

been written on the theology of the *Purgatorio*, whether the Christian character of that exquisite third of the *Comedy* has ever been more simply and convincingly related to Catholic teaching.

I have dwelt on what seem to me the excellencies of this book, because if I were to press my objections to certain points, I should become rather involved and excessively tedious. Besides, it is nice to pay compliments. But I must add that if much of Miss Sayers' book is theological explanation of the *Comedy*, and very good too, a large part of it, and in her eyes just as important a part, is taken up with an attempt to explain Dante's allegorical method: and here I find myself admiring her ingenuity, amazed at her assurance and unconvinced by her conclusions. And to those of her readers who are beginners in Dante, I should like to say, perforce dogmatically, two things: that it is less necessary than she thinks to sort out and define the four 'senses' of the *Comedy* before one starts to read it; and that her confident elucidation of these four 'senses' is unsupported by the main tradition of Dante scholarship and is very questionable in itself. But it is quite good reading.

KENELM FOSTER, O.P.

THE ENGLISH TRAVELER TO ITALY. By George B. Parks. Volume I, The Middle Ages (to 1525). (Roma, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura; £3 15s.)

This volume, itself long (669 pages), is but the first part of Mr Parks' work on *The English Traveler in Italy*. It covers 'Roman and Anglo-Saxon Britain', 'The Earlier Middle Ages (1066-1300)' and 'The Ending Middle Ages (1300-1530)', and describes for each period the travellers themselves and the means they took—routes, transport—to get to Italy, and tries to assess the nature of their impressions and the nature of any cultural exchange between the two countries. In this last respect, the author is not interested only in Italian influence on England; for the last period, for instance, he suggests (p. 453) that 'it could indeed be argued that Italy drew more intellectual sustenance from England, than England from Italy. Englishmen came to Italy to study law; a few came to study the new classical learning. Students at Italian universities, on the other hand, who were Italian in the majority, studied philosophy and theology, and something of the methodology of science, in frequently English terms. We cannot strike a balance here, but we may at least note something of an exchange.'

The bulk of the story is naturally taken up by the ecclesiastical travellers, an archbishop going to receive the pallium, clerical litigants appealing to the curia, lay litigants in ecclesiastical causes, and by pilgrims. But we do not get the story only of the travels of clerics,

nor of students and diplomats; we find the author discussing the exports to Italy of the Arthurian legend in the twelfth and of *opus anglicanum* from the thirteenth century, the activities of mercenaries like Hawkwood in the fourteenth, together with the growth of diplomatic exchange and the exchange of books.

The author's method is to put down whatever data he has discovered about the subject with a scrupulousness that makes the book somewhat irksome to read. The space allotted to topics is governed by their complication rather than by their importance, and there is much here that is uncomfortably between the expansive minuteness of a learned article and the measured brevity of a book. The work would be intolerable to the general reader and is clearly not designed for him, and it is surely a mistake to have translated all the many quotations—though an exception could be made for the author's version of Robert Flemmyng's *Lucubracionculae tiburtinae*. The matter quoted is almost always of the highest interest, the extracts from St Willibald's autobiography, for instance, the Malmesbury *Notitia Portarum*, the account of twelfth-century Rome by Master Gregory; but the letters of the merchants Richard Farmer and Thomas Watts (pp. 409-415), and of John Free (pp. 554-563) are not of comparable interest and help to give the work something of the appearance of a jackdaw's nest; the latter, moreover, have been printed twice already. This, however, is bound to be the most unsatisfactory volume of the work. The information is scattered and spare, and little of it can be final, as the effect of Perroy's work on the late fourteenth century has shown. But this volume, well illustrated and indexed, reveals a caution and devotedness that leave the reader eager to examine Mr Parks' treatment of periods ahead, where the seams are richer and the metal, once extracted, can be more readily worked into shape.

J. R. HALE

NATURE AND GRACE. Selections from the *Summa Theologica* of Thomas Aquinas. Translated and edited by A. M. Fairweather. (S.C.M. Press; 30s.)

The discerning introduction to these texts wonders what would have happened at the time of the Reformation if Aquinas had been universally understood by all parties, for they illustrate a thirteenth-century balance, tilted afterwards on one side or the other, which respected nature and did not thereby diminish the need for grace, a gift quite beyond our deserving. If only Cajetan had been born a German and not an Italian! Balance, however, is the wrong term if it implies a division of parts, for St Thomas considers the coincidence of two complete and principal causes in a single effect. His conviction,