

is amply witnessed to by the prophets. The old testament is indeed meaningless apart from the new testament, but the point is that it cannot be separated from it 'ontologically', and thus although the meaning as such could not be seen, Israel was able to see that her reality was forwardly meaningful. This is ultimately contained within her expression of reality which has been so successfully brought to light and shown to us in the main part of this work.

It is to be repeated that what the author has succeeded in doing here is indeed both stimulating and of great value. It is to be hoped that his thought will develop at a philosophical level, which will enable him to present to us eventually, in all its fulness, the kind of conclusion which he has, on the whole, unsuccessfully attempted here.

GILES HIBBERT, O.P.

THE DISCOVERY OF GOD. By Henri de Lubac. Translated by Alexander Dru. (Darton, Longman and Todd; 18s.)

This is a translation of the third edition of *Sur les Chemins de Dieu*. The French title probably gives a clearer idea of the book's intention than the English. Fundamentally it is a meditation, and the goal is ultimately, but not directly, God. The work does not however lie within the strict context of theology; the knowledge of God through Jesus Christ is nowhere examined. All that is said here is in a sense prior to and open to the Christian revelation, and nowhere is this fact forgotten. It might seem at first sight that the work would fall under the heading of natural theology—the chapter titles would seem to suggest it: 'the affirmation of God', 'the proof of God', 'the knowledge of God', etc. It does not have the systematic nature however that this would imply, nor is this its intention. It is a meditation, and a meditation not so much about God as about the nature of man. It helps the reader to unfold and penetrate man's metaphysical and transcendent nature—that by which he has a capacity for God. It helps him to realize those potentialities in himself, in the very nature of mind and thought, which make possible the fulness of Christian life. 'Grace perfects nature', but unless nature is able to recognize that possibility of fulfilment which community with God in Christ implies, and indeed demands, that Christian life is unlikely to flower and propagate. It is in his capacity for God that man is himself 'somehow God', and it is for this reason that he is 'somehow everything' (p. 75). The possibilities and their significance are here suggested and meditated upon; and the thought of the author is supported with, and developed in terms of, a wealth of quotations drawn from 'the double treasure of the *philosophia perennis* and Christian experience'. Not only is this work of value to the reader because of the vision that it can open up for him, but also as a

witness to that inward intellectual effort without which the Christian message tends to become arid, and the gospel a fantasy only for children.

The matter of this book is by no means easy; its thought penetrates deep. It is, as a result, necessarily suggestive rather than definitive. This is largely the cause of its having been attacked, in earlier editions, by many whose thought remains at a relatively facile level. In reacting against this the author has introduced in parts a somewhat sour strain of polemic, which tends to mar its meditative character. This is only a small blemish, however, which cannot be said to take seriously from the value of the work.

In a book so full of powerful quotations it is a pity that no one has thought to give it an index—if only of the authors cited. Also the English edition must be seriously criticized for having the footnotes extensively cut. The nature of the book is such as to preclude it from being in any way ‘popular’; the common excuse that ‘the English reader cannot take such notes’ is not, under these circumstances, valid. The omission of references and allusions to French books neither classical nor contemporary is unexceptionable, but the extensive cutting of texts and particularly of further doctrinal and philosophical allusions which has taken place goes appreciably towards diminishing the value of this edition.

The translation is on the whole good and makes easy and pleasant reading. It catches the flavour and truly presents the significance of the original. There are, however, some unfortunate and odd mistakes. *Raisnable* is rendered through the use of ‘reasonableness’, when it should be ‘rationality’ (p. 16). *Secrète* is translated as ‘secret’, when it should be ‘hidden’ (p. 133). Occasionally a quotation is left unidentified due to clumsy cutting of the footnotes.

These errors and deficiencies slightly spoil what is otherwise an inspiring and valuable work. The full value of the author’s work will however be more readily realizable if a copy of the French is accessible to the reader.

GILES HIBBERT, O.P.

ST BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX: *Vita Prima Bernardi*. Translated by Geoffrey Webb and Adrian Walker. (Mowbray; 10s. 6d.)

THE NATIVITY: Six sermons of St Bernard. Translated by Leo Hickey. (Sceptre; 11s. 6d.)

THE HOLY GHOST: Six sermons of Bl. John of Avila. Translated by Ena Dargan. (Sceptre; 11s. 6d.)

This life of St Bernard is the work of three great Cistercians who knew the saint well, among them William of St Thierry, his greatest