism to the Church, tries to be objective and just; he readily approves certain aspects of Catholic asceticism or general outlook. But, as one can readily understand, he is far from a real appreciation of either Catholic theology or religious practice. So far as he admits positive values in them, they are related to his theory of mental types or, as he prefers to say, of religious temperaments.

Psychology of religion, he declares, must abstract, at least at first, from the material content of experience and its objective validity. Psychology is concerned with mental states only. The end of his treatise, however, recognizes that even psychology cannot completely disregard the content of experience.

The fundamental thesis of the book asserts that religious experience is primarily of an emotional nature and has to do with the workings of the subconscious. The first part deals with the "basic elements" of religious life and tries to discover them by an analysis of conversion, the relations between religion and morals, the act of faith, and prayer. The second part contains an extensive study of the "main types of religious temperament." A brief conclusion emphasizes one or other of these temperaments, particularly in view of its importance for the student of theology and for his future pastoral work. A bibliography of 212 numbers is the continuation of a prior survey published in the *Archives de psychologie*, XIV, and therefore lists only publications of the years after 1944. It is somewhat amazing that a Protestant theologian and psychologist should neither list nor consider the works and ideas of Kierkegaard; it is less surprising not to find mention of works by Catholic authors; there are only a few exceptions. Most of the literature quoted and used is American, chiefly the works of W. James, Leuba, Starbuck, and Pratt.

A thorough criticism of the author's views would have to start with an examination of his main proposition; is it true that religious life and experience are chiefly emotional? It seems that Berguer himself does not maintain this idea throughout, or with absolute consistency; for he divides the religious temperaments into the mystic, which he believes to be predominantly emotional, the intellectual, and the active. But if there is true religious life on the basis of an intellectual temperament in which emotionality plays a very subordinate part, it is hardly possible to view emotionality as the basis of this life.

A similar criticism must be offered with regard to Berguer's theory of the subconscious mind. However widely accepted this theory is today, it is still open to several objections. To build a system of religious psychology on this somewhat uncertain foundation, therefore, seems rather a risk. The statement that religious experience emerges out of the depths of the subconscious must be understood as a predicate of man's strictly psychological nature. It has nothing, or almost nothing, to do with the notion that grace operates in the substance of the soul, and that the effects of grace, insofar as they concern a kind of transformation of the soul, need not become conscious. With the author, however, this distinction does not always seem to hold, although it is implied in his general position. He thinks of mystic

experience, not as of something essentially supernatural, since he recommends that the religious person, even though of another temperament, make efforts to develop the mystic temperament too. In his theory of the sub-conscious, the author depends least on Freud, to some extent on Jung, mostly, however, on Baudoin.

A further critical study would be beyond the scope of a brief review. In conclusion, then, Berguer has little to say which is new or particularly helpful to anyone who is already acquainted with his main sources or with the subject matter as a whole. Nevertheless, his treatise will certainly be useful for the readers for whom he destined it. Furthermore, it deserves recognition as the conscientious work of a serious and honest student of this field, anxious to be just, and careful to avoid any statement which he does not believe to be warranted by facts. If Catholic theologians can hardly use Berguer's book, they may, however, feel some regret that there is no comparable treatise written from a Catholic viewpoint and serving the same ends.

*The Catholic University of America*

R. ALLERS

NOTRE SACERDOCE. By Abbé Georges Lemaître. Paris: Desclée, De Brouwer & C<sup>ie</sup>, 1946. Pp. 260.

After a laudatory preface by His Excellency Monsigneur Guerry, Coadjutor-Archbishop of Cambrai, the theme of the present work is succinctly stated in the words of St. Ambrose: "Dignum est enim ut dignitas sacerdotalis prius noscatur a nobis, et sic deinde servetur a nobis." And throughout the author is careful to confine himself to a logical, lucid, appealing development of this theme.

In accordance with this objective, the book breaks up readily into two large divisions: "Pour mieux connaître notre sacerdoce; pour mieux vivre notre sacerdoce." The writer discusses first the priesthood of Christ: unique, perfect in consecration, sanctity, power, endurance, sacrifice. Against such a background he unfolds the extension of this same priesthood to the apostles, to the bishops of the Catholic Church, their legitimate successors, and to the priest, the auxiliary of the bishop. Holy orders, one of Christ's sacraments, in imprinting an indelible character symbolic of the eternal consecration of the priest to God assures to the former the guidance and strength needed for the worthy and fruitful discharge of the duties of his exalted state.

"Pour mieux vivre notre sacerdoce." The priesthood implies a peremptory call to eminent sanctity. From unimpeachable sources, Sacred



Scripture, divine tradition, papal pronouncements, this obligation immediately issues, while the priest's supernatural relations to Christ's physical and mystical body supply the intrinsic reason. With full documentation, the precise nature and extent of this requirement, together with its inclusion of chastity, poverty, obedience, piety, and a charity which is real, discreet, universal, and sacrificial, are splendidly expanded, illustrated, and established. The basic principles of asceticism and of Christian perfection are presented in a manner that charm head and heart alike. And together with high ideals and adequate motivation, good judgment and moderation are everywhere in evidence.

Despite so many praiseworthy features, the reviewer trusts that he will not seem ungracious or captious if he expresses dissatisfaction on just one point. The author apparently assumes that his readers will be familiar with the theology of Christ's priesthood and sacrifice. We cannot help feeling that he would have rendered a still greater service if he had expounded in greater detail the true concept of a priest and of a sacrifice. And in the application to Christ a neat distinction should have been drawn between those actions of His which may well be called sacrifices in a broad sense, and His strict liturgical sacrifice. Thus would have been avoided confusion relative to the exercise of His priesthood during the years of the hidden and public life, and the sacrificial character of the Supper and the Passion would be understood.

*Woodstock College*

D. J. M. CALLAHAN, S.J.

TRUTHS MEN LIVE BY. By John A. O'Brien, Ph.D., LL.D. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1946. Pp. xii + 427. \$2.75.

In the words of the author this is a work intended "to answer the questions in the forefront of the contemporary mind" and to effect "the harmonization of the truths of religion and science" (pp. vii, viii). Unquestionably Dr. O'Brien has made an apt selection of the main religious problems besetting man today. These questions, conveniently grouped into five parts, are the following: the existence and nature of God; the nature, origin and importance of religion; the existence of the soul, freedom of the will, and immortality of the soul; creation and evolution; the authority of Jesus Christ and His revelation. This work should be of great profit to those whom the author has particularly in mind, all those, namely, who are either searching for or desirous of a better grasp of the truths "which give meaning and purpose, substance and value, to human life" (p. vii). Dr. O'Brien is to be particularly commended for his apt development of the arguments for the existence of God from the order of the universe and from contingency.

Despite the general excellence of the work, there are a number of points that might be improved upon. For instance, the chapters on the nature and origin of religion (XIV–XVI) are somewhat confusing; one might receive the impression that the origin of religion in the present order of Providence was purely natural and that the revelation of a supernatural religion came only later. Again, Father O'Brien has well shown the absence of conflict between the general theory of evolution and the Catholic concept of creation: but his view on the evolution of man's body is worthy of comment. He states: "The Church leaves the individual free to accept or reject this view ["evolution from antecedent animal life,"—apparently understood as the purely natural evolution of secondary causes] in accordance with his judgment as to the weight of evidence behind it" (p. 325). Father Thomas J. Motherway, S.J., after a careful evaluation of current theological opinion has arrived at a quite different conclusion ("Theological Opinion on the Evolution of Man," *THEOLOGICAL STUDIES*, V [1944], 198–221). He says: "It must be noted that the insistence of theologians on this special intervention is so positive and so unanimous that it seems fair to conclude that there is no solid probability for the contrary. Hence it seems correct to say that Catholic apologists, publicists, and scientists are not at liberty to assert either in public speech or in published writings that all that is necessary for a Catholic to hold concerning the origin of man is that God created his soul. We must also admit that *God intervened in the preparation of Adam's body*. There is question here of a serious theological problem" (*art. cit.*, p. 219; italics ours). Father E. C. Messenger, Ph.D., whom Dr. O'Brien quotes in favor of his view (a little liberty, incidentally, was taken with the text), also holds as probable the need of such a special intervention (*Evolution and Theology*, p. 276). Dr. O'Brien's citation from Père de Sinéty, S.J., does not reflect the latter's full view on the subject; a special divine intervention, over and above purely natural causes, is regarded by him as the minimum that a Catholic can hold on this matter (*DAFC*, IV, 1844). Dr. O'Brien's remark, "The Bible gives no revelation concerning the subject matter of science, but reveals *only* spiritual and religious truths" (italics ours), does not seem to be the traditional Catholic teaching on the scope of divine inspiration. And what is more, many theologians are convinced that there is a great religious truth at issue here, namely, that of the unity of origin of the human race. In this connection, the chart reproduced on page 313 and the long quotation from Professor Edwin G. Conklin (pp. 314–315) would seem to call for some elucidation.

There is considerable inconsistency in the manner of giving footnote

references; also there are a few errors; e.g., on page 11 the reference to the *Summa* is wrong; on page 206, references 11 and 12 are inverted.

As previously mentioned, these minor flaws do not detract from the general excellence of the work. Dr. O'Brien has given us a very readable and timely exposition of vital religious questions.

*Alma College*

WILLIAM A. HUESMAN, S.J.

FAITH AND REASON. By Nels F. S. Ferré. New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1946. Pp. xii + 251. \$2.50.

This book is the first of a theological series proposed by its author, who is Abbot Professor of Christina Theology at Andover Newton Theological School. It offers a discussion of a problem that is of great importance in theology, "the meaning and the relation of faith and reason." One would expect that, given such a problem, an endeavor would be made to explain just what "faith" is, and yet Dr. Ferré nowhere comes to grips with that concept. It is never clearly defined. When it is said to be "dynamic whole-response," the reader would like to know what precisely is the subject and what the object of that response. If he should suspect that the object is revelation, he will search in vain for an affirmation to that effect. Neither will he receive much light as to the meaning of revelation itself.

It is likewise difficult to say what exactly the author understands by "reason." Such statements as "by reason we mean any and all ways of understanding," and "reason, at its broadest, is any and all interpretations of our reactions," are puzzling. The same is true of such terms as "whole-reason," "whole-thinking," "depth-response," and the like. In general, it may be said that Professor Ferré's book makes very difficult reading.

It is, however, good to see a Liberal Protestant theologian come out strongly against scientific positivism and relativism as well as against subjectivism and agnosticism. In many respects the author is a common-sense realist. On the other hand, he sets up a subjective standard of truth for theology. In fact, that is one of the chief differences he finds between that discipline and philosophy. In the latter he can hardly be classified as an existentialist, but in his theology he is, it would seem, just that. "Theology is the interpretation of our whole-response in all the issues of life and death. As such it is completely and constantly subjective. It is irrevocably existential" (p. 135).

Dr. Ferré is not unacquainted with the Thomistic explanation of the relation between faith and reason, but he does not seem to understand it

correctly, and in criticising it creates the suspicion that he stands with the rationalist, who would weigh all truth in the balance of pure human reason. For him Thomism is "antirationalism, because (in Thomism) the natural reason is not the final criterion of truth but is rather decisively unable to discover the basic truths which affect man's salvation" (p. 244). Throughout his book the author manifests erudition and sincerity.

*St. Mary of the Lake, Mundelein*

THOMAS J. MOTHERWAY, S. J.

WORKS OF LOVE. By Søren Kierkegaard. Translated by David F. Swenson and Lillian Marvin Swenson. Princeton University Press, 1946. Pp. xiv + 317. \$3.75.

Søren Kierkegaard, the greatest philosopher, litterateur, and religious polemist that Denmark has ever produced, has long been known in continental Europe, but only within the last ten years have English-speaking people begun to be familiar with his name and thought, thanks especially to the translated publications of the Oxford University Press and of the Princeton University Press. His name is to the fore more recently in France and Germany, where the modern trend to existential philosophy has marked him as the founder and precursor of this new movement. Philosophers of recognized merit, like Heidegger, Jaspers, Scheler, Berdiaeff, Chestov, Le Senne, Marcel, and more popularly today in Paris, Jean-Paul Sartre, all claim some philosophical descent from him.

Instead of emphasizing the universal in knowledge, or knowledge through contemplation, Kierkegaard stressed the importance of the individual. For objectivity he substituted subjectivity, "inwardness," as against the systematized objective world which Hegel, his arch-enemy, presented. No one, with the possible exception of Nietzsche, has ever given such transcendent importance to the individual as Kierkegaard; and it is a point of view which in the present state of philosophic thought—in which Hegel is still dominant—is being considered as of the utmost importance.

Kierkegaard interested himself in existentialism because of its religious implications, and specifically its Christian implications: the immortality of the soul, eternal happiness, man's God-relationship, man's relationship to other men through God, the role that suffering occupies in these relationships, etc. For that reason, though dead some ninety-one years, he is being increasingly recognized as the religious philosopher who appeals to the contemporary moulders of religious thought in European secular universities. His view of philosophy included not only ontology, but psychology, aesthetics, moral theology, logic, and poetry.

With a power of introspection and self-analysis unparalleled among modern philosophers, this "Paschal of the nineteenth century" was singularly specific about his objective as a writer and a polemist: to reveal to his fellow men the true nature of the Christian religion. He sought to point out how a man might become a Christian when he already was one. He could boast: "It is easier to become a Christian when I am not a Christian than to become a Christian when I am one." He felt himself, therefore, called to play the "rôle of the missionary within Christendom itself, aiming to introduce Christianity into Christendom."

Kierkegaard's missionary calling was occasioned by the conditions of the established Danish Church of his day, from which he separated himself in 1839 at the age of twenty-six. The people of his day, complacent in their bourgeois security, were for a large part content to be Christian in name only, rendering lip service to the tenets of the established Church and to its authorities, but, in their personal and social lives, paying little heed to God and to His commandments—all the while keeping up a pretense at observance. Thus he felt himself called to teach by means of his religious polemic what it meant to be a Christian.

In the present volume he is about his task of re-Christianizing his readers, by developing a social ethic on the basis of Christianity. It has to do not with a formally organized society, but with the relation of the individual to his associates, and hence, as Kierkegaard says, it deals with the *Works* of love and not with love itself. The present book is a series of meditative discourses of a strictly devotional kind, of a half-poetic, half-sermonizing type, on different aspects of brotherly love, love of the neighbor which, he maintains, is determined not by man's notion of love, but by God's notion and man's unconditional acceptance of God's command formulated in Christ's great commandment: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." It is a clear, simple presentation of the inward ethical demand of love of one's neighbor, a love not based on the whims of fickle human feelings or variable emotions, but upon the command of God which lifts the love of the neighbor out of the realm of the optional.

According to Kierkegaard the Christian ethic involves the grace of God and means man's answer to God's overtures of grace by a life of inward earnestness. The very opening prayer in the *Works of Love* sets the motif of the whole book: a return of love to Christ who has been all love for us—"Thou who didst hold nothing back but didst give everything in love." The loving God to whom we are hopelessly indebted is made the middle term between neighbor and self, between love of neighbor and self-love. "In earthly love and friendship partiality is the middle term. In love of the

neighbor God is the middle term; if you love God above all else, then you also love your neighbor and in your neighbor every man. Only by loving God above all else can one love his neighbor and in his neighbor every man."

Kierkegaard, strange, secret man that he was, a "monster of interiority," looked upon the world as evil, as in constant opposition to neighbor-love. His doctrine of inwardness goes beyond indifference to the social order—it regards the world as inevitably God-defiant. In his *Works of Love*, written toward the end of his life in 1846 (he died in 1855), he describes, as always, suffering—that outward suffering which inevitably accompanies a life that would be a true religious one—whereas in all his earlier works stress is placed upon the inner sufferings caused by the conflict of man with himself. And in both his earlier and his later works he is describing the drama of his own soul, hidden under the banal exterior of a dull, monotonous existence. In fact, Kierkegaard presents in all his works a unity of life and thought which is unique of its kind. Some philosophers and men of letters can be considered apart from the lives they led, but this is not the case with Kierkegaard, any more than it is with Pascal. Rather, Kierkegaard regarded the dialectic or mutual action of life and thought as an essential element in true metaphysics—the basic element of his existentialism.

The tragic element overhung his whole life: the sense of shame that haunted him as a result of the moral lapse which forced his father to marry a household servant; the deaths in quick succession of four members of his family; his unhappy marriage to and separation from Regina Olsen; his vitriolic attacks against the established Danish Church, in which he excoriated the Church as a mockery of Christianity. All these circumstances colored his whole life, shot it through with an anguish and a melancholic, grief-ridden fastidiousness, which influenced in turn all his literary, philosophic and religious writings. A lonely, silent man, he felt deeply his extreme isolation from ordinary human social life. A religious victim he was, but a religious anarchist too, dedicated to the overwhelming idea that it does not matter if the world collapses provided the individual is morally right.

Thus it is that in the present work his Christian ethic of neighbor-love approaches very closely the stern character of the Kantian categorical imperative, rather than Shaftesbury's emotion of the inherent beauty of love or Hume's sentimental feeling of universal sympathy. Its objectivity and universality are laid upon the will, not upon emotion or sentiment.

As a whole the discourses are simple and beautifully written, though the thought-content, repetitious and verbose, makes certain chapters tedious reading, and can be relished only in very small doses. Everywhere the

reverent spirit is obvious. A Catholic would note in certain passages his totally Protestant notion of justifying faith. The translation reads well, but the few abstruse, far-fetched passages, vague parables, epigrams, the endless spinning out of examples, fatigue the reader at times. From French and German translations of other works of Kierkegaard which the present reviewer has read, it is obvious that Kierkegaard's style was sometimes dense, sometimes vague and vapid. The fact that there is such simplicity and clarity in this present work is a compliment to the translators.

Princeton University Press is to be congratulated for this new translation and its pleasing format, which will enable English-speaking theologians to make contact with this Copenhagen "genius in the market town," whose influence is so strongly exerted among philosophers and men of letters in Europe today, whether for good or evil.

*St. Mary of the Lake Seminary*

EDWARD B. BRUEGGEMAN, S.J.

BEST SERMONS, 1946. Edited by G. Paul Butler. New York & London: Harper & Brothers, 1946. Pp. 324. \$2.75.

The third edition of this anthology contains fifty-two religious addresses representing the three major faiths in America. They are not proposed as the literal "best" preached during the preceding eighteen months, but the search for the finest was astonishingly thorough. Over five thousand clergymen responded to the invitation to submit manuscripts.

Catholics will find the eloquence which they have learned to expect under such names as Spellman, Gannon, Sheen, and O'Donnell; they will enjoy the stimulating thought of the familiar Protestants Holmes, Sperry, Hough, Bell, and Niebuhr; they will bridle at the appearance of G. Bromley Oxnam and then go on to admire his fervid oratory.

The sermons are grouped under twenty-four wide-ranging topics. Approximately one-tenth bear upon contemporary problems, and another tenth commemorate anniversaries and festivals of the Christian year. But every last speaker is preoccupied with the desperate need of international peace and of a moral regeneration in the home. The dearth of doctrinal discussion is doubtless due to the editorial preference for subjects of "universal appeal" and to the comparative unpalatability of dogmatic teaching on the radio, over which many of these addresses were delivered. Nevertheless, belief in the divinity of Christ is manifested with surprising and consoling frequency by the Protestant contributors.

The non-Catholic altar may have degenerated into a mere back-drop for the preacher, but many a Catholic priest will envy that preacher's originality

and literary excellence. At discovery of the Protestant's wide reading and his painstaking care in composition, the priest will painfully recall his own "five-minute rantings on Communism and the coal-bill" and the slumberous triteness of his homilies. The spokesman for Protestantism does not incline to tempt God by presumptuous reliance on *dabitur vobis* and frequently his lines flash with an ardent apostolic spirit.

This reviewer has two regrets: (1) that Mr. Butler could find no manuscript quite so memorable as Bishop Francis Kelley's amusing but hard-hitting "Conversation with an Electric Fan," which dominated an earlier edition and won its way into separate pamphlet publication; (2) that he has admitted the offerings of one charlatan, one champion of euthanasia, and one gentleman conspicuous in Leftist circles; (but the extra-curricular interests of the last two do not appear in their present sermons).

*St. Mary of the Lake*

RAYMOND F. GRIESE, S.J.

ÊTRE ET AGIR DANS LA PHILOSOPHIE DE SAINT THOMAS. By Joseph de Finance, S.J. Paris: Beauchesne, 1945. Pp. viii + 371.

In addition to the new editions of Gilson's basic studies, three important works on Thomistic philosophy appeared in the French language during the war years. In 1942 Fathers Geiger and Hayen issued their respective theses on the Thomistic theory of participation and the Thomistic notion of the intentional. Along with these books should now be placed this inquiry into St. Thomas' doctrine on *esse* and *agere* by Père Joseph de Finance, S.J. Although completed just before the outbreak of hostilities, it was not printed in complete form until 1945.

The book seems to provide a fine instance of the kind of approach to St. Thomas which we in America should emulate during the coming years. The serious Thomistic studies written by Americans have until now followed a common pattern which does not admit of much further exploitation. Routine doctoral dissertations have been content to choose some point in Thomistic philosophy around which can be gathered a *catena aurea* of relevant texts in Aquinas illustrating the systematic place of the chosen doctrine, but with very little sense of the actual development in his thought. Those, on the other hand, who have stressed the historical treatment of a Thomistic problem have often failed to establish its import for the general outlook and to point out clearly where the truth of the matter lies. Handicapping both methods is a sense of remoteness and isolation from all present-day issues. Attempts to remedy this last defect have been made in some advanced studies which offer a somewhat mechanical and strained comparison be-



tween St. Thomas and certain leaders of modern or contemporary thought. A basic lack of sympathy and insight has made these efforts unconvincing except to those who need no further persuasion. Except from a narrowly domestic standpoint, American philosophers in the tradition of Aquinas have not made much headway in our country. Nor can responsibility for this failure be placed primarily with the non-Scholastic philosophers.

Père de Finance's book suggests a way out of this impasse, and it is chiefly in this light that I wish to consider it here. The choice of theme is one which at first sight would not seem to lend itself to original treatment, since the nature of *to be* and *to act* is a well-worked lode. Well-worked, but not always well understood. Existence and action are often contrasted as the static and dynamic phases of being, a position which overlooks the truth that existence is itself the supreme act of being, the highest determination to which all perfections and operations of the essence are ordained. Until recently, however, we have simply accepted the thesis of the decisive advance made by Aquinas in treating existence as the ultimate act of the essence or the supposit, without inquiring into the problem of reconciling this conception of existence with the well-known view of Maréchal concerning the dynamic character of our powers and operations. By examining more closely the nature and implications of existence, the author has shown the equally important progress made by Aquinas in his doctrine on action as founded on and required by a metaphysic of existence. In executing his stated purpose of tracing back the exigencies of the operative order to their source in an existential theory of the principles of being, he has been led to restate the entire metaphysics of St. Thomas.

It is characteristic of the philosophy of a systematic thinker like Aquinas that no adequate treatment of a major metaphysical theme is possible without reopening a whole series of problems which can be seen to have an essential connection with the main issue. Starting with the basic notion of act, its limitation by potency, and its fecundity, the present investigation is directed in turn to existence as the ultimate act of being, the real distinction between essence and existence, the creative act in reference to the divine power and to the hierarchy of created participants in being, and the dynamic ordination and return of all beings to God. An analysis of appetite and goodness of being then leads to a study of action and causality as *le plus être*, the degrees of action and life, and the consent to concrete existing being which the mind gives by way of intellect, will, and affectivity. In general, the author manages to keep the proper measure in covering this vast field, since it is treated with constant reference to the relation between existence and operation. The more formally metaphysical the approach to

St. Thomas, the more forcefully does it reveal the unity and close-knit articulation of all the parts of his philosophy. Although consistency and synthetic power are not the sole marks of a true body of doctrine, they are indeed among the signs and consequences of truth and are impressively brought out in such a detailed yet comprehensive study as this.

While the main interest is doctrinal, the author correctly maintains that no full appreciation of the doctrinal truth and originality of St. Thomas is possible without viewing his position in its historical context. Consequently, an account is given of the solutions offered by St. Thomas' predecessors and contemporaries on all the major questions treated. Instead of making vague and unreliable references to the previous development of a doctrine and the state of the question in the thirteenth century, the author offers a concise and accurate textual resumé of the relevant evidence. Here he relies heavily upon French authorities like Roland-Gosselin, Gilson, and Forest. Unfortunately, no similarly thorough use is made of German and Italian studies either on historical or on doctrinal questions. This lacuna is particularly noticeable in the discussions on participation, the *Quarta Via*, and the metaphysical basis of knowledge and love. Yet he has provided the necessary background for understanding the influence of the Christian doctrine on God and creation upon philosophical development in the West. The true originality of Aquinas with respect to Aristotle is seen to lie in the teaching that existence rather than form is the supreme act and greatest perfection. The secret strength of Thomistic philosophy stems from its balancing of Aristotelian and Platonic factors in a new synthesis. Appropriating the tentative Arabian and early Scholastic distinction between essence and existence, St. Thomas developed it into a key doctrine in the light of the theory of participation and of act and potency. Thomistic metaphysics is concerned more with the line of existence than with the merely intelligible realm of essences. Since a theory of creation extends intelligibility even to the concrete individual existent, Christian philosophy is called to defend the irreducible value of the moral order and the will against an extreme intellectualism.

More than lip service is paid in this book to the dictum that no thinker's system is born full-grown and panoplied. One of its most valuable features is the effort to trace the growth of important doctrines chronologically in the writings of Aquinas himself. His works reveal a mind ever at work to improve its understanding of essence and existence, causality and creative power, participation in being, the nature of the will, and other fundamental notions. Just as there was demonstrable progress in St. Thomas' own speculation, so there has been advance in philosophical thinking since his day.

This is a conclusion to which many Scholastics today give only notional assent. But Père de Finance does not consider his duty done with the mere analysis of Thomistic texts. On several points he believes that the Thomistic proofs require stricter statement and even revision in the light of the revolutionary conception of existence as an act rather than as a mere factual positing outside of the cause. The most considerable extension of Thomistic principles is suggested at those points where Maréchal's views on the dynamism of cognition and volition and the tendential relation of human spiritual faculties to the absolute are taken as legitimate developments of a dynamic existentialism. On the much disputed question of a natural desire for the vision of God's essence, a solution is offered which accords with the previous analysis of the objective and transcendent ordination of action and the immaterial faculties towards existence. A proper understanding of "nature" and "desire" is given as an aid toward avoiding both ontologism and a naturalistic view of man's desire for God which leaves philosophy little more to say than did the *Nicomachean Ethics* about the final end of man.

Philosophical progress has been made not only in the direct line of Scholasticism but also in specifically modern philosophies. We find in the present work some admirable evaluations of Spinoza's theory of negation, the Kantian doctrine on negative quantity and judgments of existence, Malebranche's view of causality, and several Cartesian doctrines. Among more recent thinkers, Maurice Blondel has presumably had the greatest influence upon the author, although only one explicit reference is made to him. It is regrettable, however, that the opportunity was not taken to refer to the philosophy of Louis Lavelle at those places in the discussion which treat of *l'être total*. In this respect, the recent *Philosophie de l'être* (Louvain, 1946) of Louis de Raeymaker contains a more satisfactory rapprochement of Scholastic and modern thought as well as a thorough treatment of the problem of finitude.

But by far the most significant proof of the perennial relevance of a philosophy of being is provided by the author in his discussion of contemporary philosophy of existence. Here he has gone beyond Gilson's original stand by allowing a legitimate place in philosophy proper for this way of thinking. The Thomistic scholar looking for reliable aid in determining what is sound and what is weak in the prolific existentialisms of our day will find here a sure guide, metaphysically balanced and humanly generous. Thomism itself must be a philosophy of concrete existence and must recognize both that metaphysics is not the entirety of knowledge and that knowledge is not all that is required of man in his engagement in existence. Long ago,

Rousselot showed that there is room and need for art, history, and love in any comprehensive human approach to being.

A centrally important doctrine traced through all its systematic ramifications, an historical account of the growth of problems and of the successive Thomistic attempts at solution, an actual acceptance of Thomism as an open and still growing philosophy, awareness of modern problems and aspirations—these are some of the qualities which recommend this study to the reader. They are also qualities which ought to be demanded of any mature book that purports to represent the genuine spirit of St. Thomas in our country today.

This is not to say, of course, that philosophers will agree with all the positions defended in this volume. For all his valuable use of Proclus and the *Liber de Causis*, the author does not appreciate their increasing importance for Aquinas. He places the neo-Platonic influence at the beginning of St. Thomas' development (p. 171), whereas this is true primarily of Augustinian neo-Platonism; in the later writings, the problems raised by the direct sources are more acutely realized by Aquinas. It is a hasty judgment of Roland-Gosselin—and one not to be repeated uncritically—that Boëthius was concerned with essence *rather than* existence (p. 84). In truth, the issue was not conceived by him in any such clear-cut fashion: he espoused that variety of essential philosophy which flourished before the alternatives had been made clear. There is room also for debate concerning certain doctrinal issues: the relation of secondary causes to the determinations of being (229), the *esse* of accidents and the relation of action to substance (240–242), and certain positions connected with his dynamic view of intellect as directed to the absolute being.

*Être et agir* is an important contribution to the understanding of St. Thomas and to the effective spread and growth of his philosophy today. It is worthy of careful study and reflection on the part of those for whom St. Thomas will always remain a fresh and tireless guide in the search for being.

*St. Louis University*

JAMES COLLINS

COGITO CARTÉSIEN ET RÉFLEXION THOMISTE. By Joseph de Finance, S.J. *Archives de Philosophie*: Volume XVI, Cahier II. Paris: Beauchesne, 1946. Pp. 185.

This impressive study of Père de Finance presents a very detailed summary of the Thomist and Cartesian systems of philosophy, insofar as they bear upon the subtle problems involved in explaining man's self-knowledge. The scholarly work, although occasionally too involved and

therefore obscure, proceeds by broadly parallel expositions of the doctrines of St. Thomas and of Descartes. It is a brilliant and carefully documented indictment of the Cartesian inconsistencies and ill-founded presuppositions. Where de Finance sets forth his own interpretation of the Angelic Doctor's teaching on intellectual reflection, he touches indirectly upon contemporary disputes, without, however, fully revealing his own relation to them. His position is based largely on the controverted concepts of potency and act as expressed in the twenty-four Thomist Theses. In the main, the fundamental line of his thought reminds this reviewer especially of Gilson, Rousselot, Maréchal, and Ulloa.

His immediate realism may be arranged conveniently into three sections: (1) Epistemology is essentially a part of the all-embracing metaphysics of being; hence it cannot be properly approached except through the metaphysics of being as such; (2) knowledge of the self through reflection depends essentially on direct knowledge of external sensible being; therefore, the "I am" of self-existence cannot in any way be taken as the first truth upon which to rest the structure of human knowledge; (3) certitude, or knowledge of truth as conformity between intellect and real being, in judgments, is had *per se* by immediate reflection in the very act of judging.

On the status of epistemology, the author holds that the first object of intellectual perception, the being of extramental, sensible objects, enjoys a priority of nature over the perception of other objects. Implicit in the dynamism of this first concept of being is the intellection of first principles. Only after extramental being and the first principles have been perceived and affirmed with certitude, do we have reflex intuition of the ego and its acts. These latter become intelligible therefore, only in dependence on, in function of, and in relation to, the object of the direct act of our knowledge, *sc.*, in relation to extramental, sensible being, which was first perceived as real. Consequently, metaphysics of knowledge is a part of, an application of, the all-embracing general metaphysics of being as such. Thomistic systematization, then, must not begin with an epistemology, proceeding from subjective thought to being, as the school of Descartes holds, but rather with a comprehensive metaphysics of being which subordinates to itself in its proper order of dependence the science of thought, insofar, namely, as thought is a special kind of being. The order of thought is relative to that of being. The dynamics of our intellect is ruled by the exigencies of its formal object.

In evaluating this metaphysicism of de Finance, we gladly concede that, as de Vries puts it, we can admit neither a critical theory of knowledge that is pre-metaphysical, nor a non-critical metaphysics. However, in

order to avoid the danger of begging the question, we must insist upon the distinction between the initial stage or stages of metaphysics (before, e.g., the existence and nature of God have been proved and explained), and the final stage of metaphysics (which is constructed in the light of our knowledge of God). A similar distinction holds likewise between an initial and a finally perfected metaphysics of knowledge, which would concentrate upon the relationship between knowledge and being. In the initial stage, epistemology and ontology would have to walk hand in hand, separated from one another only by their emphasis of their special viewpoints (cf. de Vries, "Erkenntniskritik und Metaphysik," in *Scholastik*, 1938, 321-41). De Finance apparently overlooks such distinctions, at least in his method of arranging his arguments and in using controverted ontological "axioms".

Concerning our knowledge of the self, de Finance argues that the existence of the ego as reached by our immediate reflection alone can only be a knowledge of phenomenal, contingent, and merely subjective existence. This reflection gives us the being of thought in thought, merely as determined by the *ego cogito*. Because the identity-relationship of our self-conscious thought (apart from a reference to external being) does not include the character of, nor a relation to, the absolute, it is, considered only so far, not perceived as being in the strict sense. But, he asks, what about St. Thomas' statement "*Mens nostra per seipsam novit seipsam in quantum de se cognoscit quod est*" (*C.G.*, III, 46)? De Finance warns us not to interpret such texts rashly in an Augustinian way. As a genuine Aristotelian, Aquinas was bound to defend the opinion that the subject of immediate self-reflection is not the soul alone, but rather the concrete man.

Against the merely phenomenal character of immediate self-knowledge as proposed by de Finance, any number of Neo-Scholastics might argue that he unfortunately neglects too much the circumstance of objective evidence in the *cogito* and also that of the spiritual (although incompletely subsistent) nature of the human soul and its intellections. To reject such an interpretation as too Augustinian implies, it would seem, on the author's side a misunderstanding of the theory of these Neo-Scholastics, who defend both a genuine substantial union of body and soul, and also the spirituality of the soul and its intellections, against the overspiritualization of the human soul by St. Augustine and Descartes.

In his justification of certitude, de Finance offers an ingenious, if obscure, commentary on the famous text of *De Veritate*, I, 9. In reflection the act is not only known as a mere fact, as a simple internal phenomenon, but we also grasp immediately the law which commands this, as the realization of the essence of intellection and thereby also of the nature of the intellect

itself. Furthermore, according to de Finance, as another part of the same reflex intellection but directed now upon the external object, we grasp the proper characteristics of this object and its "absolute exigencies" for truth in absolutely true judgments. Thus, in a vital experience, I come to know my intellect as a power able to "become the other" intentionally, i.e., able to become objective being, and thus to form absolutely true judgments of real being.

This interpretation fails to convince us. It considerably overtaxes the power and depth of our immediate reflection. Is there not required, rather, a subtle and careful analysis and inference before we reach such a high perfection of knowledge?

The greatest worry of our author is how to legitimate the property of absoluteness which accompanies our evident, certain judgments. The objects themselves are only contingent; again, our own intellections and our very ego are contingent. How then can we legitimately form judgments which we characterize as absolutely, necessarily, and objectively true, and universally valid? De Finance's solution includes, on one hand, his interpretation of the *intellectus agens* as a special, dynamic participation of the divine light; and on the other hand, his theories on contingency and on instrumental causality. The creature is an instrument of God; to the instrumental movements of the creature corresponds, therefore, a principal activity of God. De Finance wards off carefully every vestige of ontologism from his explanation. God's presence and dynamic impulse in our mind is of a special efficient and final causality, to which corresponds in the object of our intellect a special participation of the divine, absolute intelligibility by a special kind of translucidity. God's presence is invisible, yet it attracts our intellect toward Him by a special kind of impulse, like a magnet. "Perhaps," he concludes, "we need not go so far as to assert that the Thomistic texts which speak of the vision of the divine essence as the term of our aspiration make of the absolute possibility of this vision the condition for the possibility of our thought."

Rather than attempt an original criticism of this dynamic illuminism, it will suffice to note that these explanations bring to mind the theories of Rousselot and Maréchal, and their difficulties, as indicated, e.g., by the late Père Descoqs in his *Praelectiones Theologiae naturalis*.

Georgetown University

F. R. MILLER, S.J.

AU SOUFFLE DE L'ESPRIT CRÉATEUR. By Paul Vignon. Paris: Beauchesne, 1946. Pp. 202.

This is a posthumous work by a biologist of the Paris *Institut catholique*.

Paul Vignon is known more particularly for research on insects, but his interests have been universal and have led him to read very widely. The book should attract philosophers and theologians as well as scientists: it is a moving testimony of faith in the Divine by one who has consecrated his life to research in science, and, as well, an example of a sounder approach to the world of scientists than many a Christian is prepared to make.

There is an aspect of our phenomenal world which laboratory workers have been wont to overlook: that the activities of living beings are, in great part, functions, not of the space-time universe, but of the autonomous individual. So long as the scientist proceeds analytically, it is quite evident he can explain all observed facts by physico-chemical constructs. But each step forward in this process has led him farther away from his starting point, the living whole. Measuring this distance today, not a few seem to realize more vividly that they have left something behind.

This living whole, so long overlooked by scientists, Vignon seeks to rehabilitate in its own right. He presents, not the abstract considerations of Gestalt and holistic theories, but a gallery of striking examples: of close, unceasing co-operation in man of body and mind, under the commanding presence of deliberate thought; of behavioral and organismic problem-solving in animals, and, in plant life, of adaptation to environmental and developmental irregularities. The reader is confronted with the conclusion that life is intentional, leading to goals not mechanistically predetermined but demanding the resourceful initiative of the living individual. This, no accumulation of analytical detail can explain. A unifying principle, transcending the multiplicity of matter, must govern all the parts in the service of the whole.

But there remains to be explained the natural history of the living world. Living things are not just thrown about in a statistical scatter. How did the immense variety of species come originally into being? The author, like all biologists today, accepts evolution as the only satisfactory conception of the natural order of biological phenomena. But, he insists, the terms of the problem are not thereby altered, nor is its solution: "with or without evolution, creation."

Sudden and extensive mutations Professor Vignon considers the more probable mechanism of evolution. And he marshals a second series of remarkable examples taken from animal and plant life, where a broad change in the whole structure of the organism must have been brought about in a single generation, were the species itself not to have become extinct. But it is impossible to ascribe to the blind operations of living matter such generalized and directed metamorphoses. An intelligent Cause alone can



supervise the still, to us, mysterious activity of the nucleus to produce an orthogenetic patterning of the individual.

A last chapter shows man, the conscious apex of this age-long surge of life, calling to this Creator, and God's answer, through Christ's revelation, opening vistas on eternity. The book comes to its end with a short paragraph which has the simplicity and the deeply stirring gravity of a *Nunc dimittis*.

Many scientists will find fault with this book. Its style is anything but impersonal. The author's grandson, in an introductory note, explains it as the enthusiasm of one gathering the fruits of a life-long labor. True, no writer with any sense of the mysterious can keep a frigid objectivity before the wonders revealed by modern biological research. But no poet either can keep up, through nearly two hundred pages, a continuous flow of inspired enthusiasm. Though one gets used to the apparently deliberate obscurities and intricacies of the author's style, it does seem artificial at times. More serious objection could be made to the composition of the book. However neat the broad lines of its development, the reader may feel that repetitions are many, and the logical structure not always clear-cut in detail.

To the Catholic philosopher, the author's reasoning is traditional. But it is questionable if many have been able so felicitously to expound it. The whole-quality of the living individual should not be taken for granted. To the analytical scientist, the animal and the plant appear as complex structures of parts rather than organisms viewed in their unity; and before arguing from the *fact* of this unity, we must bring our scientific friends to recognize it as a distinct phenomenological datum, having its own properties and effects. Many could profit by professor Vignon's example and learn a more effective approach to scientific readers. Not to be commended, however, is his often hazardous use of words which, in the philosopher's technical vocabulary, have a very precise meaning.

*College of the Immaculate Conception, Montreal*      ROBERT PICARD, S.J.

## DESCRIPTIVE NOTICES

SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES FOR THE BALTIMORE CATECHISM. By G. H. Guyot, C. M. Joseph F. Wagner: New York, 1946. Pp. iv + 155. \$2.50.

The sub-title of this book indicates that its purpose is to give "The Biblical Basis for Catholic Beliefs." The order of the Baltimore Catechism is followed, and under the corresponding question-number are listed references to the most important Scripture texts which are basis for the catechism answer. The texts themselves are not quoted but a very brief indication of their pertinent meaning is given. Where the catechism answer has no basis in Scripture, the foundation in tradition is mentioned. A valuable appendix presents the scriptural evidence for Catholic apologetics. A handy means of ready reference is provided by a topical index. Those who are engaged in catechetical work, whether in preaching or in instructing prospective converts, will be grateful to Father Guyot for this thoroughly reliable work. The theologian too will be pleased with the author's judicious selection and brief but lucid explanation of dogmatic texts.

*West Baden College*

JOHN A. MCEVOY, S. J.

THE VENERABLE BEDE: HIS SPIRITUAL TEACHINGS. By Sister M. Thomas Aquinas Carroll, R.S.M. The Catholic University of America Press: Washington, 1946. Pp. x + 270.

This book seems to be the result of a careful and thoroughgoing study of certain aspects of the doctrine of the Venerable Bede. It is of interest and value to the historian of dogmatic rather than of ascetical or mystical theology. It contains little about Bede's ideas on God, the Trinity, creation, the Incarnation, and such dogmas, but much on the Church both as the Mystical Body of Christ and as a visible society, on the sacraments, eschatology, and Mariology. Since all the elect owe their salvation to the merits of Christ, the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ embraces all holy men from the beginning of time. Bede stressed the notes of the Church and was displeased with "Celtic particularism mainly because he thought it controverted these notes" (page 252). In his estimation grace and the sacraments were most important for the practice of the Christian life. "In defining this term [sacrament] Bede apparently followed St. Isidore's emphasis on the secret, mysterious element in the composition, rather than St. Augustine's on the sign. Thus he gave direction to that long medieval divagation away from the latter's more precise and fruitful definition, and helped to delay the defining both the nature and the exact number of the sacraments" (page 253). Bede encour-

aged people of all classes to communicate daily. He had no very clear idea of transubstantiation. His writings are important especially for the history of penance and the change from public to private penance. In addition to confession to a priest, confession of minor faults among laymen is advocated. His testimony to the use of extreme unction is clear and strong. "Nowhere does he imply any sacramental power inherent in matrimony" (page 237).

Sinners are punished after death with cold as well as fire. There seem to be two purgatories—one in which there is severe punishment, and one in which souls wait without much suffering until they are ready for the vision of God. Bede appears to have had no knowledge of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin. It was characteristic of him that he directed his chief efforts toward sanctifying the faithful generally and, above all, the clergy rather than his monastic brethren. Good Christians should avoid sin or purge it away, lead a life full of good works as well as faith, cultivate prayer and even contemplation, and strive to excel in humility as the leading moral virtue. Priests should have the greatest zeal for preaching. With all its notes, references, bibliographies, etc., this book should be a very helpful aid to students of the Venerable Bede or his times.

*St. Mary's College*

G. AUG. ELLARD, S. J.

THE FORMATIVE YEARS OF THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA. By John Tracy Ellis. Washington: American Catholic Historical Association, 1946. Pp. 415. \$3.00.

University-origins are often shrouded in obscurity, not only by reason of remoteness, but even more on account of the unnoticed development of an educational institution into university status. But the Catholic University of America was spared obscurity on both these counts. There was in its case no gradual evolution from a lower to a higher level: it was at the outset conceived and inaugurated on the graduate level. A full decade of discussion had preceded the enacting by the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore, in December 1884, of the foundation of a *seminarium principale*, "where youths . . . after finishing the usual course of studies, may be able to devote three or four years to the theological disciplines, or canon law, or philosophy. . . a nucleus or seed from which, God's grace favoring, there would blossom forth in its time a perfect university of studies." From then until the actual inception of classes, five years later, every phase of development—choice of site, curriculum, rectorship, direction, constitutions, and so forth—was debated before public opinion in the entire nation, while the requisite funds were solicited everywhere.

It is this "pre-history" which this carefully documented study, based chiefly on diocesan archival sources, the contemporary press, and periodicals, offers. It brings its readers to the day the University opened its doors in November, 1889, The "real" history—merely hinted at in such a statement as: "There were still trying days ahead for the University, but during the seven years of Bishop Keane's rectorship a goodly number of these problems were met and solved, and when in September, 1896, John J. Keane went out of office there was no further doubt in the minds of reasonable men of the University's ultimate success" (p. 399)—that real history is still to be written.

*St. Mary's College*

GERALD ELLARD, S. J.

DISCERNING THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES. By Reinhold Niebuhr. New York Scribners, 1946. Pp. 194. \$2.50.

The ten brief chapters which comprise this volume come riding the wake of the author's immense *Nature and Destiny of Man* like so many scholia bravely bringing up the rear of a mighty thesis. Dr. Niebuhr calls them "sermons" and "sermonic essays" and in them sends some of the familiar ideas of that earlier work ricocheting against the problems of reconstruction, both international and personal, which the war has left.

Facing the problems of selfishness, anger and vengeance, pride, disillusion, and despair in the certainty of frustration which at present confront our hope for the future, the reader is led again and again to the very Christian conclusion that mankind must cherish the dream of its ideal and keep striving towards its realization, but at the same time, humbly conscious of the deficiencies of human nature, mankind must not expect too much in this vale of tears.

*Discerning the Signs of the Times* is written with the same fascinating combination of brilliant phrasing and abstract wordiness which makes the author's style so engaging and yet, at times, so amusing. Its most profound defect is the very unchristian concept of "original sin" which underlies most of its reasoning. Perhaps there is no more vivid testimony to the vitality of the Christian moral ideal than its ability to survive and transcend the quality of the "proofs" which in this, as in so many similar books, are brought to its service. It may yet be that love of "the Way" will lead thoughtful men to a rediscovery of "the Truth" which is the secret of that vitality.

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