

various other hardly less fundamental matters is truly enlightening. These are books to be grateful for; though one cannot in the least accept what Wheeler Robinson has to say about the authority of the Bible in relation to the Church. And there is also this criticism that one would make of his work: that for all the author's unmistakable depth and generosity of mind, and all allowances being made for restriction of purpose, one finds his exposition of the Bible to be somewhat bleakly scholastic, somewhat puritanical. He concentrates on the spiritual factors, the higher formative concepts, while ignoring the positive value that they extracted from the crude, natural or pagan material upon which they worked. One gets the final impression of the Old Testament as of a work of divine pedagogy, couched in Semitic terms needing to be translated by laborious scholarly effort. Whereas it is the Mystery of the redemption of man and possesses an inner, imaginative language that is Catholic and that (even humanly speaking) is immediately intelligible to the heart of man, however unscolarly he may be. RICHARD KEHOE, O.P.

TALK OF THE DEVIL (*La Part du Diable*). By Denis de Rougemont. Translated by Kathleen Maine. (Eyre & Spottiswoode; 8s. 6d.)

M. de Rougemont introduces the devil as the Bible introduces him, in full disguise, a subtle psychologist engineering the Fall. And then, in order to convey the ultimate spiritual significance of the devil, he gradually draws upon the revelation of the Gospels, of St Paul, and of the Apocalypse. In the technical process of sin the devil can only work incognito; for he must operate in the unconscious. And for this it is simply necessary that his victim should disbelieve in his existence, or else should be capable of recognising him—in effect—only in other people, as a danger from outside. It is easy, therefore, to show what scope he enjoys in our democracies. But the full powers of the author are brought into play to convince us that some of the most characteristic moral deficiencies in our democratic order, in our democratic lives, which we only think of as the weaknesses of a civilisation dedicated to righteousness, do in fact exhibit all the characteristics of devilish evil, and follow the same pattern and trend that were fulfilled in Nazi Germany. The tragedy is that whereas in Hitler we had the chance of realizing the mystery of evil, we only saw evil as in him; and so the devil acquired the most perfect alibi of his career. At the best we appreciated Hitler as an external punishment for our sins; but we did not see him as 'the exact negative of our optimistic ideals in so far as they were unrealistic, utopian, blatantly egotistic, and expressive only of a mild desire . . . for a promethean divinisation'. That we should see evil in others, and for ourselves only fear the impact of it—that is the gist of the devil's monstrous, anti-creational purpose towards us. Whereas 'the whole meaning of Christianity is expressed in three acts essentially tragic: to take upon the self the evil that is in the world, die of that evil, and rise again in purity'.

The exhortatory message of the book is largely drawn from the vision and the triumphant challenge of the Apocalypse. The evil in the world can be overcome, on condition of our realizing that it already has been overcome, and a divine order of the world established, in the strength of the victory of the Lamb of God, the Son of Man. 'We can participate in that really total victory by becoming, each of us, that "imperceptible obstacle" that stops the current. . . . The condition of that final victory is that we become each of us men, responsible persons. The only irreducible obstacle is the saint. . . . 'The world is full of demons, they flourish by millions, and we will never be able to get rid of them. But really we can only exorcise the devil from ourselves. Diogenes looked for a man, lantern in hand. It does not surprise me that he never found one. The real way to meet a man is to become one. Every man living a more respectable life is a defeat for the devil, here and now, and for the tyrants too; an absolute and unanswerable defeat, a primary element in the imperishable order'.

But this is not only a book of great theological, of vital human importance. It is also a masterly and fascinating piece of writing; in which, therefore—as the author would say—devilry itself is turned to good account. It is written with a wit and passionate irony that are reminiscent of Kierkegaard. And nothing of its poetic virtue would seem to have been lost, but if anything reinforced in the translation. It only remains for the devil to affect the sales.

RICHARD KEHOE, O.P.

A PREFACE TO LOGIC. Morris R. Cohen (Routledge; 8s. 6d.)

The author describes this book as 'not . . . a treatise on logic but an exploration of the periphery of logic, . . . the applications which give it importance'. It is in fact a development of the traditional thesis that logic is the universal instrument of science. As might be expected from his excellent *Introduction to Logic and Scientific Method*, the author is sharply aware of the hypothetical character of experimental science and of the fallacy involved in the popular view that a hypothesis is strictly verified by the verification of its implications. Accordingly the second half of the book is devoted to questions of probability and statistical methods. Yet experimental science is not relegated wholly to the field of the merely probable. 'If the actually formulated laws of our physics can be shown to undergo change themselves, it can only be in reference to something else which is constant in relation to them'. It is this 'something else'—'the relations of certain constants and variables'—which is the subject matter of logic and which constitutes the field of every science. 'Every science must assume some invariant connections or categories'—here we have in sum the subject matter of both formal and material logic. Both this book and the *Introduction* already referred to do good service in emphasising and expounding the necessity of such an invariant background not only for science, however