

Perhaps the great advantage of the book is for the beginner who has no technical philosophical training, though hard-boiled thomists will find it stimulating. The book is not so much a textbook as an introduction to the necessity and value of thomist principles in the modern chaos. Dr Versfeld is a born teacher and has evidently thought things out for himself. That is why he is able to express traditional truths, like the existence of God and the Incarnation, and their consequences in various fields of thought, in so fresh and original a way. One cannot help thinking that his environment and his natural versatility have helped him in the writing of so attractive a book. One finds oneself thinking of the peace of the lovely Cape farms or the crystalline air of the Karoo and remembering that the author is farmer, angler, botanist, a lover of nature familiar with trees and butterflies. All this helps with apt metaphor and example. The light, easy and lucid style, and the gift of catching and holding the reader's interest in problems that call for deep thinking should help young South Africans to think clearly about their country's difficult social and political problems.

WILFRID ARDAGH, O.P.

JOHN BUNYAN. By Roger Sharrock. (Hutchinsons University Library; 8s. 6d.)

Mr Sharrock's carefully detailed analysis of Bunyan's personality, development, historical setting and literary influence will probably interest the general reader most in that it shows the genesis of that great legend of *The Pilgrim's Progress* which, diffuse or piecemeal, anonymous or known, illuminates so much of the imaginative life of those who speak English. Generations have come to it, first hand or second, as an adventure or a religious entertainment; through *Little Women* and *Mrs Overthway's Remembrances*; through John Buchan's noble thrillers; through the gentle cadences of 'He that is down need fear no fall', the more dogged rhythm of 'Who would true valour see', of the music of Vaughan Williams; through chance phrases, and the trumpet quotation in wartime obituaries. Here it is, as it was written, its theological structure clearly shown, its relation to Bunyan's self and to his external adventures ably drawn, its place mapped out among his many works, and its debts set down to earlier and to contemporary literature. As to the last, would it have been too much of a side issue to discuss what connection may exist between the mapping out of the Pilgrim's Progress and the passion which appeared in other parts of seventeenth-century Europe to express in cartographical terms the landscape of the mind; compare in the temporal sphere, the *Conte du Pays du Tendre*.

Mr Sharrock puts forward some fascinating ideas as to the link between the work of Bunyan and that of later writers, even Gide; but it is odd to find him dismissing Defoe's outlook as 'completely secularized'. What about the terrifying meditations of Robinson Crusoe alone in his cave with a high temperature?

RENÉE HAYNES

QUITE EARLY ONE MORNING. By Dylan Thomas. (Dent; 10s. 6d.)

In a talk on Welsh poets printed in this volume Dylan Thomas quoted these words from an unfinished play by Alun Lewis:

'Never stale your mind
With prudence or with doubting.'

There was no need for him to take them to heart. They expressed the conviction which he carried into unregarding action from the moment when, in early youth, he determined to be a poet. The picaresque chaos of his life followed from that decision which permitted no compromise, ignored the immediacy and tried to deny the existence of the demands and pressures which make of most of us wage-earning conformists.

This attitude of mind had, apparently, nothing in common with the escapist's reluctance or inability to accept the more obvious aspects of the life of our times, grocer's bills, atomic energy, overdrafts, and a black suit for best. It was the characteristic expression of a forceful character, not the casual indifference of a preoccupied writer. He could appreciate in others qualities which made it possible for them to serve two loyalties. Of his friend Vernon Watkins he wrote:

'So many writers, because their own serious writing does not pay, live by writing about writing, lecturing about writing, reviewing other writers, script writing, advertising, journalizing, boiling pots for the chain-store publishers: Vernon Watkins writes nothing but poems. Very properly, he makes his living by other people's money: in a bank. He is proof against the dangers (so tempting to poets, such as myself, who are not qualified to extract their livelihoods other than by the use of language), the dangers of mellifluous periphrasis, otiose solipsism, the too-easy spin and flow of the paid word.'

The second part of this volume, edited by Aneurin Talfan Davies, B.B.C. Swansea Representative and producer of some of these scripts, presents the small body of broadcast work which, in spite of these tempting dangers, he devoted to other writers. There are studies of Wilfrid Owen, Walter de la Mare, Sir Philip Sidney, and other occasional pieces, thoughtful, sensitive, lively, illuminated by his