

BLACKFRIARS

delivered; on the contrary, we are enabled to understand it all the more profoundly and see more readily its applications to our own everyday life.

This work is neither scientific nor apologetic, still less does it belong to the so-called 'edifying' category. It is neither dry nor technical, nor is it overburdened with a display of erudition. But it makes real to us the oriental world in which Christ lived; details which at first sight seem irrelevant and unimportant are suddenly shown to elucidate our understanding of His story and of Himself.

We are convinced that this work of an Austrian priest, with its numerous maps and illustrations, will—although any sort of emotional appeal is foreign to its purpose—make a profound impression on the mind of every reader, and take an important place in the religious literature of every country.

ANTON HILCKMANN.

LE SENS DU MYSTERE ET LE CLAIR-OBSCUR INTELLECTUEL. By R. P. Garrigou-Lagrange. (Desclée de Brouwer; Frs. 20.)

The Thomist revival has produced much that is by nature transient but it is possible that two of its leaders, P. Gardeil and P. Garrigou-Lagrange, will maintain a lasting influence on Catholic thought. The massive achievement of P. Gardeil may remain as antidote to facile speculation, the original sin in so many schoolmen, and the clear analysis that characterizes the writings of P. Garrigou-Lagrange may counteract the loose phrasing which can only serve as a winding-sheet to Thomism. For in retrospect the last revival in the study of St. Thomas is seen to have been in double danger. It would have been so simple to have followed in that line of least resistance—organized commonsense made easy by the use of well worn terms and neat tinkling concepts which had long served as counters in a scholastic market. Perhaps more than any other of the leaders P. Gardeil saved the movement as a whole from such surrender. Again, the new policy in controversy brought contact with very alien influences. It would have been simple for a younger school of Thomists to canonize as well as to accept the tendencies of their generation and to mistake a compromise for a distinction. Perhaps more than any other of the leaders P. Garrigou-Lagrange saved the movement as a whole from such surrender. For he has maintained for nearly thirty years the great tradition of the commentators; lucid accuracy in terminology, the power to analyse and to distinguish, a realization of the importance of the minute. It is suggestive that he should seem to move on parallel lines of speculation that can be followed back to the silver age of Thomism; the one to Cajetan, the other to John

of St. Thomas: the line of analytic reason and the line of Thomist mysticism. It is this that adds significance to his latest work. There is no endeavour to join parallels, but it links them.

For the present study opens with an analysis of metaphysical certainty and closes with a chapter on the night of the senses and on the night of the spirit in *le clair-obscur spiritual*. It deals with subjects that at first seem divergent; with the nature of sense-knowledge and of causality, with the possibility of the vision of God and the possession of faith; and yet there is no digression, only integration. Such an achievement is emphasised by a careful avoidance of the emphatic manner. It is only in the fourth chapter *Le Clair-obscur intellectuel* that he permits himself two emphases which perhaps may indicate the motifs of his work; a strong loyalty to tradition even in its word form and a revulsion from false quantities in thought. 'On chemine ainsi parmi les rayons et les ombres' and then again 'Une petite déviation sur les principes mène à de monstrueuses erreurs.'

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.

CHURCH, COMMUNITY AND STATE: A WORLD ISSUE. By J. H. Oldham. (Student Christian Movement Press; 1/-.)

This pamphlet is documentary evidence of the new development that has been noticeable for some time past in what has been hitherto known as the 'Ecumenical' movement. There is a remarkable absence of those claims that have made the Movement theoretically so unreal, if not to say irresponsible, in the eyes of Catholics.

The pamphlet was written at the request of the Universal Christian Council for Life and Work (popularly known as the 'Stockholm Movement') and is meant to serve as a sort of 'opening discussion' of the issues that will form the theme of the World Conference of Churches to be held in 1937. A number of smaller conferences will prepare the work of that big conference. An interesting Appendix gives a detailed programme of study and the plans for the world conference. The author surveys some of the modern conceptions of the State and their underlying theory of man. Here springs up the problem that faces the Christian. It is the challenge of secularism, both in its practical and its more theoretical aspects.

This new development which we think is evident in the programme of the Christian Council amounts to something like a complete revision of the original 'ecumenical' scheme. We do not draw from this an argument, but wish to say that we think this new start is perhaps less conspicuous (and deceiving) but more valid.

OSKAR BAUHOFFER