

THE NEW LIBRARY OF CATHOLIC KNOWLEDGE, VOLS. 1-6. *Burns and Oates, 15s. each.*

There will eventually be twelve volumes in this series, covering the Bible, the New Testament, the contemporary Church, the organization, teaching and liturgy of the Church, its art and buildings. Contributors to the reviewed volumes include Father Gordon Albion, Aloysius Mullins, O.P., and Robert Nowell, the assistant editor of the *Tablet*. The advisory editors are three Dominicans, all experts in their own fields, a former president of the Catholic Library Association (U.S.A.) and two representatives of the English Catholic Teachers Federation. The result of this formidable array of learning, journalism and teaching experience is delightfully readable. The text is clear, straightforward and easy to read. The illustrations are excellent, particularly the colour plates and the reproductions of old masters and sculpture. The maps are very helpful to a deeper understanding of the historical sequence of Old Testament events ('Preparing the Way' by M. E. Odell) and to Father Gordon Albion's outline of Church history (Volume 3). The photographs of early manuscripts of the gospels add interest to Father Aloysius Mullins' volume on the New

Testament. This also contains analyses of the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Apocrypha.

If a volume on saints was necessary to the series it was perhaps a pity that Barbara Lucas (Volume 5) did not extend her section on uncanonized saintly figures. Her accounts of Cornelia Connelly and Blessed Elizabeth Seton are good. The line drawings throughout the series, and particularly in this volume are not up to the standard of the other illustrations.

The series is designed to appeal to all ages, and although one would not expect a child much below fourteen years old to read through consecutively, much younger children have enjoyed selected passages. It is not an encyclopaedia nor a reference book in the accepted sense, but as a general outline of Catholic knowledge it introduces fresh approaches to the subject matter not found in the usual school text-book.

The series should make a useful addition to school and parish libraries and to the family bookshelf.

Ann Hales-Tooke

THE NATURE AND USE OF PRAYER by Maurice Nédoncelle, translated by A. Manson. *Burns and Oates, 30s.*

The original title of this book is *Prière humaine prière divine* – a title which gives a very good picture of what the book is about and the actual shape that it takes. It is the author's contention that these two are, structurally as it were, very closely related. He considers it essential to examine what a relationship of prayer between two men can be, before going on to examine prayer addressed to God, for the former throws much light on what is involved in the latter. Here he is very successful, but I think that a deeper understanding of prayer could have been achieved if he had given more attention to those aspects of what is involved in it which are not tied down to *requesting, imploring, etc.* And although he is naturally careful to show how the prayer of man

to God differs from that between men, nevertheless one feels the need for a greater attention to the problem of nature and the supernatural in general for the significance of the similarity to be made clear. But any such consideration was probably excluded by the philosophical technique which the author adopts.

The nature of this technique is well brought out by the English title. It is, however, in danger of giving the immediate impression of indicating what precisely is being offered, which would thus appear to be: *What prayer is, and how to use it* – a prospectus and programme, in somewhat managerial terms. But this is far from the intention; and the stress with which this study is presented as *phenomenological* soon shows that the title

To be published in April

THEOLOGICAL MEDITATIONS A new series, edited by Hans Küng, which aims at feeding Christian life with theological and scriptural protein rather than 'devotional' pastry.

THE THEOLOGIAN AND THE CHURCH

HANS KÜNG

7s net

Rarely has so much been demanded of the theologian today; yet much of what passes for theology is well-meaning but lifeless routinism. What does it mean for the theologian to work creatively? How does such work relate him to the layman, the episcopacy, to 'secular' learning?

THE DAWN OF TIME

HERBERT HAAG

7s net

The Professor of Old-Testament Exegesis in the University of Tübingen applies modern Scripture scholarship, not simply to 'solving the difficulties' of Genesis, but to revealing its message for a world which already sees creation and evolution as essentially related.

FREEDOM IN THE WORLD

HANS KÜNG

5s net

Christianity is not, in the last analysis, a matter of 'truths' and 'doctrines' so much as a matter of persons and their relationships. Hans Küng poses the question, 'How is a Christian to live who is fully involved with the world?' His answer is not a set of generalisations, but deep insight into a great Christian layman - St Thomas More.

New Stagbooks

THE PEOPLE OF GOD

Laurence Bright, O.P. (ed.)

11s 6d net

THE PARISH IN THE MODERN WORLD

J. D. Crichton, Michael Gaine, Hubert Richards, Charles Davis and others

13s 6d net

NEWMAN: A PORTRAIT RESTORED

John Coulson with A. M. Allchin and Meriol Trevor

11s 6d net

SHEED & WARD

indicates, not the end product, but the starting point. This is in fact primarily the witness of history to man's use of prayer and the various forms it takes. Thus the starting point is essentially the concrete reality (though the use of examples taken from Homer and Virgil seems somewhat contrived). And then from here, true (at least in intention) to his phenomenological principles which demand a personal engagement transcending the crude distinction between objective and subjective, the author attempts to let the nature

of the reality reveal itself. The whole technique is heavily handled, and it gives the feeling of a large wooden structure being trundled along with creaks and groans. A less self-conscious and more spontaneous phenomenology would have served the author more satisfactorily, and given witness, in a way which this book does not, to the great value of this philosophical (or theological) approach.

Giles Hibbert, O.P.

Notices

THE MASTER MUSICIANS SERIES (*Dent*) has long established itself as an authoritative introduction to the great composers. Each volume provides both biography and criticism, and musical examples and well-chosen illustrations add to the value of a series that is at once scholarly and of interest to the ordinary music-lover. Recently reprinted are *Purcell* by J. A. Westrup (18s), *Bach* by Eva and Sydney Grew (15s), *Handel* by Percy M. Young (15s) and *Beethoven* by Marion M. Scott (15s).

NEW PENGUINS include Rebecca West's *The Meaning of Treason* (5s), a contemporary classic, written with her incomparable lucidity, and now

including fresh chapters on Blake, Vassall and the Ward affair, and Hugh Thomas's *The Spanish Civil War* (15s), already established as the definitive study of the most complex and far-reaching of conflicts. In Penguin Classics, J. F. Webb has translated three *Lives of the Saints* (4s), namely *The Voyage of St Brendan*, Bede's *Life of Cuthbert* and Eddius's *Life of Wilfrid*, the three providing a delightful triptych of sixth and seventh century monastic and missionary life. *Crime in a Changing Society* (3s 6d) is a Pelican Original by Howard Jones and discusses the methods and aims of criminology, summarizing the statistics and sociological information available so as to give the general reader a clear picture of a subject that is too often shrouded in a technical jargon.