

Blackfriars

THE SCHOOL BY THE RIVER. By Elinor M. Brent-Dyer. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne, Ltd. ; 5/-.)

This is a book for the Catholic—or non-Catholic—schoolgirl which deserves the tribute it received from a girl who found it on the reviewer's table: 'It is fresh and *different*.' The reviewer's only criticism—a constructive one—is that for the girl of twelve to fifteen for whom such a book is written, the contest of loyalty and disobedience might, in any future book, be handled more subtly with psychological advantage—more especially where the book has a slender theme, as in this case. Even a schoolgirl feels that, in real life, difficulties arise not because the bad are so bad and the loyal so loyal—but because only the saint has re-attained to simplicity, and the rest of us are so far from that consistent virtue. It is the virtues of the rebel and the faults of the obedient that make all problems of social and community life. And here—though the 'villainess' is finally caught red-handed in sisterly devotion—this is not sufficiently considered. Morality is the framework of Romance—but bones are for business, not for ornament. But again we say: 'A fresh and *different* book.'

C.H.

GOD AND MAN. By the late Dean Rashdall. (Basil Blackwell; pp. 264; 6/- net.)

The Rev. H. D. A. Major, Principal of Ripon Hall, Oxford, and the Rev. F. L. Cross, of Pusey House, have been well minded to edit the eleven sermons and essays of this volume. Dean Rashdall was one of the sincere minds that did not realise how much he was suffering from want of knowledge. Yet he had tasted the best a modern University had to give.

His mind was made for the craft of thinking, even though so much of his thought is as unpromising as a child's first steps in walking. Yet he was a thinker of whom it could be said, 'He was attracted by the intellectual freedom and speculative daring of the theologians, and in particular he was drawn to the teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas by the stress which it laid on the supremacy of the intellect' (p. 8).

It must be admitted that in Rashdall's University days there was little in foreign languages and still less in English to feed a scholar's hunger for Catholic thought. The best we Catholics had to offer a thinker was Newman. Yet Newman was too unacquainted with, perhaps too unconvinced by, the common culture of the Greeks and of the Scholastics to introduce minds to the great historic Communion of Thinkers.

V.McN.