

the *philosophia perennis*. If they don't, we are all liable to have 'existentialist' nightmares.

IAN HISLOP, O.P.

THE SEAL OF THE SPIRIT. A Study in the Doctrine of Baptism and Confirmation in the New Testament and the Fathers. By G. W. H. Lampe. (Longmans, Green; 35s.)

The author makes no secret of his intention to criticise a definite theological position, that of those Anglican theologians (of whom Dom Gregory Dix is at present the most distinguished representative) according to whom Confirmation should properly be regarded as the 'Baptism of the Spirit'. In this way Confirmation would assume a greater importance than 'Baptism of water' which would thus become merely a prelude. Against this theory Mr Lampe has ranged a formidable mass of arguments taken from history, exegesis and philology. To meet Dom Dix's reconstructions, inferences and hypotheses he brings the overwhelming weight of his erudition. This he does with a perseverance which is sure of what it maintains, with calmness and almost without allowing himself a unifying hypothesis. His book will thus be found to be both the classic authority and the indispensable tool of every scholar (be he historian or theologian) who wants to establish a sure basis for his information on the subject of Baptism, of Confirmation, or for his ideas of the 'seal' and of the 'Gift of the Spirit'. Moreover, the three chapters XII-XIV, 'The Seal of the Divine Image', 'The Seal of the Cross', 'The Seal of the Name', show an originality which is indeed remarkable. The Catholic theologian, unless I am greatly mistaken, will support the criticism of Dom Dix's theories; he will find himself in particular agreement with Mr Lampe over the connection between Baptism and the work of the Spirit, and the 'perfective' character (not that of perfecting as regards its essence) of Confirmation in regard to Baptism. Where he does find himself less satisfied with Mr Lampe's exposition, it will be because of the latter's failure to put forward a clear and definite theological opinion on the important points of doctrine on which he touches. I am not surprised that he so often speaks of 'disintegration' or 'confusion'; indeed, he treats everything on the same plane and, dealing as he does with the history of dogma, he ignores the key which is provided by dogma itself. It is not a question of an undue transference of theology into the realm of history; what is wanted is history sufficiently realist to be able to derive inspiration from its constant factors and able to bring out its different elements in their fullness. It would, however, be difficult to find in Mr Lampe's book unequivocal views on grace and on the sacramental system, still less on the 'character' and the 'divine missions'. But it is these realities which underlie the scriptural and patristic teaching

analysed here, and, however great the value of the literary and terminological analysis may be, it cannot suffice for the understanding of a doctrine, even historically speaking.

I should like to see a Catholic theologian return to, or rather take up again in this direction, this admirable work of scholarship which we owe to Mr Lampe. The task will not be easy, yet one may perhaps point out that as regards the scriptural aspect, Mgr Ruch's article 'Confirmation' in the *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* indicates the direction to be followed in laying down with scrupulously scientific exactitude the connections to be found between the theology of Confirmation and the scriptural texts on the Holy Spirit and the conferring of the Spirit in the New Testament, particularly in the *Acts*. The essential remains: Confirmation is the conferring of the gift of the Spirit with a view to bearing witness to Christ. If one tries to suppress this latter point, or to stretch it too much, one risks undervaluing Baptism to a degree incompatible with the Faith, a procedure which even history cannot but judge severely. Whatever reservations Mr Lampe's book calls for, it does represent one of the finest essays in the history of doctrine in a chapter which is far from yet having found its final formulation. The author deserves the gratitude of all those who realise the need of working at its elaboration.

HENRI DE RIEDMATTEN, O.P.

EDUCATIONAL ESSAYS. By F. H. Drinkwater. (Burns Oates; 25s.)
CHRISTOPHER'S TALKS TO CATHOLIC PARENTS. By David L. Greenstock.
(Burns Oates; 18s.)

Educational Essays is an unattractive title for so fascinating a book. Here are collected the essentials of Father Drinkwater's thought on the problems of education, over a period of more than thirty years, from the date of the founding of that wonderfully fresh and vital periodical *The Sower*—still, thank God, going strong. Most of the essays here reprinted were first written for its pages, and those who have been faithful readers and whose ideas on questions educational have been strongly influenced and made explicit by its critical examination and assessment of current educational conventions and practices will be delighted to have so much concentrated wisdom in book form; and so will many others who have not perhaps had the good fortune hitherto to be so influenced.

And what a courageous and successful pioneer Father Drinkwater has been during all these years. There is much in this collection that is autobiographical, in the sense that he lets us see the way his own mind worked in face of the actual problems of teaching religion that he encountered, and this makes his practical conclusions on a number of widely different educational subjects immediately convincing because