

Book Reviews

designed simply because it is not confined to a period. But if, say, the mediaeval chapters could be issued in one part and the post-Reformation chapters in another, the separate parts would, I am certain, find a very ready market among those who were studying the various periods.

CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS.

MOUNT ZION. By Gwendolen Greene. (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd.; 7/6.)

Mrs. Greene was the recipient and editor of the collection of letters published last year under the title *Letters from Friedrich von Hügel to a Niece*. That book brought her letters and questions from all parts of the world. In writing the present book, 'I have,' she says, 'been urged by the desire to answer some of the questions I have been asked—that was my first incentive—and I remember, too, how my uncle used often to beg me to write, saying that Julius Caesar and Mrs. Trollope did not start writing till their middle age. So in their august company I have started off, since I seemed to have something that I wanted to say.'

'Mrs. Greene obviously owes a lot to Von Hügel's thought, though her work is totally different from his.' So say the publishers, and one can only conclude that if they have read Mrs. Greene's work, they have certainly not read Von Hügel's. It is simply not true to say that her work is totally different from his. We have Mrs. Greene's own word that 'to my Uncle I owe, under God, all I see.' And she owes to him not only what she sees, but very often the language in which she expresses it. She seems, indeed, to write for a good deal of the time, not so much with her eye straining to see the object, as with her ear held to catch the words Von Hügel would describe it in. This is a pity, as Mrs. Greene can write simply and well (as the preface shows), whereas Von Hügel's own peculiar style is best left to himself.

What gave Von Hügel his position as one of the sanest and most inspiring spiritual teachers of the day, was his insistence on the need of what he called 'that fundamental Christian virtue, *creatureliness*,' and what, in theological language, is called the special virtue of religion, that attitude of mind and heart which leads to due acknowledgement of God as God, infinitely real, infinitely rich. 'Honour,' says St. Thomas, treating of the virtue of religion, 'is owed to a man by reason of his excelling in some point. To God belongs a unique excellence, because He infinitely transcends all things and transcends them in every possible way.' 'The first and central act of religion,'

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Von Hügel insisted, 'is *adoration*, sense of God, of a God infinitely more than a mere assuager of all men's wants.' And he saw, too, and insisted on, the connexion of humility with religion, both indeed being based on this *reverence* for God and His goodness.

We might say many things in praise of Mrs. Greene's book, but it is surely sufficient to say this, that she does remind us of the things that are fundamental. 'Superior' souls, for instance, are apt to look down on the prayer of petition (St. Augustine reminds us that the Pharisee in the Temple asked nothing of God in *his* prayer). 'I find,' says Mrs. Greene (p. 11) 'so many good people make these askings all their worship; so many people live their lives of faith and live entirely by these askings (it is the way their sense of dependence issues), so I am pulled up in my criticisms. Prayer in itself means asking; it is dependence, supplication, the speech of the creature to the Creator, God. It is an attitude, an utter dependence on Him who is beyond ourselves, a worshipful recognition that God is God.' Again (p. 17): '*Do not criticize*; perhaps this is the most delicate and difficult of all things to learn . . . not to criticize, not to feel superior, *not to make comparisons*. How important all this is! We must dismiss all thought of self, we must fix our eyes elsewhere, and prize what is precious wherever it comes.'

We repeat, the book is to be valued for its insistence on the virtue of religion, and what that virtue issues in. One the other hand, we regret that Mrs. Greene should speak disparagingly of theology, as she does occasionally in her book. What is best in her book is nearest to theology, for theology is nothing but the organised knowledge of *God as God*. And had it had the advantage of revision by a theologian, it might have been pruned of the inaccuracies that are to be found here and there.

L. W.

RAMON LULL. By E. Allison Peers, M.A. (S.P.C.K.; 18/-).

There are three stages in the making of a work of history—the collection of all the pertinent material, the ordering of that material, and finally, the representation as a unity, of the person or period with which it deals. Only at the last stage is the past palatable to the present because only then does it come to life—with a more than contemporary vitality, its inner motives and principles being revealed.

It is thus a criticism to point out that this book has stopped, more or less, at the second stage. Chronological difficulties are