

REVIEWS

THE BIBLE DOCTRINE OF GRACE. By C. Ryder Smith, D.D. (Epworth Press; 22s. 6d.)

This reviewer, as a dogmatic theologian, is not qualified to criticize this work on its own ground of Biblical exegesis and philology. He can only be grateful to the author for another volume of his meticulous scrutinies of leading Biblical conceptions, and therefore of the primary sources of all theology. But he may be allowed to remark how this objective, scholarly and unprejudiced examination of the sources indirectly but surely testifies to the conformity of Catholic dogma and theology with them. Dr Ryder Smith is not, of course, concerned with such things, but a Catholic theologian cannot fail to see that his work in fact does much to vindicate the Church's fidelity through the centuries to the written Word of God, both in her affirmations and in her condemnations, whether of Pelagian or some Reformed theology.

Dr Ryder Smith is perhaps too scholarly and meticulous to be exactly exciting, but his insights are often illuminating. Special mention may be made of his treatment of St Paul's troublesome analogy of the potter and the clay, and with it of the whole biblical revelation regarding Grace, Election and Freedom. His few pages on Satan, and his whole chapter on the co-existence of Grace and Sin (though here Catholic theology would add some qualifications) are especially stimulating.

Only briefly and at the very end does he try to vindicate his Methodist doctrine of Assurance. And here, significantly, his appeal is beyond the Bible to existentialist 'self-authenticating experience' which 'posits the *reality* of two "subjects"'. Unquestionably the Bible also knows of such experience; but to proclaim it as a norm, even as a necessity, is to fall dangerously short of the Bible doctrine of God-given hope in God alone, even in spite of all appearances and experiences to the contrary.

VICTOR WHITE, O.P.

THE ALL-KNOWING GOD: Researches into Early Religion and Culture.

By Raffaele Pettazzoni. Translated by H. J. Rose (Methuen; 60s.)

Fr Wilhelm Schmidt has argued for a 'primitive monotheism' (more like a full-grown natural theology) for which omniscience was an attribute contained in an articulated conception of the unique Supreme Being; Jung has proclaimed that this attribute 'more or less regularly accompanies' the divine archetype; Max Muller, on linguistic grounds, 'discovered' that one all-seeing Heavenly Father, *Dyaus*, *Theos*, *Zeus* or *Deus*, was the ancient and common heritage of all Indo-Europeans. Notwithstanding the evident fallibility of familiar