

instance, prevents the 'central thinking' from substituting memory for perception.

The real value of Biran, however, seems to lie in his witness. As Diogenes *stepped out* to put the logicians of his day in possession of the fact of movement, as Pascal inveighed against geometrical thinking and Kierkegaard against the crippling of life by the all-devouring dragon of Hegelian logic, so Biran by lifting his finger hoped to convince the empiricists that a dead hand is, so to speak, not a principle of movement. *Le sens intime* emphasises the need of intension as well as of extension in logic and is freely translated by contemporaries like Le Senne and Lavelle as 'the sense of being'.

The present study is academic and necessarily leaves much unresolved. For instance, is Maine de Biran attempting to solve what is intrinsically a problem of being by an analysis of mind? The origin of the concept is not clarified; could not a strong point be made with Hume, for example, that thinking apprehends the reality of the universalised form only in the image of the individual reality? An account too of the origin of first principles that skimps sensation seems a little rushed. The author hints at a certain Stoicism in Biran, a hint worth developing: the effort to overcome the resistant flux of existences? (Incidentally an overdoing of 'resistant reality' only prolongs the war between being and good started by Kant's disjunction).

Again, the background is barely sketched (except for Descartes). Hume had displaced the eighteenth-century natural man who was a Man of Reason by the new natural type, the Man of Feeling. Maine de Biran's 'Moi' tries to unite both in the whole man, but too much weight is laid on 'interiority' and volition (as he explicitly defines 'effort' in one place). Also, is it not principally intuition and not effort that is involved in the primitive fact—effort is rather the later elaboration? Further, as in Buber's 'primary word', is it not rather the togetherness of the I and reality rather than their duality that is given fundamentally, and is not the direction of the act of apprehension primarily towards an exterior presence? The notion of 'engagement' or 'being committed to reality' (which is so valuable in recent existentialism) seems missing here. Finally, although Père Monette quotes Pascal on the evidence of the 'heart', and Kierkegaard, Biran's contemporary, stresses 'interest', one misses any such note in Biran, and the author says that it is useless to point out that Biran does not envisage causality within a metaphysic of being, since the choice was between him and the extremes of innate ideas and Hume's scepticism. Perhaps it needed a philosophy for which Descartes was not too confessedly a 'mother-doctrine' to reinstate the key doctrine of finality once more.

JOHN DURKAN

THE NATURE AND UNITY OF METAPHYSICS. A dissertation by Rev. G. M. Buckley, M.M., M.A. (Catholic University of America Press, Washington, D.C.; \$3.00.)

It is surprising that the Catholic University of America is so care-

less of its reputation as to sponsor such a publication as this. The bibliography alone gives it away. Works of vulgarisation, general manuals of an out-of-date character, and too many of the University's own doctorate theses make up the majority of volumes referred to. Little or no account seems to be taken, in it or in the text, of the vast amount of Thomist research that has been carried on in France and elsewhere. The method of compilation seems to have been to read comparatively popular presentations, to follow up their references, and to give the texts so found in a series of footnotes. The central and important section on analogy, for example, is evidently taken from Dr Phelan's slight lectures published by the Marquette University Press; one result is that a passage with which Dr Phelan made much play but whose phraseology is unique in St Thomas's work is described as typical of his treatment (p. 83). The author is not above translating a neuter nominative as a dative (p. 103) (in the same passage he clings to the obviously faulty punctuation of the printed editions), confusing simple apprehension with sensing (p. 59 n. 70) and writing such slovenly phrases as 'the third member of being *per se* is the distinction of being into act and potency' (p. 68). The whole is *précis*-work of the most material kind without any attempt at interpretation or even explanation; there is no suggestion that either the thought or the exegesis of St Thomas may be difficult.

It would be ungenerous not to recognise the painstaking work that must have gone to this study. The fault seems to lie not with the student but with an academic tradition that promotes tasks so little worthy of the human spirit and publishes the fruitless results.

COLUMBA-RYAN, O.P.

**THE INTELLECTUAL LIFE, ITS SPIRIT, CONDITIONS AND METHODS.** By A. D. Sertillanges, O.P., translated by Mary Ryan. (Mercier Press; 10s. 6d.)

Sound common sense has usually a poor market. Buyers flatter themselves they know all about that. Often they do, but too seldom think about it. It would be a pity if for this reason students, especially those at the beginning of their studies, should pass over this store of good sense on the practical business of studying, at last made available in English. The book should certainly be in every library that serves Catholic students. It is the collected wisdom of a generous-minded scholar and a humble disciple of Truth. Nothing is too great, nothing too small for his attention: where God comes in, how to take notes, when to sleep, how to pray and read and play. Here is the life of study set in the life of holiness by an author equally practical about both and who writes as well for the part-time as for the professional student. To the kind of question 'Is there such a thing as a Catholic mathematician, scientist etc.?' these pages provide an inspiring, affirmative answer.

Père Sertillanges has had rare good fortune in meeting with a trans-