

Mr Anthony Rhodes had the unusual idea of travelling to Rome in Holy Year through the Sabine Hills on a donkey. He is therefore in the lively tradition of mad Englishmen abroad, and has written a most attractive account of his journey. His book is full of 'characters' and of entertaining incidents, and the remoteness of his territory from the usual tourist routes gives a special freshness to descriptions of places and people. Mr Rhodes has scholarly interests besides: his appreciation of Horace's farm is particularly happy. There are good illustrations, but a very poor map does little to help the reader to trace so delightful a journey.

I.E.

BROADCASTING AND TELEVISION SINCE 1900. By Maurice Gorham. (Dakers; 18s.)

Since most of what has been written about broadcasting and the B.B.C. is reminiscence and gossip, it is gratifying to record that Mr Gorham has added to that short list of serious books which are innocent of anecdotes about announcers, celebrities, spoonerisms and what X said to Y. The author has carried out his brief. He has mapped the milestones which mark the winged progress of broadcasting in this country and traced the developments in organisation and administration which accompanied its expansion, from the era of the cat's-whisker to the triumph of the H-aerial.

Circumstance, and the overwhelming conviction and character of Lord Reith, combined to make British broadcasting a monopoly. Its formidable achievements are here analysed objectively and with real understanding. It is when he comes to references to the broadcasting systems of other countries and to the arguments of those who oppose monopoly that the reader may feel the lack of a book not yet written. Whatever one's opinions may be, it would be easier to think clearly about the future of broadcasting and television if there existed some serious and systematic survey of the effects of broadcast programmes on the life, thinking and habits of their vast audience. Our present knowledge is fragmentary. We know, as Mr Gorham says, that 'many acquire tastes that they would not otherwise have had, and take up all sorts of new activities from pig-breeding to making music, from writing poetry to going to football matches or horse shows'. But that barely touches the edge of an almost limitless field of fascinating and difficult inquiry, and until it is undertaken we must agree that 'it is open to controversy whether the growth of the radio habit has been a benefit or an evil to mankind'. It is, as Mr Gorham adds, equally open to question whether the change from listening to viewing will be a social evil or a social good. But the silent reader will draw little comfort from his argument that 'whether it is a good or a bad thing to sit at home and allow

other people to occupy your mind, it is a more natural process to receive your impressions through two sense than through one'.

DAVID LLOYD JAMES

NOTICES

THE ORCHARD BOOKS (published by Burns Oates), a well-known series of spiritual classics, admirable alike in their editing and in their appearance, has for some time been out of print and a new edition is very welcome. The first volumes to appear (in larger format, and at much larger cost) are *THE RULE OF ST BENEDICT* in Latin and English, translated and edited by Abbot Justin McCann, O.S.B. (16s.), *REVELATIONS OF DIVINE LOVE* by Julian of Norwich edited by Dom Roger Hudleston, O.S.B. (16s.), and *THE CLOUD OF UNKNOWING* and other treatises by 'a fourteenth-century English mystic', also edited by Abbot McCann (16s.). The volumes are not simply reprints: they have been thoroughly revised, and in their new form should meet the real need for scholarly editions of the great classical works of spirituality.

GOD IN PATRISTIC THOUGHT (S.P.C.K.; 21s.), by G. L. Prestige, was described in these columns on its first appearance in 1936 as 'a fascinating volume', marking 'a new stage in positive theology'. A new edition, with some revision of judgments and ascriptions of authorship, makes available once more a book of the first importance for patristic students and indeed for all who care for exact scholarship supremely well expressed.

MERE CHRISTIANITY (Bles; 8s. 6d.) is a revised edition of three of C. S. Lewis's most successful books: *Broadcast Talks*, *Christian Behaviour*, and *Beyond Personality*. Originally prepared for radio, the chapters of Dr Lewis's book have lost none of their clarity of exposition, and in a new preface he considers what they may have achieved: not reunion, indeed, but perhaps a deeper sense of the need for it. Certainly Catholics can welcome a work of apologetic which, while it cannot tell the whole story, is a model of clear thinking and of writing to match the thought.

THE FAITH OF MILLIONS, by John O'Brien (W. H. Allen; 17s. 6d.), is a popular American account of 'the credentials of the Catholic religion'. It covers the usual territory of the catechism and is particularly designed for 'religious discussion clubs'. It should in its English edition find many readers, for few books cover so large a field and have so constantly in mind the needs of enquirers.

THE SECRET OF HOLINESS, by Father James, O.F.M.Cap. (Mercier Press; 15s.), is in the best sense a theological essay on sanctity, which is to say that it is solidly christocentric in its emphasis. Fr James is aware of the modern world and its mood, and he presents a traditional doctrine with wisdom—and patience.