

critic to be impartial, and even more impossible for a reviewer to preserve absolute equanimity of judgment. M. Lory's book however is perhaps as impartial as any book on Bloy could be: if anything, it is even too impartial. In this comprehensive and well-written work, the author examines the factors involved in Bloy's life of spiritual conflict. He shows how Bloy's real energies in the earlier part of his life were so orientated towards prayer and his zeal for God, that he was unable to deal with the struggle of earning a livelihood as journalist and *littérateur*. Yet, paradoxically enough, his concern with writing and his artist's temperament made him totally unsuited to live the ascetic life under monastic discipline, and led to a great deal of the misery in his stormy existence. M. Lory virtually condemns Bloy's theological views and dismisses the greater part of Bloy's exegesis as ill-informed or even childish. The real value of Bloy's work and thought is to be found elsewhere for, during the latter part of his life, his character became transformed by prayer and he emphasised the wonder and mystery of the supernatural order. In spite of the extreme positions he took up, he had considerable insight into the problems of his period and laid his finger on the characteristic sin of the nineteenth century, that of avarice and materialism, showing it against spiritual values which had become obscured or forgotten. His violent, and sometimes obscene, abuse was a means of shocking his fellow Catholics out of their sloth, and the clergy out of their inaction and indifference. One may feel that M. Lory has at times saved Bloy from himself and has minimised his worst excesses, but he does give us a clear, well-documented and interesting work. A full bibliography, chronology of Bloy's life, and indexes are included.

M. HAVARD-WILLIAMS

NIETZSCHE; ou L'Histoire d'un Egocentrisme Athée. Par J. C. Lannoy.
(Desclée de Brouwer; Frs. belges 145.)

For Dr Lannoy's erudition there can be nothing but praise. He has evidently studied Nietzsche's writings with the greatest attention and has examined more of the voluminous literature about Nietzsche than most people would care to face. The result is an exact and well-documented study of the philosopher's development and of the succession of his works. Where the book is not altogether satisfying is in a very different respect from that of scholarship; it is in the author's attitude to his subject. Dr Lannoy's categories are those of the rigid moralist untempered by psychological sympathy; *orgueil* and *égoïsme* seem to be made the whole explanation of Nietzsche.

That pride and self-centredness were prominent in Nietzsche, especially on the surface, is only too obvious, but he would not present the interest that he does present if they were all that needed to be said about him.

At bottom Nietzsche was very vulnerable indeed; otherwise, whatever the physical cause of his disease may have been, he would scarcely have ended in the kind of madness that in fact defeated him. His was not the complacent self-sufficiency of the Hyde Park atheist, nor can his chequered relations with Rohde, with Wagner, with Lou Salomé, be interpreted except as manifestations of his frustrated need to find someone whom he could wholeheartedly admire. From one point of view his whole philosophy is a gigantic bluff to hide from himself the emptiness of a life without God and the solitude of a life without friends who could fully understand him. The philosophy is interesting precisely because it is constantly on the verge of breaking down and because, when it attained its most strident note, it collapsed finally and for ever. Even in this bluff Nietzsche maintains a fundamental intellectual integrity; it was the kind of bluff which was necessary to give meaning to life in the universe as Nietzsche supposed it to be, and he could not be content with any conventional substitute for meaningful existence. An adequate appraisal of Nietzsche demands more sympathy than Dr Lannoy brings to the task; his book can be recommended as a careful study of the facts, but it lacks pity.

D. J. B. HAWKINS

LOGIC AND LANGUAGE; Second Series. Edited by A. G. N. Flew. (Basil Blackwell, Oxford; 21s.)

THINKING AND EXPERIENCE. By H. H. Price. (Hutchinsons University Library; 25s.)

From the outside, philosophy, by that I mean the talk of philosophers, often appears bewildering. It is rather like arriving late at a party and finding our hosts playing a complicated family word-game; we miss all the allusions, and it appears to be sheer absurdity. A little attention and reflection can show us that the game has a pattern and if we follow closely we shall soon be able to form a plausible hypothesis as to what it is all about. The difficulty about the complication of language and long-windedness of philosophers is not really serious, because philosophy, like every other human activity, has the right to its own conventions, its own technical language. Further, philosophers, like lawyers, have to be long-winded for their task is to discriminate between all the fine shades of meaning latent in our ordinary use of terms and to indicate the assumptions which underlie our normal attitudes; to do this, with clarity and accuracy, an immense amount of analysis and restatement is necessary. Nor is philosophy just a game, for it is seriously concerned with the truth or falsity, the importance or triviality, of any and every statement.

Both the works reviewed have their characteristic difficulty, but both of them are of great interest. The second series on 'Logic and Language'