

REVIEWS

on St. Albert for over fifty years, and that is why this work 'has been undertaken in order that English-speaking peoples may have in their own language a study of a great saint and a man of vast learning whose influence on the thought of Western civilization has been immeasurable and in the hope that it may stimulate others to further research.' Lovers of the thirteenth century and all who are interested in one of its greatest scholars should be grateful to the editors for this undertaking.

R.N.

THE CHURCH AND SPIRITUALISM. By Herbert Thurston, S.J. (Milwaukee: Bruce; pp. 384; \$2.75).

A scholarly and unprejudiced survey of the facts; an exposure of the fictions. Fr. Thurston investigates the history of modern spiritualism from the days of the first manifestations in Hydesville, his massive learning presented in a way that makes every page extremely interesting. One is most grateful for his uncompromising attack on the Pure Fake theory, a theory which, in Catholic hands, can be as harmful as, to the present writer at least, it is untenable. Telepathy, clairvoyance are recognised as facts by all but a very few; the evidence for materialisation, genuine automatism, etc., as arrayed in this book is cogent. But it is difficult to accept the hypothesis of merely 'mischievous' and frolicsome spirits to explain obviously bogus yet apparently harmless communications.

The Church's attitude, as the author explains, is one of prudence: so much harm has in fact resulted, there is always so much danger and usually so little real success, that spiritualists themselves have echoed her warnings. The book should do much good, not least in exonerating Catholics from the charge of obscurantism and the uncharitable refusal to recognise sincerity.

L.S.G.V.

THE ADVENTURES OF GABRIEL IN HIS SEARCH FOR MR. SHAW. By Dr. W. R. Mathews. (Hamish Hamilton; 2/6.)

Dr. Mathews is not content with the answer 'P'shaw' to Mr. Shaw. The machinery of his book creaks rather more than that of the *Black Girl* and it is altogether slier and is unfortunately far less attractive in its shabby clerical black than that amazingly attractive piece of black beauty. Dr. Mathews enlivens his work by pleasant humour and gives some valuable criticism of such doctrines as the 'Life Force.' He ends by a passage of real discernment of the 'indignation and despair at the cruelty

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and folly of our society ' which is the driving force behind Mr. Shaw. He scarcely does justice, however, to the great literary and dramatic powers which make Mr. Shaw's plays live.

P.D.F.

SOME ERRORS OF H. G. WELLS. By the Most Rev. Richard Downey, D.D., Ph.D., LL.D. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne; 1/-).

This new edition of Archbishop Downey's criticism of the *Outline of History* is a compact summary of the chief errors in the fields of anthropology, zoology, biology, the historical records of the Old Testament and the origins of the Christian religion, the history of philosophy, the history of the Church, as they bear on Catholic belief. The many inaccurate conclusions to which Mr. Wells arrives in the light of the vast field he surveys and the theories his material endeavours to substantiate, are treated by his critic simply, convincingly, and with an erudition gathered from those specialists whom Mr. Wells has chosen to ignore. For the student especially no more convenient pamphlet has yet appeared to show how confused and blurred a picture the *Outline* really is, and the danger of a bird's eye view on the history of man.

W.A.

THE MENACE OF FASCISM. By John Strachey. (Gollancz, 5/-).

Until quite recently one was tempted to see only a simple dichotomy in the future social programme of the world; the choice lay between a society organised on Christian principles and one based on Communism. A third type, that of Fascism, has now appeared with menacing significance. In Mr. Strachey's view it represents the triumph of Capitalism over the misdirected opposition of the Labour movements. Its 'Corporate State' exists, he claims, on paper only; and the veto on the workers' right to withdraw their labour is its single realisation. Professedly against big business, it is in reality financed by the great capitalists and bankers (Jewish and non-Jewish) who obtain the support of the ruined middle classes by fantastic promises. It proposes to plan, but cannot. To plan would necessitate the control of the means of production in the interests of the common good, whereas Fascism continues the system of self-regulated production for private gain, motivated by prices. Further, its insistence on the absolute sovereignty of the State, its hatred of internationalism and the necessity of finding markets for its capitalist enterprise must *inevitably* lead to war. Mr. Strachey analyses the fortunes of the Labour movement in Germany since