

no secret of how much Waugh's journalism was pumped out to finance an image of success and good taste, but at the same time makes clear the way in which Waugh could see through the assumptions held by many of his contemporaries and the political stances which they adopted. His ear picked up the clichés: 'That is the danger which faces so many people today', he wrote in 1932, 'to have no considered opinions on any subject, to put up with what is wasteful and harmful with the excuse that there is "good in everything" — which in most cases means inability to distinguish between good and bad' (p. 297). In stark contrast with the prevalent politics of idealism Waugh knew the limitations and flawed nature of the political animal: 'given propitious circumstances, men and women who seem quite orderly, will commit any conceivable atrocity' (p. 483). The only realistic means to salvation was through the Church and in Christ.

This is a biography valuable not only for what it tells us of Waugh, but also for the picture of the age it presents.

RICHARD FINN OP

JOHN CASSIAN, *Conferences*, trans. Colm Luibheid. Classics of Western Spirituality, Paulist Press. 1985. pp. xvi + 208. \$9.95.

JOHN RUUSBROEC, *The Spiritual Espousals and other works*, trans. James A. Wiseman. Classics of Western Spirituality, Paulist Press. 1985. pp. xviii + 286. \$9.95.

JOHANNES TAULER, *Sermons*, trans. Maria Shradly. Classics of Western Spirituality, Paulist Press. 1985. pp. xvi + 183. \$9.95

Of these three new volumes in the Classics of Western Spirituality unfortunately only one can really be commended. Cassian has been badly treated; the introduction by Owen Chadwick is disappointing and the selection of *Conferences* is badly translated. The introduction to Tauler contains some valuable comments, especially on Tauler's doctrine of faith as non-experience, but these comments are (as Emily Dickinson said) like 'beads among the bog'; to find them, the reader has to wade through a morass of vague and garbled historical assertions and a daunting array of jargonistic flora. The translation is imprecise, inaccurate and sometimes incomplete (and only a selection of sermons is included).

Ruusbroec, by contrast, is interestingly presented and well translated. The introduction situates him usefully and clearly in his historical context and suggests cogent reasons why Ruusbroec should be taken as a writer of considerable importance in the history of Christian piety. His major writings are well represented in this selection. There is a good bibliography (neither of the other two volumes has any bibliography at all).

SIMON TUGWELL OP

MARCUS GEWELD EN GENADE. DE ACTUALITEIT VAN HET MARCUSE-VANGELIE by Benoît Standaert. *Lanoo, Taitt (Belgium), 1985. pp. 215.*

Few readers of *New Blackfriars* will be able to read this book written in Flemish. This review thus has been seen as an invitation to get the book translated. It offers a new and well-founded view on the structure of St. Mark's gospel. According to the author it was written to be read to candidates for baptism in the Easter night. Its composition follows the structure of the classic discourse: prologue, narrative, argumentation, dénouement and an epilogue, complete with a 'deus ex machina' as in many dramas of that time. This analysis offers numerous new insights into the contents of the gospel and new confirmation of old insights. One example: the young man who flees away naked in 14:51–52 refers to the candidates for baptism who will enter the water naked; the young man is back again in the epilogue, the resurrection story, as a person who died with Christ and is risen with him. Brief colloraries on 'women' and 'violence' in St. Mark's gospel enrich the book.

A.F. LASCARIS OP