

REVIEWS

CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE. AN HISTORICAL AND DOCTRINAL STUDY. By George Hayward Joyce, S.J. (Sheed & Ward; 21/-.)

The publishers announce the publication of this book to be 'an event of great importance for the Christian world,' but we note with more interest the official description of it as the first of a series, to be called the *Heythrop Theological Series* and intended as the equivalent in its own field of the *Stonyhurst Philosophical Series*. The latter, in some of its volumes at least, has rendered good service, and it is welcome news that we are to be given something similar in the field of theology.

The new series is fortunate in its opening volume. This is described on the title page as 'an historical and doctrinal study,' and it conforms to the description. The reader will not find in these pages any treatment of questions (like birth-control, for example) that pertain to the moral theology of marriage. The thirteen chapters of the book are devoted to such subjects as 'Marriage and Natural Law,' 'The Formation of Christian Marriage,' 'The Sacrament of Matrimony,' 'The Church's Jurisdiction over Matrimonial Causes,' 'The Indissolubility of Marriage,' etc. And the Church's teaching and legislation on these subjects are approached historically. There can be no doubt about the value and interest of this method of treatment, and Fr. Joyce has given us a book that deserves a warm welcome, not only from professional students, but from all educated Catholics.

Naturally, not all sections of the work are equally successful. For instance, the author's critical sense seems somewhat to fail him when dealing with the important passages Ephesians v, 22-32 and Matthew xix, 3-13. In discussing the former he remarks (p. 155) that 'most Catholic theologians recognise that the passage provides an adequate argument for the doctrine that marriage is a sacrament.' It is difficult to know what value precisely statements of this kind are supposed to have. Is it, after all, a question of counting heads? Is it not notorious that some, in other respects, excellent theologians are by no means at their best in dealing with 'proofs from Scripture'?

Though this is not a point of much importance, we notice that Fr. Joyce treats as certain Hugh de Mortagne's authorship of the *Summa Sententiarum* long attributed to Hugh of St. Victor. Is he justified in doing this? It is true that in 1923 Chossat put forward that view, but it was not universally accepted. Certainly as late as 1928 Geyer held Odo of Lucca's authorship to be more probable, while Grabmann thought the authorship still doubtful. The question may have been settled since, but, if so, a mere reference to Chossat's work published in 1923, which is all that Fr. Joyce gives, is hardly sufficient. Which reminds us

BLACKFRIARS

that on one or two occasions books published thirty years ago are cited as evidence of views current to-day.

Praise is due to the printers of the book. The excellent way in which it has been produced will help to ensure it the success it certainly deserves.

L.W.

CASTI CONNUBII. Encyclical Letter of His Holiness Pope Pius XI on Christian Marriage. With a commentary by Fr. Vincent McNabb, O.P. (Sheed & Ward; 2/6.)

Fr. Joyce's work reviewed above has but one passing reference to the *Casti Connubii*. His was an historical and doctrinal study, whereas the Pope, though, as he says, following in the footsteps of Leo XIII he re-affirms the Gospel teaching on the nature of Christian marriage, is for the greater part of the Encyclical 'expounding more fully certain points called for by the circumstances of our times' (p. 4), points which belong rather to the domain of moral theology. Fr. McNabb indeed, as we learn from his characteristic introduction to the present edition, thinks that 'the Encyclical may be seen by later ages to have been the official opening of the great ethical battle which, if we are to learn from the history of defined dogma, will be the occasion of the Church's ethical development' (p. xiii).

The dozen pages of notes in which Fr. McNabb comments on certain passages of the Encyclical will be read with profit. We are not told who is responsible for the translation of the Encyclical itself. It does not seem to be always above criticism. Indeed in one important passage it would be difficult to justify it. The passage in Latin is as follows: 'Habentur enim tam in ipso matrimonio quam in coniugalis iuris usu etiam secundarii fines, ut sunt mutuum adiutorium mutuusque fovendus amor et concupiscentiae sedatio, quos intendere coniuges minime vetantur, dummodo salva semper sit intrinseca illius actus natura ideoque eius ad primarium finem debita ordinato.' In the English it runs thus: 'For in matrimony as well as in the use of the matrimonial rights there are also secondary ends such as mutual aid, the cultivating of mutual love, and the quieting of concupiscence which husband and wife are not forbidden to consider so long as they are subordinated to the primary end and so long as the intrinsic nature of the act is preserved.'

L.W.

The April number of *LES ETUDES CARMÉLITAINES* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 15 fr.) is chiefly concerned with questions arising out of the 'mysterious doings at Beauraing' and the ecstatic phenomena remarked in Teresa Neumann.