

Notices

VARIETIES OF ENGLISH PREACHING: 1900-1960, by Horton Davies; S.C.M. Press, 25s.

Dr Horton Davies's survey of the English preaching of this century rightly emphasizes the strength of the Nonconformist tradition, with its insistence on a long and carefully organized sermon at the centre of Christian worship. Such notable preachers as Dr Campbell Morgan, and, in our own time, Dr Leslie Weatherhead, are carefully assessed, with copious illustrations of their style and language—which, it must be admitted, does not always survive the translation to the printed page. The Anglican representatives—surely untypical—are Dean Inge and Bishop Hensely Henson, and it is good to be reminded of their intellectual authority and constant rejection of the sentimental and the second-hand. The Catholic preacher chosen is Mgr Ronald Knox, and a chapter oddly entitled 'Liturgical Preaching' does justice to his eloquence of language and brilliant anecdote. But if liturgical preaching be understood as integrally related to the liturgical work of the Church—the communication of the word of God within the re-enactment of the work of Christ—Mgr Knox's approach, uniquely excellent in its own order, can hardly be so described.

ILLTUD EVANS, O.P.

THE NEW VOCATION, by Josef Hornef; Mercier Press, 5s.

The ratio of priests to laypeople in most parts of the world is such that sooner rather than later the Church will *have* to go back to the ancient practice of ordaining permanent deacons if her pastoral work is not to collapse completely. Precedent is very remote and the possibilities are numerous, so one can thoroughly enjoy oneself thinking out the various forms one would like a new version of the diaconate to take. Many of the author's suggestions are stimulating, though rather strongly influenced by specifically German conditions. Some are downright alarming, e.g. that 'religious knowledge teachers and social workers who serve the Church should be welded into a social class and that the consciousness of belonging to this class should be instilled into them'. Perhaps the translation is at fault here, as it is in so many other places? There is also an extraordinary omission. He admits that parish life in Germany and elsewhere has become unthinkable without the work of the trained full-time *Seelsorgehelferinnen* (woman parish helpers); yet he does not so much as raise the question of women in connection with a revived diaconate. The price of the book is low but, alas, it is already falling to pieces.

ELISABETH WANGERMANN

CONNAISSANCE DE LA FOI, by Nicolas Dunas, O.P.; Cerf, 12F.

The most valuable part of this book is the classified bibliography on the nature of faith, which runs to more than sixty pages. The secondary literature referred to is of course mainly French and much of it would not be easily available to English students. For all that, however, this is a useful programme of study. St Thomas Aquinas is very rightly presented as the author of the classical treatise, but one may be allowed to express regret that so little is done to bring out his profound fidelity to the perspectives of Scripture and the Fathers of the Church—something his conceptual apparatus generally screens from his readers.

The rest of the book is a rapid outline of the structure of Christian believing. The general insistence is always on the act of faith as something at once divinely *given* and humanly *chosen*, and its normal context as the believing community. Some important points are made too about the preparation of the soul for conversion. The book should prove instructive, in short, to all who want to understand a little better what they are doing when they believe in God.

FERGUS KERR, O.P.

THE NEW TESTAMENT IN CURRENT STUDY, by Reginald Fuller; S.C.M., 7s. 6d.

This very useful survey is restricted to those who, roughly speaking, have worked within the framework of Rudolf Bultmann's thinking about the New Testament. After sketching this thought and the criticisms it produced, Fuller goes on to the post-Bultmannians. His central chapter shows their recovery of faith in a historical figure behind the kerygma (proclamation) of the early Church, and how this has produced something of a split in their ranks as regards the centre of their attention. More particular topics are then treated; the four gospels and Paul. Professor Fuller's criticisms of Bultmann's position are well known; here he lets them appear perhaps less often than we might have wished, but the result is an admirably sympathetic study which every Christian can profit by reading, however different his own position may be.

LAURENCE BRIGHT, O.P.

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