

recommends C. R. Harris and E. A. Moody), or the idealists, who are made quite remarkably baffling—but on his own ground, on Locke or Hume or Russell, he is very well worth reading.

LAURENCE BRIGHT, O.P.

THE RANGE OF REASON. By Jacques Maritain. (Geoffrey Bles; 15s.)

This book is made up of ten essays which formed the bulk of the author's *Raison et Raisons* published in 1947, supplemented by seven others. By this manipulation of his material M. Maritain hopes that the present book forms a more satisfactory unity than the French book, which bore the sub-title of *Essais détachés*.

In what this unity consists is perhaps sufficiently indicated by the title. The book is divided into two parts entitled 'Human Knowledge and Metaphysics', and 'Faith and the Human Community'. The first begins with an essay on our human rational knowledge, especially the supreme science of metaphysics and its relation to the modern empirical sciences. But although man is a rational animal, he has other ways of knowing than the strictly rational one. The various forms of knowledge by connaturality are accordingly next dealt with. Then again, human knowing has its implications, its degrees of self-awareness, its history. Several essays on these aspects conclude this section, among them one entitled 'The immanent Dialectic of the first act of Freedom' being the most closely knit and the most thoroughly metaphysical in method.

The title of the second part is more explanatory of its contents than the first. This part still comes under the range of reason, firstly because the realm of politics, as part of ethics, necessarily involves the use of the practical intellect and depends upon the givings of the speculative intellect; and secondly, because we are here concerned with faith, not strictly as such, but as healing and enlightening reason, and especially the practical reason, in the exercise of its (reason's) own functions. The non-Christian reader may demur to this last, and maintain that the author is undoubtedly talking theology, and therefore something irrelevant to him. But the opposition which the Church has met with throughout her history is there to prove that her theology (the thinking that guides her action) can no more be ignored by anyone concerned with human reason, than can the fact of her existence by the historian. Moreover, this problem of the relationship between the Church and the temporal human community with which M. Maritain is here preoccupied, is one perhaps which within the Church is reaching a decisive stage, comparable to that of the problem of the relationship between speculative human reason and faith which was reached in the age of Aquinas. If that latter crisis was resolved in a sense which safeguarded the autonomy of reason in its own sphere in contradistinction to the previous somewhat fideist compromise, the question whether the

Catholic theologian finally resolves the former in favour rather of the relative autonomy of temporal communitarian ends, than of the medieval sacral interlude (and this is M. Maritain's contention), can surely be of no less interest to the humanist.

Enough has perhaps been said to indicate the importance of the problems dealt with in his book. It must be confessed, however, that the many valuable things M. Maritain has to say on these would have gained in force had greater care been taken in the presentation of his book. The impression of unity given by a book is always imperilled when it is made up of items written at various times and for various occasions; items, too, which vary in their value and interest. One feels the need for a greater degree of self-editing than has here been undertaken, and, above all, the lack of an introduction serving to make the connections of these *disjecta membra* more evident.

RONALD TORBET, O.P.

EXISTENTIALISM AND THE MODERN PREDICAMENT. By F. H. Heinemann. (Adam and Charles Black; 18s.)

CHRISTIANITY AND EXISTENTIALISM. By J. M. Spier. (The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company; \$3.00.)

METAPHYSIQUE DU SENTIMENT. By Th. Haecker.

GABRIEL MARCEL ET LA METHODOLOGIE DE L'INVERIFIABLE. By Pietro Prini.

CRISE DE LA METAPHYSIQUE. By Max Müller. (Desclée de Brouwer.)

Anyone who discusses what is loosely called *Existentialist* philosophy is peculiarly liable to the temptation to develop, in a succession of portentous clichés, some sort of history of western culture culminating in a critical Now in which the exponents of this philosophy play an urgently dramatic role. It is not being suggested here that such a view is necessarily false because it is platitudinous, nor that the philosophers themselves are free from preoccupations with the 'fate of western culture', nor even that they or their commentators ought to be free from such preoccupations; but it is surely true that the real importance of a philosopher is obscured when he is interpreted as a portent in the interpreter's pet eschatology and not *metaphysically*, as contributing to our intelligence of Being.

Dr Heinemann, I am afraid, has a quite remarkable flair for the acceptable cliché: *Respondeo ergo sum* is his 'key-symbol'. He is at some pains to assure us of his credentials for his task: he is apparently on familiar terms with many of the leading philosophers he discusses, and claims to have coined, in 1929, the term *Existenzphilosophie*—not, it might have been supposed, something of which he would have wished to remind us. Yet his brief digests of Kierkegaard, Husserl, Jaspers, Heidegger, Sartre, Marcel and Berdyaev are undistinguished, except for the chapters on Husserl and Heidegger, which simply miss the point—the point being, in