

REVIEWS

general reader whom it is hoped to reach. Less understandably, Père Lebreton's fine preface has had to give way to some trite hackwork from the General Editor of the *Religion and Culture Series* in which the edition appears. But the translation is good, unpretentious and thoroughly readable.

We hope that it will soon be followed by translations of the author's subsequent magnificent studies on the moral and social implications of our incorporation into the Whole Christ, and on our assumption thereby into the mystery of the Life of the Trinity of Persons.

VICTOR WHITE, O.P.

A RABBINIC ANTHOLOGY, selected and arranged with Comments and Introductions by C. G. Montefiore and H. Loewe. (Macmillan; 18s.)

Unless it is held—according to what seems an unlikely opinion—that Rabbinic religion underwent a profound change during the period in question, it remains to accept the evidence provided by this anthology as forming a genuine, although an incomplete, record of Pharisaism as it was taught and held at the time of Christ, or somewhat earlier, and onwards until about the fifth century.

As Montefiore acknowledges, the characterisation is rendered very imperfect through the complete omission of *Halakah* material—that is to say, of all that body of Rabbinic teaching that was formed of their scholastic, casuistic elaborations and interpretations of the Law. Nevertheless it is their more purely spiritual moral and religious life that should properly be taken as finally characteristic of the whole; it is by the soul of their religion that the body must be judged, scarcely the reverse.

A tremendous depth, sincerity, purity are the marks of the religion that reveals itself here. At least it is hard to think that an unprejudiced mind should judge otherwise. All that is noblest (if not most sublime) in the religion of the 'Old Testament (its Christian promise apart) is here carried on and in some points even developed. (As, for example, in the working out of the great conception of the *Shechinah*, of the conception and practice of *Kawwanah* and of *Kiddush ha-Shem*.) And through the homely, spontaneous form of the *Haggadah* teaching it is possible to make contact with the Rabbis themselves and discern the noble character of their personal religion.

It cannot be said that, in view of Christ's denunciation of Pharisaism, it is disloyal in a Christian to submit to such impressions as these. For, supposing it is thought that Christ's denunciation was in part directed against essential Pharisaism, and not merely against an abuse of real Pharisaism, it highly

BLACKFRIARS

becomes a Christian before he allows himself to stand in judgment with Christ, to let himself be humbled and shamed by the goodness that is set before him. Certainly our common facile charges of mediocre moralism, of anti-mysticism, etc., break down before the evidence that is provided here. And, on the other hand, insofar as it was a false Pharisaism that Christ denounced, it is not for us to insist on being able to verify the abuses, or to find traces thereof.

More scholastically considered, the book has great importance for the study of the bible. It is pleasant to consider that it is necessary to resort to the schools of the Rabbis in order to attain a full understanding of the Scriptures. The service of introduction and interpretation is supplied by the Jewish editors of this book; they have been generously attentive to all the needs of scholarship, and still more generous has been their concern for the cause of charity.

There is scarcely less of charm than of edification in this book, and they do not make separate features. This lovely prayer that God is imagined to pray may be said to comprise the best of *Green Pastures* at a stroke: "May it be my will that my compassion may overcome mine anger, and that it may prevail over my attributes (of justice and judgment), and that I may deal with my children according to the attribute of compassion, and that I may not act towards them according to the strict line of justice."

RICHARD KEHOE, O.P.

SOCIOLOGY

A PERSONALIST MANIFESTO. By Emmanuel Mounier. Trans. from the French by Monks of St. John's Abbey. (Longmans; 7s. 6d.)

We have wasted an enormous amount of valuable time being negativists, being content to do no more than condemn non-Christian attempts to remedy the evils which surround us. This has caused us to be regarded as in alliance with those evils. It has also lost us those who, for want perhaps of a better alternative, turned to the non-Christian solutions. The lead was given us, *Roma locuta est*; but then, in a sense not originally intended, *causa finita est*. There could be nothing more fiercely affirmative than the social encyclicals; but they need to be implemented by an equally affirmative policy on our part.

That affirmation, happily, is not now everywhere lacking. In the realm of action, there is the great collective affirmation of the Christian Workers. In the realm of thought, there are the many efforts being made to think out anew the implications for sociology of the Christian doctrine of man: to think out an