

## REVIEWS

### PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY

RELIGION AND REVELATION. The Paddock Lectures for 1931. By A. L. Lilley. (London: S.P.C.K.; 4/6.)

Canon Lilley's latest work, like some previous works of his, deals with certain historically significant occasions in the development of a particular doctrine; its sub-title is: 'A Study of Some Moments in the effort of Christian Theology to define their Relations.' An earlier volume on the Sacraments described as 'A study of some Moments in the attempt to define their Meaning for Christian Worship' was a work of much interest, and, in spite of not a few errors, instructive. His treatment of Catholic doctrine and of Catholic theologians was marked by great sympathy and by an evident desire to do them justice. The same goodwill is manifest in the present volume, but we have to say at once that the author is not equipped with the knowledge requisite for the task he has undertaken. Naturally a good many pages are devoted to St. Thomas, more than half the book in fact. Canon Lilley treats him with reverence, and, in a sense, shows an extensive acquaintance with his writings. But there can be no doubt that he has not understood him; and the account he gives of the Saint's teaching is often nothing but a travesty. We will give one or two instances from among the many that might be given.

Canon Lilley thinks that according to St. Thomas the reason why man needed revelation of the mysteries of faith and why he had not the intuitive vision of God was that he was a creature made up of body and soul. He speaks as if angels enjoyed that vision from the very fact that they were immaterial substances (pp. 45, 48, etc.). There is no need to point out how this betrays a complete misunderstanding of St. Thomas' position.

He travesties St. Thomas' view of the Bible, because he is unaware of the distinction between Revelation and Inspiration. It is difficult at times to know precisely what he means, as for instance when he says that for St. Thomas the Scriptures 'had in their whole extent and in every part a full revelational value' (p. 34). But it is perfectly plain from the whole book that he has no idea what we Catholics

mean by Inspiration. It is quite true that according to Catholic doctrine the Scriptures are inspired in all their parts. But not all that they contain was revealed. Unlike the prophets, says St. Thomas (2a—2æ: CLXXIV: 2, ad 3), who spoke in the person of the Lord, saying to the people: *Thus saith the Lord*, those who wrote the hagiographa 'spoke as a rule of things which can be learned by human reason, and spoke not as in the person of God, but in their own person, though with the aid of a divine light.' It is also true according to Catholic doctrine that, being inspired, the Scriptures contain no error. But it does not follow that every sentence in them is true. Truth is to be found only in a judgement or an assertion, and it is the inspired author's assertions, not anyone else's, that inspiration guarantees. It is necessary, therefore, to consider what precisely he is asserting, and also in what sense. And even the most conservative theologian will allow that in determining this, account must be taken, among other things, of Semitic modes of thought and of speech. It is just such considerations as these that led, for instance, to the establishment of the Dominican Biblical School at Jerusalem, a school which, remaining faithful to the principles of St. Thomas, has produced a series of works admired even by the most independent of Biblical critics. And yet Canon Lilley lumps us with fundamentalist Protestants (p. 118).

He states quite clearly 'that the traditional view of Revelation, re-affirmed by the Vatican Council, is the classic theology of Christendom,' and he has done good service in insisting on the gulf that separates this view from the view held by many calling themselves Christians, among whom must be reckoned many Anglo-Catholics. Where he fails is in his account of the nature of Revelation according to the traditional view, and in not adequately distinguishing between Revelation and Inspiration. He says that there is no fundamental Protestant who would not be grateful for the determined assertion of Leo XIII that the Holy Scriptures were written 'at the dictation of the Holy Spirit' (p. 118). The truth is that the fundamentalist Protestant would understand this technical phrase as little as Canon Lilley seems to have understood it.

L.W.