of Matter, with the Divine Attributes, with Providence and with Miracles, all in the simplest of language and all within the narrow compass of the familiar C.T.S. pamphlet. He not only makes this intelligible but intensely interesting. We do not, of course, pretend that it exhausts the possibilities of this method of treatment. Admirable in itself, it is even more admirable as an indication of what yet remains to be done, especially in the cause of the New Apologetic. In the meantime, while we wait hopefully for fuller and completer treatises along the lines indicated, we sincerely trust that this invitation to 'use their reason' will be widely accepted by Catholics and offered to the notice of non-Catholic enquirers. Especially do we venture to recommend it to the consideration of the active members of the C.E.G.

HILARY CARPENTER, O.P.

PHILOSOPHY

THE TRANSFORMATION OF NATURE IN ART. By Ananda K. Coomaraswamy. (Harvard University Press; $3.)

A book by Dr. Coomaraswamy needs no commendation: and the present is as thought-provoking and accomplished a one as any that he has written. His theme, of course, is the theory of art in Asia: a theory which with singular charm and skill he develops, explains and brings home to an Occidental reader. If to-day the West appreciates at all Indian art, the merit belongs to such pioneers as our author and Mr. E. B. Havell: and the success of the Indian Society's recent Exhibition of Modern Indian Art at the New Burlington Galleries proves that their voices are no longer crying in a wilderness.

What is of special interest to a Catholic is the remarkable *rapprochement* between Hindu and Catholic aesthetics that this book effects: contrasting both together with modern, post-Renaissance, art in Europe. Dr. Coomaraswamy reveals himself as a serious student of St. Thomas Aquinas, who indeed is freely quoted in the pages of this book; to him 'the scholastic view is more than a great provincial school of thought, it represents a universal mode of thought, and this mode throws a light on the analogous theories that have prevailed in Asia, and should serve Western students as a means of approach to, and understanding of, Asiatic art.'

To him—as to us—'art is by nature rational; aesthetic experience is, as Eckhardt calls it, the vision of the world-picture as God sees it, loving all creatures alike, not as of use, but as the image of himself in himself'; his reproach to modern, Western, Art is, that 'it is no longer creative, imitating an exemplary form, but merely a succedaneum, more or less apt to titillate the senses'—that in fact 'post-Renaissance European Art

takes on the aspect of a reanimation of the corpses in a charnel house, rather than that of a Resurrection of the Dead in a more glorious form.' He sums up the Asiatic theory of art under two heads : ' (1) that aesthetic experience is an ecstasy in itself inscrutable, but in so far as it can be defined, a delight of the reason; (2) that in the analogy of art (sâdrüçya) Heaven and Earth are united in an ordering of sensation to intelligibility and an ultimate perfection in which the seer perceives all things imaged in himself '—which sâdrüçya he defines in the words of the Angelic Doctor as that ' ratio pulchri quae consistit in quadam consonantia diversorum.' As for the history of art (which in the West, he caustically observes, ' has been replaced by a history of artists '), he pokes deserved fun at those who ' suppose that art was unintelligible and that artists, in the goodness of their hearts, were trying to make it comprehensible either to themselves or others—which is as if to suppose that speakers made sounds with a view to the subsequent formation of a valid means of communication.' And if it is asked, Why every work of art is not immediately intelligible, he replies : ' Because the artist sees only what of the express image his powers permit; for, as constantly asserted by Scholastic philosophy, the thing known is in the knower according to the mode of the knower.'

One is tempted to go on quoting : but one would rather refer the reader to the book itself. Let me only add one warning, in order to avoid misunderstandings : Dr. Coomaraswamy, admirable as he is—one would fain say, good Catholic as he is in his aesthetics, is not really a Catholic in the innermost ' ground ' of his thought. His failure to take the last fence crystallizes around his unhappy rendering of *Deva* (=divine being) as ' angel,' so that in the end God, *Mahâdeva,* is called ' the Supreme Angel ' and 'Angel of the Angels.' The latter term he compares with our *Rex angelorum*, but he does not seem to realize that the difference between God being one of the angels and being their King, is not merely a difference of phraseology, as he seems to suggest, but an abyss separating our concept of God and its contradiction (*cf.* p. 22, where the author would make his reader believe that *creation* is merely ' a religious translation of what in metaphysics is spoken of as *emanation* ').

But I would not end on this note, necessary though it seems to me to sound it, but rather on the joy that comes from seeing that, at a long last, Hindus are discovering Catholicism. That this discovery should take place *via* Aesthetics, may seem quaint : at all events, Dr. Coomaraswamy is not alone in this—only a year ago Mr. Mulkraj Anand (in his *The Hindu View of Art,* prefaced by Mr. Eric Gill) drew the same close parallel between the Hindu and the Catholic concept of art. That the Hindu

approach should be rather through the Beautiful than through the True or the Good—who is there to command the spirit, not to blow where it listeth? Hitherto Catholicism—for a multiplicity of historical reasons—has to the average Hindu seemed not worth knowing: now that, here and there, eminent Hindus are beginning to see that Catholicism is worth studying and are beginning to know it, is there not every hope that, with God's grace, they will end by understanding it?

H. C. E. ZACHARIAS.

DIEU SOLEIL DES ESPRITS. La Doctrine Augustinienne de l'Illumination. By Régis Jolivet. (Desclée de Brouwer; Frs. 12.)

Some modern expounders of Plato suggest that he never disclosed his proper conclusions in philosophical thought, that his mind spent itself in secret musings. Neither Aristotle nor Augustine so treated him. Both accepted his account of the 'Ideas' seriously. 'The crux of all Platonism, of the whole Tradition,' to quote Dr. Schiller, 'is that it is vital to Platonism to project beyond our present life a transcendent realm of intelligible and eternal Being that hovers above the flux of sensible Becoming. For unless this is done there is no stable background over which the shadows of the Cave can flit: moreover, in Plato's eyes at least, the very form of rational communication and of predication, "*is*," attested that such being *could* be asserted. Yet by weird fatality as soon as intelligible being had been affirmed it generated an insoluble problem as to the relation of Being and Becoming, of the sensible and the intelligible. All Plato's loftiest flights were shattered by this obstacle and none of his successors have failed so gallantly . . . the resources of every language have been exhausted to render intelligible the ineffable nexus which attaches the world of sense to the world of intuitive reason or spirit as Dean Inge prefers to call it' (*Mind*, July 1934, p. 387). Does Jolivet relieve St. Augustine of 'failing gallantly' in his criticism of this tradition?

To follow Jolivet, what does St. Augustine make of this problem? Certitude is got by principles known by the light of reason, our reason, by which God speaks interiorly. Certitude is not given by exterior matter or fact; by an exterior master. And if the latter takes us from conclusions to principles again we should not accept his science unless we had the certitude of the principles into which consequences are resolved within our minds. As Jolivet sees it: 'The real problem for Augustine is to explain the certitude of our judgments—this is the problem of Illumination—but not the formation of concepts.' Can these