

## **Blackfriars**

specifically human influence he proposed a remedy which is not only ethically indefensible but psychologically impossible. The sense of spiritual Reality—*Deus fortis et vivus*—can alone give equipoise to the conflict of body and soul which is man; and the sacramental grace of matrimony is the pragmatic solution of the sex problem, for mere reason and emotion fail—and spoil in the effort to succeed.

Only in passing does Mr. Dawson treat of the details which constitute the 'problem of sex'—marriage, family, divorce, monogamy, contraception. But he sets these matters in their true perspective, and his casual remarks are worth many monographs. The pamphlet should find many readers among thinking Catholics, who will discover in it the Catholic answer to their most urgent perplexities presented with an all too rare understanding and breadth of outlook.

V.W.

**THE JURISPRUDENCE OF THE JEWISH COURTS IN EGYPT.** Legal Administration of the Jews under the Early Roman Empire as described by Philo Judaeus. By Edwin R. Goodenough, D.Phil. (Oxon). (Yale University Press: London, Milford, 13/6 net.)

Mr. Goodenough's thesis may be summed up in two members. 'In his conception of the Jewish law Philo is very close to the writer of the *Letter of Aristeeas*, who said of the Sacred Books—"For our laws have not been drawn up at random . . . but with a view to truth and the vindication of right reason (i.e., the Law of Nature,"' p. 214). It was the belief of Philo that 'the Torah was the supreme written code known to mankind, because it stood closer than any other to the Law of Nature which was the Law or Logos of God.' (p. 10). This belief of Philo is now practically moribund; yet is still arguable.

The second member of the thesis shows that for Philo, the completely Hellenized Jew of Roman Alexandria, the first member of the thesis was as good as moribund. Mr. Goodenough writes: (In) 'Philo's treatment of the laws . . . the Sacred Word is deliberately ignored or is misquoted or refuted outright, in case after case, until the resulting system is made into one which Jews could have used in their Egyptian environment under Roman rule.

'Philo's work has no value as a religious apology because it does not defend the Jewish revelation as such . . . Philo is not proving the ideal but the practical value of the Jewish code and in doing so he has in mind the code not as it was written in the Torah but as it was administered in the Courts' (p. 216).

## Book Reviews

It remained for Moses Maimonides and still more emphatically for St. Thomas to give the Torah an exposition which justifies the student of political and social institutions in looking upon the Jewish Law as the closest approach to the Law of Nature.

Students of the Matthean texts on divorce will find food for thought in Philo's study on the use of the word 'adultery.' According to Mr. Goodenough Philo bears witness to the fact that in his day there was (1) an intermediate state between simple betrothal in which the girl was *μενηστευμένη*—and complete marriage. In this intermediate state the two are called *άνηρ* and *γυνή*; (2) there was a doubt whether infidelity in this state was to be called adultery (*μοιχεία*). At the very least it would be called *πορνεία*: fornication.

This seems to throw light on Mt. V, 32, which supposes two things: (a) there is a state of pledged troth in which infidelity is called *πορνεία*; (b) only this state can be dissolved by divorce. The other state of pledged troth in which infidelity is *μοιχεία* cannot be divorced, but the divorcer makes his wife an adulteress; and whoever attempts marriage with his wife is an adulterer.

The traditional canon law about unconsummated marriages seems to throw light on this interpretation.

V. McN.

MODERN PHYSICS: A GENERAL SURVEY OF ITS PRINCIPLES.  
Translated from the German of Theodor Wulf, S.J., by  
C. J. Smith. (London: Methuen & Co., 1930; 35/-.)

The average man usually regards the working of the scientific mind with a certain amount of suspicion. While he is ready to accept experimental facts, he fights shy of the theories and deductions drawn from these facts. Yet, from the very nature of the case, the hypothesis must play a very large part in any scientific investigation. The dry bones of fact are by themselves of little use; but clothed in the flesh and sinews of a working hypothesis they become productive of new facts, in the light of which the hypothesis is examined anew and its adequacy or inadequacy discovered. And so the process goes on, until the accumulation of observed facts adequately explained by an hypothesis warrants its enunciation as a scientific truth.

Father Wulf shows how this method has been applied in physics, and in language which may be easily comprehended