

REVIEWS

phrases in the abstracts printed at the head of each chapter and in the list of Contents, or the phrases themselves were inserted in the text after the number at the beginning of each section, or both these changes were made.

C. J. F. WILLIAMS

THOMISTIC EPISTEMOLOGY, Vol. I, by Georges Van Riet, translated by Gabriel Franks, O.S.B.; B. Herder; 46s.

In 1946 Dr Van Riet published *L'Épistémologie Thomiste*, a massive tome of some 700 pages dealing with the modern attempt to justify the realism of thomistic philosophy by a coherent theory of knowledge. When this movement began about 1850, it was not a case of thomism awakening from dogmatic slumber. It was occasioned by a feeling of dissatisfaction with the type of philosophy being taught in the seminaries and lycea of the time: an unpalatable mixture of various post-Cartesian ideologies. The early stages of the return to thomism were fraught with danger and looked upon with suspicion. We are surprised to hear of a Jesuit provincial being exiled because of his profession of thomism; and of a certain group of seminary professors describing themselves as a thomistic 'masonic lodge'! Perhaps no less significant is the story of a certain professor who suffered for his thomism and whose brother later became Pope Leo XIII. But the movements prospered, and the encyclical *Aeterni Patris* (1879), the foundation of the *Institut Supérieur de Philosophie* at Louvain and the *Institut Catholique* at Paris guaranteed the continuity of thomistic revival. Much has now been achieved in various branches of thomistic philosophy, surprisingly little on the crucial question that so preoccupied the pioneers of neo-thomism: the problem of knowledge. No agreement has been reached as to the conditions, the value and limits of human cognition. Maybe what was needed before a breakthrough could be accomplished was a reassessment of the achievements and failures of the past hundred years. Van Riet's monumental work has done precisely that.

This English translation, based on the 3rd edition, covers the first three chapters. i.e. about half of the French original. It is excellently done and beautifully produced. But 46s. is a stiff price seeing that the complete French original cost less.

NICHOLAS FOLAN, O.P.

THE COMPLEX QUESTION OF MIXED MARRIAGES, by Ladislav Orsy, S.J.; Burns and Oates; 2s. 6d.

The title of this brochure is well taken, since the question, as ably discussed by the author, is in fact exceedingly complex. As he points out, the problem can and should be set in three ways, 'theologically, legally in its proper historical context,