

Flaubert, to Proust, his life-companions, he remains faithful, reads and will read again *Wuthering Heights*, *Middlemarch* and Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter*. But, although interested in D. H. Lawrence's character, he has only scorn for 'that ridiculous prophet' and his novels he cannot read more than half-way, just as he did before, and so do Robbe-Grillet's attempts towards the non-psychological fail to interest him.

For he is well aware of the change of perspective he has undergone as a reader. While he was busy writing novels, as a young man, he used to long for the evening when he could take refuge in the stories of the masters. But, he remarks, these novels or rather their characters, for us, live only as long as we give them a setting within ourselves, for as young readers we feel we have something to learn from their experiences. 'Now it is the writers, rather than their books, who still for me have the gift of life.' Gide, brilliantly compared to Spartacus leading a slave-revolt in the Roman order, belongs to this category of writers whose lives seem to him more interesting than their works, though one might feel justified in taking the opposite view. (Valéry, he tells us, never read anything Mauriac wrote, he was too much involved in his own thoughts.) It is on this business of writing and expressing oneself that Mauriac's reflections are the more arresting, as he repeatedly refers (pp. 80, 103, 220) to the craving for survival from which springs the impulse for writing, this childish dream of retaining for posterity something of our transient and familiar images, sentiments and thoughts, which he now looks upon with severity, even disgust, 'a sign that the last and final detachment is now at hand'. Withdrawing from the books he himself, as he says, has 'secreted', he reflects in a humorous way upon the writer's fate: 'A writer is, fundamentally, a man who has lost his shadow, or, rather, when he has outlived himself and is nothing but an old mill churning out words, he has become a shadow who has lost his man'. No fear need be felt that Mauriac will do so as he displays for us such wisdom and attempts so courageous a re-valuation not only of books but of attitudes to life, from which, it seems to me, we can all draw benefit.

J. B. BARRÈRE

CHRISTIAN FAITH AND GREEK PHILOSOPHY. By A. H. Armstrong and R. A. Markus. (Darton, Longman and Todd; 15s.)

Controversy started very early between the Christians and adherents of Greek philosophies; but another 'dialogue', more fruitful the authors think, went on in the mind of any Christian who had some philosophical culture. The authors believe that the same sort of dialogue occurs today in the minds of Christians who read Greek philosophers. This book, written half by each author, is a device to produce such a dialogue artificially, each author having thoroughly discussed his contribution with the other.

It does not read like the result of conversation, not even of two men's conversations with themselves. Nowhere does the reader feel that an argument is going on but rather an historical account, presented with the simplicity of two masters, of the philosophical ideas which Christians selected for their own use and adapted, or rejected. In tracing the Christian development of Greek philosophy Professor Armstrong is inclined by and

large to stress the Christians' independence of what they mastered for their use, while Dr Markus shows them doing as they must, translating Christianity into the language they had.

An unusual addition to the *Nihil Obstat* and *Imprimatur* explains that it only declares the book free from doctrinal or moral error without implying any agreement with the opinions expressed. This is perhaps the more remarkable because the authors have expressed so very few opinions; but at any rate it dispenses the reviewer from discussing the extent to which Greek borrowings are represented as incorporated into Christian doctrine.

QUENTIN JOHNSTON, O.P.

T. S. ELIOT AND THE IDEA OF TRADITION. By Sean Lucy. (Cohen and West; 25s.)

Mr Lucy is not uncritical, but for the most part this is homage to the pundit of English letters. It takes the shape of an amiable and appreciative exposition of the coherence and profundity of T. S. Eliot's idea of tradition, drawing for corroboration and illustration on the whole body of his work, prose, poetry and drama, and claiming that the idea is acceptable, and central to his achievement.

Mr Lucy is often a great deal too appreciative. We are reminded, to take one of many minor instances that cumulatively create the atmosphere of his study, that Mr Eliot once wrote that Protestantism would cease to exist if the Church of Rome were no longer there to protest against—but not for this dictum to be questioned, or even justified, amazing as it is in its disregard for the realities of what Protestantism now represents. Or again, we read this: 'In imputing the contemporary artistic Babel to the lack of a healthy and active tradition, Eliot shows great insight'. Great insight? And is his assessment of the current situation always so sure, and what would the tradition he has envisaged really be like?

A slighting reference or two to Dr Leavis proves that the author is aware of the existence of the greatest critic of Mr Eliot's idea of tradition. Of course Dr Leavis may be wrong, but he has presented a formidable case, according to which the idea is a muddle and has worked only to ruin Mr Eliot's achievement. This would have to be dealt with, to save the pre-suppositions of his book, but Mr Lucy does not try.

FERGUS KERR, O.P.

NOTICES

ROUTLEDGE PAPER-BACKS bring a library of standard modern texts, indeed of accepted classics, within the reach of any serious student. The first list is any case a reminder of how much sociological and psychological studies in particular owe to the house of Routledge and Kegan Paul. It includes Karl Mannheim's *Ideology and Utopia*, 'an introduction to the sociology of knowledge' (10s. 6d.), Freud's *Totem and Taboo*, 'some points of agreement between the mental lives of savages and neurotics' (6s.), Erich Fromm's *Fear of Freedom* (7s. 6d.), Malinowski's *Sex and Repression in Savage Society* (9s. 6d.), Piaget's *Language and Thought of the Child* (10s. 6d.), G. E. Moore's