

performs his saving work and explains what he has done (or what he is about to do). No theology of revelation that fails to give a

balanced account of both elements is likely to hold the field for very long.

JOHN ASHTON, S.J.

**ST THOMAS AQUINAS: SUMMA THEOLOGIAE.** Vol. XXIX: The Old Law (Ia IIae xcvi-cv), David Bourke and Arthur Littledale. *Blackfriars*; London: *Eyre and Spottiswoode*; New York: *McGraw-Hill*, xxvii + 322 pp. 50s.

The treatise on the Old Law is one of the longest in the *Summa* and it provides one of the largest volumes in the new edition. Also, as the translators remark in their Introduction, it is one of those most often neglected by the student. It presents peculiar difficulties, partly on account of St Thomas's determination to present as a coherent and systematic whole what is in fact a mass of material of very different date and from very different sources, and partly on account of the very imperfect state of Old-Testament scholarship in the Angelic Doctor's time. Many of the interpretations are therefore highly allegorical and some are, by modern standards, quite fantastic.

Nevertheless St Thomas's treatment does bring out impressively the double aspect which characterizes the Old Israel and the Old Law. On the one hand they link up with the natural law common to mankind as a whole; on the other they look forward to the redemptive work of Christ. And St Thomas's allegorizing, dominated as it is by symbolism and *rationes convenientiae*, emphasizes the purely pedagogical nature of the Old Dispensation and the witness which it bears to a future and effective work of salvation which in itself it is powerless to perform. Thus, like the Old Testament itself, St Thomas's interpretation of it is dominated by the concept of *Heilsgeschichte*, the history of God's salvation.

It is apparently not simply for lack of space that the translators have provided only a short introduction and no appendices or glossary; the character of the text, with its dauntingly long and numerous replies to objections, requires extensive comments at the relevant places. These the translators have provided most adequately; they have not hesitated to point out the Angelic Doctor's lack of correct

information and historic sense, and they have made use of the work of all the leading Old-Testament scholars of the present day, both Catholic and Protestant. The serious student will in fact learn a great deal about modern Old-Testament scholarship by reading the footnotes, while the less austere reader will be entertained by the examples which he finds in the text of thirteenth-century natural history and exegesis. Particularly delightful is the reply to the first objection to Question 102, Article 6, in which, in learning that the ceremonial precepts of the Old Law had reasonable grounds, we are given a potted manual of ornithology. 'The hawk', we are told, 'which helps man in the pursuit of his prey, signifies those who serve the powerful in exploiting the poor. The screech-owl, which seeks its food at night, but lies hid in the daytime, signifies the dissolute, who seek concealment in what they do. . . . The moorhen, unlike other birds, has a webbed foot for swimming and a cloven foot for walking, for it swims like a duck and walks like a partridge. It drinks only as it bites, dipping all its food in water. It signifies those who refuse to do anything at the will of another, but do solely what is dipped in the water of their own will.'

In the hands of less inspired or less learned editors this might have been one of the least attractive volumes in the series. It is in fact both interesting and instructive, for they have perceived the essential rightness of St Thomas's basic principle while enriching it with knowledge which the Angelic Doctor did not possess but which, we can be sure, he would have welcomed with delight.

In lines 10 and 11 of page 58, *judicialia* should be *judicialibus*.

E. L. MASCALL

**MAN'S CONDITION, God and the World Process**, by William C. Shepherd. *Herder and Herder*, New York, 1969, 286 pp. \$5.95.

The title which William C. Shepherd has given his book leads the reader to expect something more and something other than the text really offers. This work is really an analysis,

interpretation, and criticism of Karl Rahner's theological writing, both as system and as a technical doctrine on the nature-grace problem. It is on this basis that the book has to be