

ists—particularly psychological and spiritual ones—are really at home with the classic tongue. Many more people will be able to take this book down from the library shelves and begin to understand what the ancient ‘rational psychology’ was about and how it can apply to moral practice. The translators have carried out their difficult task with success, if not distinction (for it would be almost impossible to turn this practical Latin into distinguished English prose). The book is readable and accurate. But no one unfamiliar with St Thomas’s commentaries on Aristotle should begin to read without first mastering the Introduction by Father Thomas. ‘We should’, he says, ‘read the Commentary as an exposition of an enquiry composed within a living tradition still vitally active in speculation.’ (p. 15.)

CONRAD PEPLER, O.P.

THE PEOPLE’S PRIEST. By John C. Heenan. (Sheed and Ward; 12s. 6d.)

‘The reader’, says Dr Heenan by way of preface, ‘will find little enough in these chapters about the deeper spiritual life of the priest. My object in writing is much more modest. It is to give younger priests the results of twenty years’ experience in the ministry. I cannot tell them what they ought to do. I know, by recalling past blunders what they should avoid. I shall suggest how the priest in a parish can seek and find perfection in his own state.’ The twenty-two chapters which follow are eminently readable, often amusing and always practical. And accordingly the clergy will like them. The narrative is intensely personal without being in the least egoistic.

As one would expect from the title, the book is mainly concerned with the attitude to be adopted towards the pastorate. Dr Heenan deals in turn with all the aspects and manifestations of parish life: the sick, the poor, the institutions and the rest. He speaks clearly from experience and stresses the importance, which indeed can never be exaggerated, of compassion and of kindness. He rightly stresses the importance of visiting. The chapters on the administration of the sacraments, and especially confession, are outstandingly good. He writes with a virile tenderness about our Blessed Lady and he has a first-rate chapter on ‘The Work of Conversion’ in which he has had so great experience. All these things are illustrated with a wealth of scriptural quotation.

Dr Heenan is always stimulating but sometimes provocative. And occasionally one pauses to consider whether what he says is really the mind of the Church. When for example he says: ‘The breviary can easily become an obstacle to our prayer of thanksgiving’, he might seem to suggest that private prayer is to be preferred to the *Opus Dei*. It is rather surprising that in his chapter on Prayer he has less than one page on the Divine Office. And even in that small space he takes the surely defeatist line that ‘for the most part the Office will be a burden’.

Nowadays, more and more priests are becoming conscious of the fact that the Divine Office, precisely because it is imposed by the Church and because it is the prayer of Christ, must be in the line of prayer the chief means of their sanctification. No one doubts the vital and overwhelming importance of mental prayer. But it is too often emphasised at the expense of the *Opus Dei*. Really it should flow therefrom and be intimately related thereto. The Mass and the Divine Office are surely the integrating and unifying factors of the spiritual life, which if they are fulfilled in all their richness will cause other things to be seen in the right proportion and in simplicity.

It is always dangerous to be content with mediocrity and perhaps to make too many allowances for the frailty of human nature even when aided with grace. Nevertheless, it is with some surprise that one reads in the chapter on the Priesthood as follows: 'If it is appalling when a man abandons his priesthood, it is still more appalling if, no longer practising the priestly virtues, he nevertheless remains within the ranks of the priesthood. For such a man would do better to depart. By remaining he only harms the little flock for whom Christ died.' It is at least to be hoped that no one will be discouraged by these words. Our Blessed Lord bade us not to break the bruised reed or to extinguish the smoking flax; and the Church, who has made 'priests for ever', even when she laicises never releases from the vow of celibacy. Her mind assuredly is to take a tender and infinite care lest one of them be lost. That was the burden of Christ's own prayer after the Last Supper. He did not reject St Peter from the priesthood after the denial. Instead, he turned and looked on him.

Most of the saints seem to have been the opposite of rigorists. They accepted the fact, generally speaking, that indifferent things are relative. But Dr Heenan says: 'A priest's time is too valuable to waste on thrillers and popular romances'. And later on: 'It is a useful habit *always* [italics ours] to have a pencil in hand when reading'. Surely one cannot always be so categorical? These things are relative. And anyhow, does not such a notion smack of that utilitarianism of which we have all had more than enough? It is what we *are* that matters even more than what we *do*. And this tension in our being can lead to nervous breakdowns. Very few people have the physical, moral, mental, and spiritual élan to dispense entirely with harmless relaxation. Dr Heenan's standards in this matter might easily lead to discouragement.

Speaking of preaching, the author says: 'The advantage of delivering a sermon spontaneously is that the attention of the congregation is more easily held. . . . The man who constantly refers to notes is telling the people what he thought. The man who uses none is telling them what he thinks.' That is certainly true. But it seems to be contradicted, or at any rate vitiated, a little later on when the author says: 'The ideal

way of preaching is to learn a sermon by heart'. Most priests see more reason in following the advice of Cardinal Manning in this matter when in *The Eternal Priesthood* he says: 'This outline or synopsis must be thought out and impressed, not upon the memory, but upon the intellect, so that the whole with its parts and its continuity, is present to the mind, not by remembering but by reasoning'.

Most books on the priesthood are stimulating, especially to the young clergy. This one is dynamically challenging as one would expect from Dr Heenan. Thank God, he destroys complacency, and if sometimes he seems a little ruthless, the reader will rejoice that he is rightly intolerant of the second-rate, and, remembering that God's power finds its full scope in man's weakness, he will never be discouraged.

GORDON WHEELER

MORALS IN EVOLUTION. By L. T. Hobhouse, D.LITT. (Chapman and Hall; 25s.)

Professor Ginsberg, who contributes a new introduction to this, the seventh edition of a well-known treatise, writes of it as 'a synthesis on an imposing scale of data derived from comparative religion, history and anthropology in the light of Hobhouse's own work on comparative psychology, the theory of knowledge and moral philosophy'. (p. xi.) The synthesis is, of course, moulded in the self-assured rationalism of the beginning of this century when the book was written; and the evolution described is the evolution of moral philosophy rather than morals, because of the identification of morality with reflexive knowledge about human morality which was an assumption of the time. Indeed, work of this kind still suffers from the imposing of patterns and the unproven assumptions of their authors. Here for example the author assumes that 'spiritual religions' only came into being when man first attempted to articulate a scheme of the world process and to discover a solution to the problem of being; he assumes, too, that at such a period the original polytheisms began to give place to the more spiritual and more moral monotheisms. From such premises 'spiritual religions' become identified with those forms of religion which developed a dualism between the flesh (or the world) and the spirit. For the Christian, however, who approaches the same facts from the 'assumptions' of a revealed religion, the pattern is quite different. The unique religion, which does not merely evolve, but is established on the foundation of evolving morals and religion by the one true God, gathers or 'recapitulates' all the best features of these religions into a single concrete whole in which 'spirit' and 'flesh' are wedded into a wholesome unity.

Yet the facts set out with such thoroughness and close analysis in this