

wisdom. Possibly this illumination of the obscure realms of poetic intuition will prove to be his most truly original contribution to the perennial philosophy.

The cost of the book is justified by the fine production and liberal illustration, as well as by the intrinsic value. It is unfortunate, however, that the plates are not in colour, since a paraphrase is a poor substitute for the poetry, and this work deserves nothing less than the best.

DAVID MOODY

A NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY FOR ENGLISH READERS. By R. A. Knox. Vol. II, The Acts of the Apostles, St Paul's Letters to the Churches. (Burns Oates & Washbourne.)

When I looked over the remarks I had jotted down as I was reading this book, I observed that for Acts and Romans they were mostly adverse, while for I Corinthians onwards they were nearly all favourable. The reason is less a change in the quality of Mgr Knox's commentary—though perhaps his notes on Romans *are* the least successful part of the book—than in my own notion of what sort of commentary it was meant to be. I began reading it with the idea that it was a work of exegesis, which should expound the fullest and deepest meaning of the sacred text. I was of course disappointed. Why, the longest of the introductions to each book in turn is a bare two pages, and everyone knows that the heart of an exegete's work is his introductions. So I blamed my disappointment on the author, and picked on those points in his commentary which gave me a peg to hang it on. But by the end of Acts I couldn't withhold a grudging admiration for his treatment of their chronology, that most tedious and bewildering of subjects, and for his convincing thesis of St Paul's unrecorded travels in Macedonia between Beroea and Athens (Acts 17, 14). By the time I reached I Corinthians, I was in full palinode.

For the truth is that Mgr Knox undertakes much more humble a task in this book than exegesis properly so called. He does not make it his business *ex professo* to expound the profundities of the text, but to explain its obscurities. He is providing the educated, but in these matters unlearned, English reader of his N.T. translation with the translator's footnotes, which contain material on the text, and the language, and the historical setting, that will help him to assimilate the full meaning of the New Testament for himself.

To this ground-clearing work the author brings great ingenuity, a just imagination, and above all a very nice sense of the Greek language, especially the Greek of St Paul. Note for example his suggestion of what the precise meaning of 'faith' is, in the 'measure of faith' and the

'analogy of faith' (Rom. 12, 3, 6); his suggestion of 'competitiveness' instead of 'covetousness' or 'extortion' for *pleonezia* (II Cor. 9, 5); of 'intend' or 'venture' instead of 'dare' for *tolmo* (II Cor. 10, 12, Rom. 15, 18). His explanations of the 'sting in the flesh' and the angel of Satan (II Cor. 12, 7), of the 'infirmity of the flesh' (Gal. 4, 13), of the 'mediator who is not of one' (Gal. 3, 20), of the obscure reasons why women should wear hats in church (II Cor. 11), are ingenious, original, and even convincing.

Sometimes he is misleading; for example on Philippians 4, 5 he says that 'the Lord is coming' is written in Aramaic. Not in my Greek text, it isn't, nor in the apparatus, nor in the Vulgate. Sometimes he is too ingenious and makes difficulties where there are none: see his remarks on the 'dumb idols' of I Corinthians 12, 2. Sometimes he is rather wrong-headed, as on the 'expectation of the creature, which was subjected to vanity not willingly but because of him who subjected it in hope' (Rom. 8, 20). You may agree with Mgr Knox or not, that by 'him who subjected it' is meant Adam, not God. But his argument against the contrary view is weak in the extreme. He caricatures it, whereas if stated properly it makes the whole passage run very well. 'Creation was subjected to vanity not indeed willingly, but nevertheless in hope, because of the nature of him who subjected it' (i.e. the God of grace). There would be no hope for the future liberation of creation merely because of Adam. If you take him who subjected it as Adam, and then make the contrast between 'not willingly' and 'because of him who subjected it', the 'in hope' at the end is left hanging painfully in the air; but if you contrast 'not willingly' and 'in hope', the whole sentence becomes neat and pointed, and we can make God the subject of creation to vanity without any of the absurdities which Mgr Knox attributes to this view.

But at any rate, though sometimes unconvincing, he is always stimulating. Even the misprint he is subjected to, not willingly, but perhaps deservedly, tickles the fancy. On p. 97 it is written 'St Paul is perhaps guarding himself against the imputation of teaching that grace is *inadmissible*.' A rap on the author's knuckles for using such a scarcely English word as *inamissible*.

Since it is in fact a collection of footnotes, Mgr Knox's commentary must in the first place be judged piecemeal. You like this comment and that one, you don't agree with the other. But in spite of the necessarily disjointed character of the book, some sort of pattern does emerge. Though not obliged to it, the author succeeds, almost by accident and on the side, in sketching out the general lines of a very effective exegesis, which would co-ordinate almost the whole of the N.T. (certainly the books commented on in this volume) in the

framework of the Jew-Gentile issue, in terms of that mystery of the kingdom (Mark 4, 11, Ephesians 3, 4, etc.) which was the opening of it to the Gentiles. In a more concrete way he correlates the Epistles and the Acts, and puts the Epistles in their context in a manner which makes it much easier for the reader to understand them. In a word, Mgr Knox, besides levelling the site and pegging out the surface, also suggests the most likely possibilities for deeper excavation.

EDMUND HILL, O.P.

CHRISTOLOGY OF THE LATER FATHERS. Edited by E. R. Hardy. (S.C.M. Press; 30s.)

This latest volume of the very handsome Library of Christian Classics contains translations of Athanasius' *De Incarnatione*, Gregory of Nazianzus' *Theological Orations* and *Letters to Cledonius and Nectarius*, Gregory of Nyssa's *Non Tres Dei* and his *Catechetical Oration*, and a selection of Christological letters and documents including the *Tome* of St Leo. For Gregory of Nyssa and the documents other than the *Tome* new translations have been made by Dr Richardson and Dr Hardy. There is a general introduction of twenty-four pages and shorter introductions to each of the Fathers.

The general introduction by Dr Hardy is a concise and careful history of the development of theology up to the third Council of Constantinople. It is marred only by an insufficient understanding of the Church's teaching on the unity of God. The Cappadocians, Dr Hardy thinks, taught that the three divine persons are three particular instances of one generic essence, though they were aware that there is no room for three separate infinities. Did they not in fact go further than this, and say that the infinite divine nature is not only not separated but even identically one and the same in each of the Three Persons? Dr Richardson makes this point very clearly in his thoughtful introduction to Gregory of Nyssa in this volume, where he says: "The nature of the Godhead more nearly corresponds in their (the Cappadocians') thought to Aristotle's idea of a particular, concrete existence (*prote ousia*), not to the *deutera ousia* which members of a species have in common."

Dr Hardy does not, in the general introduction, allot a major part to Athanasius in the evolution of Christian theology, perhaps because he does not see the fundamental importance of the deeper meaning read into the Nicene formulary by Athanasius: God is one by identity, not merely by equality of nature. His special introduction to Athanasius does something to redress the balance, although in it he makes the curious judgment that, for Athanasius, man's original state was one of