

by answering specific questions. The answers for the most part were originally given in the questions column of the *Catholic Herald*; they vary in length from a paragraph to a page or two, and they are very good. Miss Hastings possesses a genuine theological tact which on every occasion leads her straight to the real grounds of faith, and gives what she has to say the ring of conviction. It is of some importance to look for the source of these qualities, so rare in modern theological writing. They are surely due to a practical experience down the years, in the Catholic Evidence Guild and elsewhere, which has forced her to put her whole belief to the question, in the classical manner of the medieval theologians, reflected one might say in the rubric 'whether . . .' before each article of the *Summa Theologica*. By contrast the positive answers of modern manuals do little to guarantee that those who accept them have first asked themselves the necessary questions. However that may be, Miss Hastings has provided an account of the faith which is always accurate and is at times excellent to the point of making the reader want to stand up and cheer.

The introductory outline is less successful. This is partly because Miss Hastings's prose style, with its liberal use of that confession of grammatical failure, the dash, is not so well suited to this form. But it is also because she has rightly refused to be content with a second best, and has aimed to present Catholic doctrine in the context of scriptural revelation, through a historical survey which begins with the creation of the world and ends with the Church of the New Testament. In this difficult but worth-while task some mistakes of emphasis would be hard to avoid. For example, too much use is made here of the devil's point of view; no doubt patristic warrant could be found, but to most people it is rather unreal, and with some justification since angels do not need to argue things out as men do. I should have preferred instead a fuller treatment of the messianic prophecies that were precisely fulfilled by our Lord's casting of devils out of the kingdom of heaven. But this is personal prejudice; on the whole there are few books about the Church's teaching which can be as whole-heartedly recommended as this one.

LAURENCE BRIGHT, O.P.

THE UNITY OF PHILOSOPHICAL EXPERIENCE. By Etienne Gilson. (Sheed & Ward; 16s.)

It is not given to many men to achieve something like classical status in their lifetime, the position of M. Gilson today. To have written definitive studies of Augustine, Bernard, Bonaventure, Scotus and Descartes, and detailed accounts of medieval philosophy generally, is a considerable achievement of historical scholarship; and it is this

scholarship which gives the firm basis to M. Gilson's own essays into speculative philosophy. *The Unity of Philosophical Experience* is typical in this respect. It is shown, on the basis of brilliant thumb-nail sketches of modern philosophies, how each has failed because it has tried to limit philosophy by means of techniques borrowed from more special sciences, but that a genuine metaphysics escapes such limitation. In the twenty years since the book was first issued it has become sufficiently well-known to make any further recommendation superfluous.

LAURENCE BRIGHT, O.P.

NUCLEAR WAR AND PEACE. By Professor J. E. Roberts and the Bishop of Chichester. (National Peace Council; 2s. 6d.)

It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of this booklet. Although a good deal of information about the effects of nuclear weapons is now available in technical journals, it has not yet been presented to the general reader. Professor Roberts now gives, in some forty pages, the clearest possible account of what nuclear warfare implies. He explains briefly how the bombs work, and then discusses the consequences of blast and heat flash, direct radiation and long-term genetic effects. He describes possible protective measures, and ends with a chapter on the peaceful uses of atomic energy. The figures, so far as they are known, are given precisely, and speak more eloquently than any colouring of rhetoric could help them to. Every educated person will now be in a position to make a moral judgement on an exact basis of fact. In the last twelve pages of the pamphlet the Bishop of Chichester draws his conclusions about the moral issues. He avoids the most fundamental questions about the morality of war by taking his principles from such documents as the Hague convention and the Nuremberg charter, but these are sufficient to show that the use of hydrogen bombs, and atom bombs as directed against centres of population, is indefensible, though the use of atomic weapons against military objectives, if due precautions are taken, may be permitted. The majority of Catholics would, I think, endorse these conclusions, though a full discussion of the moral aspect from first principles would still seem to be called for.

LAURENCE BRIGHT, O.P.

TWO CITIES. By Paul Foster, O.P. (Blackfriars; 7s. 6d.)

To anyone interested in the problem of the common good, which is the philosophical problem behind the Church-State conflict, this little book may be a keen disappointment. But in that case the fault will not have been the author's but the reader's. For the author states quite explicitly in his Introduction that his purpose is to ventilate the problem