

BLACKFRIARS

the possession and use of which puts a man in his right and proper relation to the objects of his cognitive and reasoning powers, whether in philosophy, religion, theology, or everyday life. Both writers show a sympathetic understanding of the various views they oppose, and Dr. Egenter further endeavours to correct mistaken views current among Christians themselves. In his treatment of humility, for instance, the most maligned as it is the most fundamental Christian virtue, he attacks a common popular misconception of that virtue with no less force than Nietzsche's view of nobility. In another place too (p. 42) he derides a common notion which acts equally as a deterrent to attempted holiness to believers, and a scandal to unbelievers, namely that a thing can become noble by being spiritualized at the expense of its nature. Human perfection is not gained by man trying to become an angel (cf. p. 74). His explanation of the significance of Christian love of one's neighbour, humility and mortification (p. 93) links up admirably with Paul Wolff's account of reverence for oneself and one's neighbour, both founded on one's reverence for God.

While Dr. Egenter is quite consistent with himself in "no more daring" to apply the description "noble" to God, some of the four marks of nobility on which he lays so much stress being obviously inapplicable to the divine nature, this seems a curious and difficult position to adopt in view of the ontological foundation which he lays for nobility. Paul Wolff here adopts far safer ground in emphasizing the analogy of being, which enables him to explain how reverence, whose primary object is being, can be felt for myself and my fellows as well as and because it is felt for God. Thus nobility, as the plenitude of this or that nature under the guise of which being evokes reverence, is predicated analogously, is genuinely convertible with the other transcendentals, and attributable to God. Dr. Egenter's four marks might be preserved in some form by restating them so as to show an analogy between the stable, wholly actual dynamism of God, and the progressive dynamism of the human agent.

Special praise should go to Dr. Egenter's defence of Aristotle's "Magnanimity," frequently scorned as a most unchristian character and the personification of worldly pride. It is again quite a false view of humility which is responsible for this stricture.

HUGO CASTERMANN.

SPIRITUALITY

THE FIRE OF LOVE. By Richard Rolle; translated by G. E. Heseltine. (Burns Oates; 7/6.)

DIVINE COMMUNICATIONS. By the Abbé Saudreau. (Burns Oates; 2 vols.; 12/-.)

REVIEWS

THE LIFE THAT IS LIGHT. By Archbishop Goodier. (Burns Oates; 3 vols.; 15/-.)

CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER. By Shirley C. Hughson. (S.P.C.K.; 6/-.)

It is a note of Catholic spirituality that it has never been completely dominated by the traditions of a single school and that the acceptance of new modes of presentation have seldom hindered the survival of the old. Four distinct traditions seem to be still current in English Catholicism and each is illustrated by a recent publication.

The modern influence of the English mediæval mystics is sporadic, often indirect and already well diffused; perhaps much of it is due to the writings and sermons of Fr. Bede Jarrett who owed so great a debt to Julian of Norwich. Yet *The Fire of Love* is the first English version of the *Incendium Amoris* since the fifteenth century redaction of Richard Misyn. Mr. Heseltine translates readably and freely and probably for a considerable public, since more than any other of Rolle's tractates the *Incendium* shares in the more popular traits of the English mystical theory in the later Middle Ages; a very individualist spontaneity, an abiding distrust for categories, a stress on the value of human friendship, an emphasis on the opportunity for union with God rather than on the possibility of a final separation from Him.

A very different school is represented by the two volumes of *Divine Communications*. The Abbé Saudreau has compiled an Anthology of Revelations, often edifying, and always of interest to a student of Phenomenalist mysticism. Many almost forgotten *ecstaticas* are represented in it and one phrase will convey the sense of period; a saying of the Abbé Saudreau is recorded, "I will be a soldier of Jesus Christ and not of Louis Phillipe."

It might seem that the Phenomenalists have tended to foster a rather excessive interest in some physical concomitants of prayer. In contrast, a group of English writings, ascetical rather than mystical in tone, have long maintained continuous concentration upon the obviously essential. Fr. Reginald Buckler, Fr. Bertrand Wilberforce and at times Bishop Hedley may be associated with this tradition, and in this generation Archbishop Goodier is by far its most influential representative. Something of his influence is suggested by the three volumes of *The Life that is Light* and will be perpetuated by them, for they represent a summary of his own retreat notes and a quarry for the retreats of the future. The volumes deal successively with the purgative, the illuminative and the unitive ways and are marked by careful clarity and logical sequence.

It is curious that none of these influences seem reflected in the study of contemplative prayer by the Rev. S. C. Hughson. Yet

BLACKFRIARS

his work is largely of Catholic inspiration and he has made little use of his great heritage of seventeenth century Anglican spirituality. The practical teaching centres on the use of the prayer of acts and remains predominantly Bakerist, and though there is evidence of some familiarity with Mgr. Farges and the ingenious P. Poulain, the perspective is fortunately that of Abbot Butler. It is a fresh example of the unique influence of the Downside tradition upon Anglican thought; a position gained through the recognition of scholarship, a distrust for clichés, the capacity for sympathy and the power to make contact. Yet it is of interest to note that Thomism has only affected Mr. Hughson through Dr. Kirk. The modern revival in Thomist mystical theology has barely touched England and, in contrast to the strangely fruitful union of the *Sancta Sophia* and of a simplified Von Hügel, the work of P. Gardeil stays still inaccessible and in an unfamiliar medium.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.

THE GLORIOUS BONDAGE OF ILLNESS. By France Pastorelli.
Translated from the French by A. D. (Allen & Unwin; 6/-.)

Madame Pastorelli has given us a book both unique in its theme and remarkable for its convincing exposition. It is a study of the inner self of an invalid and of her relations with others who come into contact, friendly or professional, with her. The writer was struck down with an incurable heart complaint in the midst of an advancing career as a pianist with exceptional talent. At first the onslaught of the disease was gradual, but for several years past her bed and sick-room has become her "whole world." Deprived of all hope of recovery and lonely in her helplessness, she fell back upon the mystery of the why and wherefore of this state of life wholly new to her. She gives an absorbing account of her experiences in trying to probe this tantalizing problem. She finds that as the body grows weaker, the mind becomes clearer, the soul stronger; for illness and suffering do not make life to cease altogether, though they may narrow and restrict it. There is still *life* to be lived, viewed from however different an angle.

Being herself Christian and Catholic, she comes to feel the need for spiritualizing this life. By reading and deeply meditating she begins to realize the purpose of suffering. She finds that illness is part of God's permissive plan for the benefit of humanity and that pain may be the gift of the all-wise Father. Did not the Saviour *choose* suffering, not for its own sake, but for the purpose of redemption? Her reading of the Gospels, of the *Imitation*, of spiritual writers enables her to accept suffering and to realize more and more how it likens her to the privileged Cyrenian.

This is no new doctrine; it is the science of the saints. What is