

impressive in its earnestness, though it cannot entirely hide, here and there, traces of subjectivity and special pleading. Homer, Aeschylus and Euripides among the Greeks, Virgil and Dante on the life hereafter, Shakespeare, Racine and Dostoevsky, whose work reveals the 'climat chrétien' in which it was produced, are quoted extensively and with effect. A French critic on Shakespeare is always interesting, especially when, as here, he shows both knowledge and discernment; but Dr Moeller's conception of the character of Hamlet, 'ce jeune idéaliste', is too nicely adjusted to the lines of his thesis to be wholly convincing. Shakespeare, least of all poets, lends himself to *a priori* treatment. The book's underlying argument, however, remains unimpaired; we are led safely to the conclusion, hardly to be refuted, that it is only in the '*humanisme céleste*' of St Francis of Assisi and ultimately of the Gospel that evil, suffering and death find their solution.

ALFRED GRAHAM

THE NEW TESTAMENT DOCTRINE OF THE 'LAST THINGS'. By H. A. Guy, B.A., B.D. (Cumberlege, Oxford University Press; 10s. 6d.)

Eschatology is a subject which is at the present time receiving special prominence in biblical theology. This book includes a careful sifting of the eschatological teaching in the New Testament by an Anglican schoolmaster. The tracing of the various texts is in itself a valuable work, involving much patient research. At the outset the author distinguishes two aspects of the 'Last Things': on the one hand there is the 'personal' aspect (what will happen to me after death?) and then there is the 'cosmic' aspect (what will happen at the end of the world?). The second chapter consists of a review of Jewish and Old Testament notions on the subject. The author then launches out on to the Gospel teaching. Here at once we find (as we cannot but expect) the argument to be frequently vitiated by much speculation about the reliability of the Gospels themselves (with acceptance of Mk and Q as sources for Mt and Lk), and by speculations (which to us Catholics seem so idle) about the possibility of our Lord's false expectations (p. 57), ignorance or error (p. 84), or that 'the thought of Jesus underwent development at different stages of his ministry' (p. 80). Chapter IV analyses and criticises the three main views on eschatology at the present day (and it is useful to have these laid out so clearly): (a) Schweitzer's 'thoroughgoing eschatology', according to which Jesus expected the immediate advent of the Kingdom and was disappointed, (b) the traditional identification of the Kingdom with the Church, and (c) the 'realised eschatology' (the Kingdom of God is within you) usually associated with the name of C. H. Dodd. The author inclines to the third view, rejecting the two others. Lastly in this connection is recorded the view that the eschatological

teaching of the Gospels is the result of interpolations. From Chapter V a similar study is made of the Acts and the Apostolic writings. Again argument is vitiated by mistrust of sources: it is, for instance, taken for granted that the Pastorals are not Pauline, nor the Apocalypse Joannine. Further, the apocalyptic passages in Thess., Jude and II Peter (like that in Mk 13), are merely incorporations of existing Jewish apocalyptic material (p. 140). It is also supposed (p. 105 sq.) that St Paul fully expected the Parousia soon. The view of Dodd (p. 127) that a 'realised eschatology', according to which the Last Things are realised in the Messianic Age, is to be found also in St Paul, is discussed. In short, there is much that is valuable in this book, both in the study of the New Testament and in the presentation of various interpretations current among non-Catholics, and these the Catholic reader will find interesting, though he will not wish to pause over much of the unorthodox speculations.

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH, O.P.

THE NEW TESTAMENT DOCTRINE OF BAPTISM. By W. F. Flemington. (S.P.C.K.; 10s. 6d.)

At the beginning of the preface the author writes: 'It has become increasingly clear that baptismal practice is confused because baptismal theology is indefinite. There is need for a more thorough study of the biblical, patristic and liturgical evidence which must form the foundation for a more adequate theology of Christian baptism'. He would hardly have spoken of baptismal theology as confused if he had been familiar with the large treatises in the *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* or in many of the manuals of theology. The author is, however, a Methodist, and there is no small difficulty about the interpretation of Wesley's own teaching about Infant Baptism (p. 140). The object of this book, carried out in a most scholarly way, is to investigate all the evidence dealing with the sacrament of Baptism in the New Testament. A certain amount of time is, from the Catholic reader's point of view, wasted in ch. III in speculations about the reliability of Gospel evidence and the historicity of the facts therein related. Similarly ch. IV opens with an apology for accepting the evidence of the Book of Acts, and continues (p. 46) with the rebuttal of the view that Baptism was not universal among the primitive Christian communities. In spite, however, of many doubts carefully classified, the author finally (e.g. p. 109, 127) concludes in favour of the dominical authority behind the practice of Baptism.

The chief value of the book to the Catholic student is the examination of the New Testament text (even if he does not accept its treatment) and the registering of the many various interpretations. He will be helped in this by the good indices.

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH, O.P.