

56-324) deals, but the authors have usefully appended notes on more than 250 collegiate churches or chantries served by bodies of secular clergy living a quasi-monastic life, and to these are added a catalogue of the academic colleges and halls of both universities, where also a community life existed.

W.G.

MIRACLES. By Jean Hellé. Translated by Lancelot G. Sheppard. (Burns Oates; 15s.)

THE SUN HER MANTLE. By John Beevers. (Browne and Nolan; 15s.)

Miracles are in the air these days. Of the two books under review, that by Jean Hellé (Morvan Lebesque) is the more critical one. It includes fakes like Nicole Tavernier and Rose Tamisier and controversial cases like that of Therese Neumann; but, not being a theologian or a medical expert, the author contents himself with reproducing accounts from other sources, such as the *Etudes Carmélitaines* or Dr Poray-Madeyski's book on Therese Neumann. This method has one disadvantage; for where no critical account exists the popular view is followed. Thus Hellé is, indeed, sceptical of Therese Neumann, but he describes with admiration the visions of Catherine Emmerich. Nevertheless the cases of these two stigmatics are very similar, and the latter's description of the miracles of Christ recorded in the Gospels contradicts the Scriptural accounts in important details. She sees, for example, how he 'draws near to the man sick of the palsy, takes his arm . . . and massages it' and gradually heals it—whereas the striking feature about this as about most of our Lord's other cures is the authoritative way in which they were brought about simply by a word.

Mr Beevers deals solely with apparitions of our Lady, especially with those that have received ecclesiastical approval. Lourdes, of course, and Fatima, La Salette, which is given more space than the others, and Banneux. The most controversial of these apparitions are those purported to have taken place at Beauraing, in Belgium, in the winter of 1932-33. Hellé, following the *Etudes Carmélitaines*, treats them frankly as an imposture of the five none too trustworthy children who claimed that our Lady was appearing to them. The arguments against their authenticity seem overwhelming, though according to Mr Beevers, who accepts it, the cult of our Lady of Beauraing was authorised by the Bishop of Namur in 1943.

Mr Beevers rightly closes his book with a chapter on the message of our Lady in all these apparitions: 'We must pray and we must do penance'. Yet one sometimes wonders whether the flood of books on such subjects is really a sign that we are heeding her words. There exists at present a very real danger that the Catholic public is all too anxiously seeking for signs and wonders. It was castigated in the well-known article of Mgr Ottaviani, 'On the Dangers of Credulousness', in the *Osservatore Romano* in February

1951 and driven home by the recent placing on the Index of eight books on Padre Pio.

Without doubt our Lady did appear at Lourdes and at Fatima. No doubt Catholics should know the facts of these apparitions, set out in sober fashion, as was done for Fatima by Father Martindale, for example. But is it really necessary to rehearse them constantly, and not only them but quite a few unsubstantiated legends as well? Is not such a treatment apt to obscure precisely the 'message' and to make readers increasingly avid for more and more marvellous details? This danger seems to be present especially in Mr Bcevers' book. It seems a pity that so many good spiritual writers appear to be irresistibly attracted to the marvellous and neglect a field at least as worthy of their attention: the heroic lives and deaths of the martyrs of our time.

H. C. GRAEF

INITIATION A LA PHILOSOPHIE DE SAINT THOMAS D'AQUIN. Par H.-D. Gardeil, o.p. Tome II: Cosmologie. Tome III: Psychologie. (Paris: Editions du Cerf; n.p.)

Two further volumes now complete the original plan of this new French manual of Thomist philosophy, the first volumes of which were reviewed in the April number of BLACKFRIARS. Undoubtedly it is the best thing of its kind that has yet appeared.

To write a text-book of cosmology can be no easy matter, but P. Gardeil has adopted the only possible solution at an elementary level. Apart from passing references to modern theories, he has contented himself with giving 'une idée objective du système du monde, tel que l'a conçu Aristote'. How much more satisfactory than an unconvincing attempt at reconciliation. The treatment follows fairly closely the books of Aristotle's 'Physics', and is illustrated by relevant passages from St Thomas' commentary, together with the whole of his *De principiis naturae*.

The volume of psychology is rightly more ambitious, for more than any other part of St Thomas' philosophy this is of interest to non-scholastic thinkers. Especially in the chapter on the intellect, P. Gardeil has gone deeper than is usual in a manual, as is evident from the fact that for texts he has drawn largely on the difficult *Questiones disputatae*. His lucid discussions are set properly in an historical context, and take into account the work of the commentators and later scholastics. But more attention might have been paid to the chronological order of St Thomas' texts in attempting to resolve apparent conflicts; and here, as elsewhere, it would have been worth while mentioning more specialised works to which the reader whose interest had been aroused might refer. For example, in connection with the 'récente polémique' about the status of the *verbum menis*, nothing later than 'Les degrés du savoir' is quoted; surely the article of P. Kuiper