

fascinating and scholarly record, ranging from the sparse obituaries in Egyptian tombs to the developed introspective technique of St Augustine. The author is aware of a certain recalcitrance in much of this material. The ancient conception of man was rational and objective, largely because of the dominance of the Greek philosophical tradition. Even after the revolution brought about by Socrates and the Sophists which separated mental phenomena from cosmic life, the treatment of the self remains general and rational. For anything like that more inward and dynamic conception of experience which we now associate with autobiographical revelation, we have to wait till the period when the Graeco-Roman world was disintegrating. Even Plato, with all his personal charm and literary subtlety, presents a wooden public self in the *Seventh Epistle*. Professor Misch, from a humanistic standpoint, sees the Christian conversion narratives as one item in man's progressive self-revelation; he neglects the reasons for the entirely new sense of human dignity and importance apparent before Augustine in, for instance, Gregory of Nazianzus, and due to a consciousness of the unique bond between God and the creature after the Incarnation.

The advantage of the phenomenological method is that it precludes a dogmatic philosophy of history. In Professor Misch's pages we are part of the way out of that ghost-world of German *Geisteswissenschaft* where concepts stride abroad with the stature of living beings. Nevertheless, perhaps more is said of 'individuality' than of the revelation of individual minds.

ROGER SHARROCK.

REPAIR THE RUINS: Reflections on Educational matters from the Christian point of view. By H. Blamires. (Geoffrey Bles; 12s. 6d.)

This book is an important one, though it makes no pretentious claims. The author is a teacher of experience who has been specially concerned with training teachers. His theme is the importance of analysing the underlying assumptions of much of the educational material contained in current text-books,—which encourage the unconscious formation of a philosophy of life at variance with the specific principles rooted in the doctrines of the Christian creeds; so that even when these principles are explicitly taught as religious doctrine they tend to be neutralised by what is unconsciously imbibed from the assumptions implicit in the common presentation of secular subjects.

This theme obviously opens up large and fundamentally important questions as to the nature of true education. Mr Blamires discusses some of these with the wisdom and insight of experience, from the point of view of orthodox Christianity, and every word he writes is well worth the thoughtful consideration of Catholics interested in education. He

has some cogent things to say on the subject of equality, based upon the nature of individual man as created by God and the doctrine of vocation, and concerning the false assumptions underlying the desire for 'parity of esteem' in regard to the different types of education envisaged by the Spens Report and the Act of 1944.

Altogether a refreshing and stimulating book, written with candour and directness, and one about which we may echo the hope of the Bishop of London expressed in his foreword, that it will be widely read and carefully studied.

H.St.J.

THE REVOLT AGAINST REASON. By Arnold Lunn. (Eyre and Spottiswoode; 15s.)

This is a difficult book to place, for it is at once a general history of the ups and downs of Faith in relation to Reason, and a very modernised and somewhat streamlined (and hence, shall we say, a less ponderous than we are accustomed to) work of apologetics. But classed under any head you will, it must be allowed that *The Revolt against Reason* is a fine and at times a brilliant piece of writing. Mr Lunn's thesis is that 'the tragic bankruptcy of the modern world is a consequence of the revolt against reason. . . . Nothing but a return to the rationalism of Christianity can save our doomed civilisation from complete collapse'. Christian rationalism (an intelligent appreciation of the relation of reason to revelation) had its roots in Greece, forced its way into the Bible literature when Jews came into contact with Hellenism, flowered powerfully but all too briefly in the Middle Ages, was rejected by Luther ('Does reason shed light? Yes, like that which filth would shed if it were set in a lantern'), and has never really recovered. That it has not recovered may be put down by some to the advances made by physical science during the past three centuries. This is to do science a grave injustice, for the real villain is not science but rather an arrogant and 'pseudo' brand of science which for want of a more suitable name Mr Lunn labels Scientism, and which specialises in exploiting the prestige of science on behalf of an explicit or implicit atheism. Ten chapters, half of the book in fact, are devoted to aspects of this Scientism, and in turn the bubbles of Darwinism, Evolutionism, Surrealism, Logical Positivism, etc., are pricked delicately, effectively, above all wittily; and generally with needles supplied, however unwittingly, by the 'Scientians' themselves.

L.B.