

HEAVENWARD BOUND. A child's book of the Catholic Religion. By E. T. W. Branscombe. Drawings by Clare Dawson. (The Pax House; 7s. 6d.)

One cannot praise too highly the literary skill, religious zeal and psychological insight which have so successfully combined into one interesting, illuminating whole an explanatory doctrinal catechism and a course of instruction for the living of the Christian life. A profusion of apt illustration, both verbal and pictorial, has been pressed into service. The special virtue of this book lies in the 'just-rightness' of its appeal to youth. The boys and girls for whom it is written will, with some slight initial help from a trusted grown-up, find it a sure and friendly guide for life's journey—to many it will become a treasured *Vade-Mecum*.

Unfortunately, we cannot endorse the author's choice of sub-title: 'A child's book of the Catholic Religion.' The acceptance of almost every Catholic doctrine, the spirit of reverence, the unreserved adoption of Catholic practices and prayers, so evident throughout its pages, do not suffice to make the book Catholic. The author himself, in defining *The Church* (p. 48), disclaims—perhaps unconsciously—membership of the Divinely instituted Society constituted under one visible head. If, however, this book cannot be adopted for use among Catholic children, there is much in its manner, method, and complete adaptability to its purpose which might inspire a Catholic teacher to the imitation of so fine an achievement.

S.N.D.

## NOTICES

SOME MYSTERIES OF JESUS CHRIST. By Vincent McNabb, O.P. (Burns Oates; 2s. 6d.)

There are fewer than sixty pages in this book, but almost every sentence is provocative of thought. It would seem that it is made up of selections from Father Vincent's note-books. It is clear that his wisdom was learnt at the foot of his crucifix; it was there that he learnt his principle of life: 'All man's life should be work, or preparation for work. And all man's work should be, not for himself, but for others.' It is the lesson that he teaches us, not only in his book, but also in his life.

B.B.

... TO ONE OF THESE MY LEAST BRETHREN. By Charles K. Murphy. (The Forum Press, Cork; 6d.)

A forceful pamphlet which should be read by all priests and laymen who desire to raise 'Catholic Action' in the parish to a spiritual level and to keep it from flagging. The idea of 'Vocation' and its

attendant responsibilities brought to bear on 'voluntary work' point out a widespread error and consequent weakness in most kinds of 'Catholic Action' and provide the remedy by showing the true view. This is only one of the many precious things found within a small compass.

D.D.

**THE IRON RATION OF A CHRISTIAN.** By Heinrich Vogel. **CHRISTIAN REALISM.** By John C. Bennett. (Student Christian Movement Press; 6s. each.)

The first of these books is of interest as being the work of a courageous pastor of the German Confessional Church. But it has more value than that. It is a book very pertinent for meditation at the present time, and, in spite of its Barthian tinge, Catholics who feel the need of a strong spiritual purge would do well to read it. The author's aim is to express 'as simply and as briefly as possible the decisive essentials of what God has to say to us—in fact, the essentials of our Christian faith.' The result is no pious re-hash, but an original work of great penetration and Ignatian austerity. I do not think the second of these books, by an American, deserves the attention of Catholics. The author's Modernist ideas on the Resurrection of our Lord are an index to his general approach.

M.G.S.S.

**SCIENCE AND THE WORLD MIND.** By H. G. Wells. (New Europe Publishing Co.; 1s. 6d.)

In this pamphlet Mr. Wells' theme is the integration of intelligent opinion all over the world so that men may adapt his life to the changes brought about by applied science. The application of science to transport has brought the world into one community, and simultaneously the destructive powers in the hands of discontented members of the community have enormously increased. Mr. Wells advocates world federal control of transport, world control of raw materials, a 'world institute of thought and knowledge,' a supra-national language with the same functions as Latin previously had, and the imposition of a declaration of human rights such as the Sankey declaration. With most of this it is easy to agree; but Mr. Wells' solutions of all problems seem to be still based on the optimism of the man-centred humanism whose structure is tottering about us. They presuppose that world control will not be frustrated by selfish interests, and that declarations of rights can be 'imposed' on the nations. They are not radical solutions. Yet in his vision of the chaos of our times, and in his insistence that the problems can and should be rationally solved, Mr. Wells is treading paths familiar to contemporary Christians. It remains for Christians to put forward the real solutions and make them practicable.

E.F.C.

AGRICULTURE'S CHALLENGE TO THE NATION. By Arthur Smith. (Heinemann; 8s. 6d.)

Mr. Smith is rightly anxious to better the conditions of English farming and to assure its stability; but his proposals for reform appear of very unequal value. On the one hand there are those which cannot but do good service to land and people—reclamation of waste land, serious cultivation of grass, more use of improved strains of wheat, and so forth. On all such things he is worth hearing. On the other hand there are doubtful short cuts to 'efficiency'—national ownership of the land, increased mechanisation, diminution of 'the excess of small farmers.' A number of principles enter here—social justice, the status and rights of the family, the nature of human work: but it would be unprofitable to argue about such things with an author who writes quite seriously of men 'bringing music from European cities to the denizens of African forests,' and who allows himself the following sentence: 'Fierce though foreign competition may be and depressed his industry, the mechanised farmer has snapped and will continue to snap his fingers, his cash returns showing him that though scientists have evolved seeds and fertilisers, and engineers machinery, to aid his foreign competitors, the same discoveries and inventions have brought and will continue to bring him profit.'

W.S.

BACK TO THE COUNTRY. By F. D. Smith and Barbara Wilcox. (Black; 6s.)

An advance on the previous book by the same authors, *Living in the Country*. The advice offered is more practical, there is greater awareness of the social and political implications of a return to the land, and enthusiasm for laboratory and machine is suitably tempered in the chapter on soil erosion. Some tiresome facetiousness remains.

W.S.

MY NEIGHBOUR'S LANDMARK. By Frederick Verinder. (Henry George Foundation of Great Britain; 1s.)

This is a reprint of an attempt to reassure 'a very large number of Englishmen' that the Single Tax theory of Henry George is in accordance with the teachings of the Bible, particularly with the Law of the Jubilee. While providing interesting reading in peace time, it seems hardly worth a reprint in these days of paper shortage when publishers find it difficult even to print essential books.

J.F.

CAMBRIDGE EVACUATION SURVEY. Edited by Susan Isaacs. (Methuen; 8s. 6d.)

A well-documented and very readable record of the evacuation scheme as it has worked out in the Cambridge area. Using all avail-

able sources, teachers, parents, foster-parents, and even the children themselves, Miss Isaacs gives a comprehensive account of the problems that have arisen and are arising out of the scheme. Though only devoted to the situations that have arisen in the Cambridge area, the book is fairly representative, as far as can be judged from experience, of most other districts, and, when the time comes, will be a valuable document for tackling the post-war problems of evacuation which promise to be even more knotty.

G.S.J.

MIRROR OF BRITAIN. By J. E. SEWELL. (Hodder & Stoughton; 5s.)

An observer from the Press Gallery describes the House of Commons during the twelve months following the outbreak of war. This is a useful and interesting book—part record and part commentary. It gives a clear, even vivid, impression of the House and its leading as well as minor personalities in all their moods from the inspiring and inspired (naturally rare enough) to the tedious and ridiculous. Whether the House of Commons is a mirror of Britain some will question. However, the author is a convinced, though discriminating, admirer of Parliament, and his book should prove instructive and entertaining to both friend and foe of our strange 'democracy.'

M.G.S.S.

SIDELIGHTS ON THE CATHOLIC REVIVAL. (Sheed and Ward; 5s.)

For those whose reading in bed is not limited to detective stories this is an excellent book. The essays which it contains are concerned with the more eminent of the Catholic contributors to the world of letters. No essay is so long that one does not feel inclined to commence the next. They all contain material which stimulates thought and interest, and although they are necessarily familiar to the readers of *This Publishing Business* (in which publication they first saw the light), their collection in book form is sufficiently valuable to overcome the suggestion of advertised advertisement.

C.B.

PYGMALION. By Bernard Shaw. (Penguin Books; 6d.)

The great charm of this new edition of Mr. Shaw's play consists in the illustrations, in the text, by Feliks Topolski. They are numerous and excellent. Curiously enough, though the text of the play has been brought up to date to match the film production of it, the illustrations record costumes of the early Edwardian period. The epilogue illustrates how much better his characters speak for Mr. Shaw than he does for himself.

P.U.F.