

REVIEWS

a rare aptitude for quotation which displays a wide knowledge of the great Fathers and divines. He makes full use of the heritage of the speculation of the great schoolmen, and especially of St. Thomas, but (as befits a manual of exposition) he never allows the machinery that created it to become obtrusive. He is well acquainted with the work of more recent theologians inside and outside of the scholastic tradition (especially Newman), and he makes good use of them. Though his treatment of various questions is inevitably often summary, he seldom or never shirks the real problems that they raise. He writes with refreshing simplicity and directness, an enviable economy of words, and whenever possible he lets the "authorities" speak for themselves. While avoiding facile "refutations," and never allowing his positive exposition to degenerate into polemic, his criticisms of unorthodox theologies and religious philosophies are trenchant and to the point.

Such a work as this is no substitute for nor imitation of the cold, non-affective approach to divine realities of the purely speculative and constructive theologian. But a manual will necessarily fail of its own purpose in the measure that it aspires to be such. Without endorsing every view it expresses, we may welcome this book as one which will nevertheless be of immense help to professional theologian and layman alike.

It is to be completed in three volumes. It is characteristic that this first volume departs from the custom of devoting separate treatises to the *Deus unus* attainable through reason and the *Deus trinus* known only from revelation. The custom is a sound one, both logically and pedagogically; but it may too easily suggest an unsynthesised dichotomy of the "God of reason" and the "God of faith." Dr. Schmaus will never let us forget that the *primum movens immobile* and *actus purus* of the philosophers is identical with the Living God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who is Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

We await the remaining volumes with eagerness, and a translation of the whole, which we trust will be done with the same loving care as that with which the original is written.

VICTOR WHITE, O.P.

UNION OF CHRISTENDOM. Edited by Kenneth Mackenzie.
(S.P.C.K.; 8s. 6d.)

This most recent and significant effort in the things that are towards religious peace cannot help being of great interest to BLACKFRIARS. It is a series of Essays published for the International Committee of the Church Union in view of the International Convention of 1940.

Some thirty writers, cleric and lay, (indeed male and female),

have offered over seven hundred pages of hope in the future union of the scattered fragments of Christendom. In these days when little or nothing discernible in the political world is calculated to oust despair the ceaseless stream of pronouncements on the need of unity in religion must not be drained of its hopefulness merely because the formulated schemes are as awkward and unpromising as a child's first attempts at walking.

Gradually the desire for reunion should lead to a more impersonal view of the plans for fulfilling that desire. Each side of the projected union may become less and less insistent on what might be lost if they withdraw their co-operation. This lessening would be fully compensated for if each side laid emphasis on their share of responsibility for the sad fact that a renewal of co-operation is now a necessity. Human wills have made the religious separation. Only human wills acknowledging their responsibility and therefore their fault will unmake the separation.

Whilst we have no call to offer a detailed criticism of these thirty writers whose sincerity is witnessed by everyone of the seven hundred pages we presume to offer a thought which seems to have escaped the minds—or at least the pens—of the writers.

Unity is the supreme quality of every being. Indeed it is a transcendental; and therefore predicable of being as being.

Of the four notes of the Church it is placed first because it is fundamental. The Church is One—is Holy and One—is Catholic and One—is Apostolic and One.

Unity has either existed or has yet to be given existence.

If the Unity of the Church has yet to be given existence, then Jesus Christ failed to give His Church its more essential quality!

But if the Unity of the Church has existed men's first duty is to enter that unity, when they have found out where it is.

Nothing can be truer than the introductory words of Bishop Manning: "But the real question is not, Is union humanly possible? but, Is it the Will of God? If union is God's will, it is not impossible. *And we know that it is His will*" (p. 15).

In other words Jesus Christ has given us the *duty* of Unity. But it would be almost a denial of His mercy and wisdom if He had not also given us the "machinery"—or rather the vital organs—of that unity.

Perhaps a closer study of this principle in the light of the Gospels, especially of St. John, may show all peace-expectant hearts the value to reunion of such texts as "Thou art Rock, and on this Rock I will build my Church."

"Feed my lambs—my little sheep—my sheep . . ." "There shall be ONE FLOCK AND ONE SHEPHERD."

VINCENT McNABB, O.P.