

BLACKFRIARS

Incidentally, three compulsory visits to *La Maternelle* might with advantage be imposed on all English and American film directors; and all but the very addle-pated members of the general public will, if they have a chance, go there too.

H. BERRY.

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ON THE POWER OF GOD. *Quæstiones Disputatæ de Potentia Dei.* By St. Thomas Aquinas. Literally translated by the English Dominican Fathers. Vol. I (Questions I—III). With an Introduction by Thomas Gilby, O.P. Pp. xii, 248. Vol. II (Questions IV—VI). Pp. 227. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne; 7/6 each vol.)

The *Quæstiones Disputatæ* are a kind of Hansard Report of the debates held by St. Thomas as part of his course of lectures. He dealt with the subject matter of these volumes during his time in Italy as official theologian to the Papal Court. They start with discussions regarding the power of God in general, and go on to His begetting and creative power (Vol. I); the creation of matter, the power whereby the universe is sustained in being, and miracles (Vol. II). We hope that these volumes will have the welcome accorded to the English translation of the *Summa Theologica* and the *Contra Gentes*. English students of philosophy and theology are under a great debt of gratitude to Fr. Lawrence Shapcote, O.P., to whom belongs the chief praise for the whole of this great work of translation.

F.v.S.

DIE GESCHICHTE DER KATHOLISCHEN THEOLOGIE SEIT DEM AUSGANG DER VATERZEIT von Dr. Martin Grabmann. (Freiburg i.B. : Herder. R.M. 12.50.)

A general survey of the history of Theology has long been needed, and the task could not have been committed to more competent hands than those of Mgr. Grabmann. Although his history begins with the close of the patristic period, an excellent introduction sums up the work of the Fathers in laying the foundation for subsequent theologians. In the 120 pages on the Theology of the Middle Ages an account is given of the work of every mediaeval theologian, mystical writer and canonist of the least importance as well as a summary of that of the Byzantine divines. Here the author is on his own familiar ground and at his very best so far as the compass and purpose of a manual permits. Another 130 pages brings the story rather breathlessly down to our own day. The lavishness with which the author lavishes unfortunately laudatory adjectives on all and

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sundry tends to obscure the relative importance of the various theologians and to make the narrative monotonous. There is a general bibliography of seven pages and a sixty-page bibliography of the principal monographs on particular theologians and schools. It will be found an invaluable book of reference by every student of Theology.

V.W.

STUDIES IN THE GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN. By the Very Rev. H. Erskine Hill, D.D. (Eliot Stock, London; 2/6.)

The author of this little book being an Anglican clergyman, it is a pleasant surprise to find him taking up such a thoroughly traditional and anti-modernist attitude on the question of the interpretation and authorship of the fourth Gospel. Without being able to agree with all the opinions of the author, for in some respects he has a theology all of his own, we have found much of what he writes very agreeable and stimulating; so much so that we look forward to the opportunity of reading a former work of his, *Mystical Studies in the Apocalypse*. His mysticism, such as it is, does not divorce him from common-sense realities.

R.G.

THE EVANGELICAL APPROACH TO ROME. By Stanley B. James. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne; 3/6.)

Mr. James' thesis is that Evangelicalism must lead logically to the Catholic Church, for there alone is it found in its integrity. Dr. Orchard's pilgrimage is something more than just another conversion to the Church: it is a symbol of Evangelicalism returning home. What at first sight might appear to be a mere piece of opportunism takes on substance under Mr. James' exposition. Evangelicalism as a movement is played out. It arose to meet the exigencies of a particular period. Faced with a very different set of circumstances it loses its appeal, and the Evangelical is forced to look for his *experience* in a different setting. He must move on from the Christ of the **Gospels** to the living Church through which Christ still continues His redemptive work. Here he will find the same *experience*, but enriched and lifted above the limitations of time and place. Mr. James has added a valuable footnote to *From Faith to Faith*.

R.B.M.

An excellent pamphlet has reached us from Basil Blackwell, Oxford (price 1/6), entitled **VATICAN DIPLOMACY**, by Humphrey Johnson. It is well written and describes the diplomatic action of the Holy See, that is to say of Benedict XV, during the war.

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By setting out that action in simple statements of fact, the impressiveness of the Pope's foresight and earnest desire to persuade the belligerents of the foolishness and the moral degradation of their policy, are most startlingly manifest. It shows the Papacy as the only power in Europe, or indeed in the world, which was on the side of righteousness and of true peace. The short foreword by Count de Salis adds to the authenticity of the whole. This is invaluable for the Catholic who is questioned over the failure of the Church in war time. She failed, not to urge the right thing, but to impose it on the warring world. She did not fail it, but it failed her.

B.J.

A wit like Camille Desmoulins will always carry off his ras-cality with less condemnation than a more stolid and perhaps more deserving villain. On the strength of this wit Desmoulins has managed to skip past the judgment of history with a caution. But then the wit must be presented as a wit, and not a hero with fine writing. That is where Mr. Piers Compton fails in his new life of *CAMILLE DESMOULINS* (Scholartis Press ;5/-). It is all too much of an effort to live up to these pages of poetic prose when all that is to be said of him to his favour can be put into two sentences—his efforts to undo some of the mischief he caused, and his fine death. His character was cheering and full of boisterous jollity, his wit was gay and mordant when he was aroused, his temper savagely brutal without his having the slightest idea of the grim use that would be made of his statements when the Terror began. But his death was so splendid that he atoned, as Charles I atoned for a spoilt life, by an ending that everyone could envy, for he died bravely with words on his lips that are eloquent and memorable. Like a true dramatist he went off the stage with an ideal 'curtain.'

B.J.

People used to denounce the railways for having destroyed or rather put out of action the magnificent canals of England. Destroyed them they have but only a5 public trade routes not as stretches of water, well-stocked with fish, lovely, disorderly in bank and luxuriant in reeds. As places of beauty the railways have made them. But who sees these canals at their best? Few of us have ever seen them as they really are. Perhaps alone of us all William Bliss has seen them in their every form and shape of beauty : read *THE HEART OF ENGLAND BY WATERWAY* (Wetherby, 7/6) and you will understand. With a delicacy of understanding which is matched by his delicacy of style, Mr. Bliss takes us through these canals in his canoe and shows us the lost England that is not lost, but visible to those alone **who**

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will follow his directions. But you must buy his book and take his maps and accept his guidance, else you may never discover all that he has seen. Others indeed we know who have begun such an adventure but never carried it out. They began badly, and the end was disappointment. Begin as he tells you to and all shall go well with you. You will come on all those lovely villages with their lovely names that sing themselves into your mind as you read the book, haunt you like a poem that you have learnt without knowing that you had. Poem, that is what this book is ; but a poem that is a guide to life. From Leeds to Guildford follow in print, and at last one day by waterway.

B.J.

A SECOND SHEED AND WARD ANTHOLOGY. (Pp. 425; 5/-.)

A collection of extracts from sixty-two Sheed and Ward books by forty-one different authors. (Why is the information on the wrapper inaccurate : sixty-four books, 452 pages?) The books themselves have been reviewed before in these pages. Here one need only congratulate the publishers. Most of the extracts make good reading despite the fact that they are extracts; some of them, indeed, may induce readers who have not yet read the whole of the books from which they are taken to do so; and while there are passages from some **works** which one is not overjoyed to see again, it is a testimony to the high standard of this firm that there is little in this representative volume which is not good and so much that is excellent.

P.L.M.

THREE NOVELS by Mrs. Wilfred Ward will be useful and entertaining to those who enjoy the omnibus form of literature. *One Poor Scruple*, *Out of Due Time*, and *The Job Secretary* are the three novels here printed. Sheed and Ward are the publishers; and 8/6 is the price. Such a book needs no commendation. Should one be needed, it is to be found in the appreciative introduction by Alfred Noyes.

B.J.

L'AVE MARIA AVEC BERNADETTE. By R. P. Piacentini. (5 francs. Sold for the benefit of the French-African Missions at L'Ecole Apostolique des Missions de Cellule, Puy-de-Dôme.)

A beautiful little commentary on the Angelic Salutation, written with the graceful touch of the poet and the certain precision of the theologian. Many an Ave Maria will be the better said for the perusal of these simple pages.

S.M.D.

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ANTONITO : A SPANISH BOY OF '10-DAY. By Fr. Benedict Williamson. (Ouseley, London ; pp. 171 ; 3/6.)

An account of the spiritual development of a Spanish boy who died at the age of eight. The book seems to have been very hastily written : there are frequent repetitions, and the English is often very faulty. There are several misprints. A number of photographs accompany the text.

P.L.M.

THOUGHTS FROM ST. BENEDICT. Edited by Maurice Leahy. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne. Pp. 112. Cloth, 2/6 ; leather, 4/-.)

Short readings, mostly from the Rule, for every day of the year.

A NEWMAN PRAYER BOOK. Compiled by Ada F. Clarke. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne. Pp. 97. Cloth, 1/6 ; leatherette, 2/6.)

A selection of prayers for many occasions from the writings of the great Cardinal.

O PERFECT LOVE AND OTHER RELIGIOUS VERSES. By Dorothy Gurney. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne. Pp. 24. 1/-.)

GOD'S GARDEN AND OTHER VERSES. By Dorothy Gurney. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne. Pp. 31. 1/-.)

Graceful lyrical verse, without the surprise of beauty.

E.C.

YOUR HIDDEN POWERS. By Alan Macey. (The Fen Series, No. 5. Fenland Press ; 2/-.)

This book suffers considerably from **lack** of definition. The author writes with conviction, but owing to the vagueness of the terminology is at times difficult to follow. The various chapters are interesting, but by the time he reaches the end of the book the reader will have judged that greater precision is necessary throughout, and especially in the chapter on the efficacy of prayer.

G.B.L.

HOUSE OF FAITH. Verses by James O'Hanlon Hughes, F.R.I.B.A. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne ; 1/-.)

Here are poems of unusual promise, both in matter and expression, though marred by faulty construction. Too much is sacrificed to originality, and the constant irregularity of metre irritates the ear.

M.B.