

works a vast amount of original material has been published. The volumes of the Historical Manuscripts Commission and the many calendars published by the Stationery Office, the local records published by various country record societies, and above all the forty-five volumes of the Catholic Record Society have added enormously to our knowledge of post-Reformation Catholic history. The task of absorbing all this newly-provided detail into our works of reference is a formidable one: the problem of publishing such a revision is an insoluble one. Hence *Biographical Studies*. The joint editors are A. F. Allison of the British Museum and D. M. Rogers of the Bodleian, and their intention is to publish materials that will fill up some of the *lacunae*, and correct some of the errors in our existing reference books. To reduce costs this work is duplicated, and subscribers receive two issues yearly, each of eighty pages, for the modest sum of 8s. 6d. In this first number Mr Allison compiles a bibliography of Fr Henry Garnet, S.J., which makes Gillow's account completely out of date. Mr Rogers' article on John Abbot (the first name in Gillow) is a good example of the wealth of detail, about a comparatively obscure writer, that is now available. Other articles treat of the eighteenth century: the Manhoods of Finchley, the Berkeleys of Spetchley, and others. Those who possess Gillow and Foley would do well to subscribe to this enterprising venture, and slowly bring these time-honoured reference books up to date.

G.A.

A HISTORY OF THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHERS. By George Catlin. (Allen and Unwin; 30s.)

The student and general reader is already blessed with a number of good histories of political thought, like Dunning's *Political Theories*, Sabine's *History of Political Theory*, and for England the various volumes in the Home University Library, but this new work of Mr Catlin's (new in England, having already been published in the U.S.A. in 1939) is a valuable addition to their number because it sets the thought of various political philosophers from Plato to Laski against the background of their time. Its eight hundred pages make it a veritable encyclopedia of political thought, and it is an encyclopedia that it must be judged, i.e. on its proportions, balance and omissions.

The first impression that the reader receives from the whole book is the way in which more and more space is given to individuals the nearer Mr Catlin approaches the contemporary. Thus half the book takes us from Confucius (500 B.C.) to Bakunin via Plato, Aristotle, the Middle Ages, Hobbes, Locke, the American and French Revolutions, and the Utilitarians. The second half covers the last hundred and fifty years or so, from Rousseau to Hitler via Hegel, the Post-Hegelians, Marx, Kautsky, Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin, Laski and Strachey, and

Mussolini. While no doubt the ex-Minister of Food and former Minister of War will be duly flattered, and we are too close yet to the death of Harold Laski to estimate his influence, there does seem to be a certain lack of balance in devoting more space to Laski and Strachey than to the whole of the Middle Ages. In fact the weakest part of the book is this chapter on Laski and Strachey, with its interminable analyses of books by the latter which may have seemed important in the 'thirties, but which are now forgotten and best forgotten. The promise of fuller treatment, for example, of Richard Hooker in another book is no excuse for dismissing him in a page while allowing this prolixity on the vagaries of the Left Book Club in pre-war days.

The style is not easy, which will make the book difficult reading for the student and general reader for whom it is intended, but this may be due to compression, for a great deal of information and comment is packed into a small compass. The comment is never trite, but at times is likely to cause raised eyebrows. Thus, others besides Dominicans will be interested to learn that the *Summa* 'has remained the intellectual backbone of all subsequent Catholicism, although reset in some vertebrae by the Jesuits' (p. 169).

Inevitably Mr Catlin's work recalls the encyclopædic work on *Political Thought: The European Tradition*, edited by Dr J. P. Mayer and published in England about the same time that the present work was published in America. While Dr Mayer's work was more limited in scope, on balance it shows a better sense of proportion and without overstraining brings home the continuity of political thought better than Mr Catlin, while Mr Catlin's work gradually leads the reader to the realisation that in practice the theme of one world is becoming ever more insistent.

JOHN FITZSIMONS

THE CHURCH IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE. Vol. 1. By J. R. Palanque, G. Bardy, P. de Labriolle. Translated by Ernest C. Messenger, PH.D. (Burns Oates; 25s.)

This is the fifth volume of Dr Messenger's translations of Fliche and Martin's *Histoire de l'Eglise*. The first four volumes, corresponding to the first two volumes of the French text, appeared under the title of *The History of the Primitive Church* and have been reviewed in BLACKFRIARS. Dr Messenger's competence as a translator is well known and is shown again in the present work. The authors are on the whole less successful than were their predecessors, in striking a balance between the general manual and the specialised study. This is perhaps most obvious in Professor Palanque's sections on Constantine; too elaborate and confusing for the general reader, and with nothing to attract the attention of the specialist.