

the prophets” (p 2). The New Testament is itself treated selectively, with chapters on Matthew, Paul and John, but in writing his final synthetic chapter on ‘primary constituents and characteristic traits’ the author aims to have all sixty-six books in mind. The problem of patriarchal and male-dominated language is side-stepped, and questions of socio-economic background are passed over on account of their difficulty (p 4).

Within these limitations Gerhardtsson offers an attractive distillation of many years’ study. The book is full of suggestive observations on the three authors discussed. He is not afraid to criticize the tendencies to unworldliness which he sees in Paul, and exclusivism which he sees in John. Matthew is evidently his favourite,

and love what it is all about. Imitation of Christ and self-sacrifice are also strongly emphasized. There is much to be grateful for here, not least the reflections it provokes on what theology and ethics of the New Testament should be. The necessary historical work is surely to be linked with reflection upon one’s own convictions. More serious *debate* with the New Testament authors is needed, a discussion which draws upon whatever the human sciences can contribute to moral reflection today. Even in its own mainly descriptive terms this book cuts out much that was surely important in the social and political life of the early Christians. The result is an implied suggestion that Christian faith and life are conservative.

ROBERT MORGAN

FRANCIS AND CLARE: The Complete Works. Translation and Introduction by Regis J Armstrong, O.F.M.Cap, and Ignatius C Brady, O.F.M. Preface by John Vaughn, O.F.M. *The Classics of Western Spirituality.* London. SPCK, Ramsey N.J. Paulist Press, 1982. pp xvi + 255. £9.50.

EARLY DOMINICANS: Selected Writings. Selected with an Introduction by Simon Tugwell, O.P. Preface by Vincent de Couesnongle, O.P. *The Classics of Western Spirituality.* London. SPCK. Ramsey, N.J. Paulist Press, 1982. pp xiv + 508. £12.50.

The latest additions to *The Classics of Western Spirituality* give translations of some of the central documents for the history and spiritual life of the early friars, and must be warmly welcomed for providing careful versions of texts of the highest and deepest interest, and making them widely available. For Fr Tugwell’s volume, one can claim more: his is a brilliant selection and a work of original scholarship, which will breathe new life into the study of the early history of the Order of Preachers.

Fr Brady is one of the respected senior editors of Grottaferrata, and he and his younger colleague have given us careful translations of the works of Francis and Clare. For Francis, the great edition of Kajetan Esser provides a secure basis; and Fr Brady has himself translated the works and legend of Clare in an earlier publication. All that we want is here, and it is well translated; and there are useful, sometimes exceedingly valuable notes, indicat-

ing sources and comparative literature, and occasionally (as for the Testament of St Clare) recent manuscript discoveries. Of the introductions it is not possible to speak so well: they are relatively superficial and refuse either in text or notes to pay adequate attention to modern literature. The only modern biography of Francis in English which is quoted is G. K. Chesterton’s and a passage on p 15 seems to make Sabatier’s classic life of 1893-4 (not 1919) ‘contemporary’ (see n. 29). Strangely, there is no reference, except of the most general character, to recent attempts to translate these writings, though there are indications that some have been carefully considered. More serious, the discussion of the authenticity of Clare’s *Testament* (pp 174-6, 226) is vague, even contradictory: at one moment it is left uncertain, at another the Testament is cited as a clear reflection of the saint’s mind. The Editors are wonderfully precise on the textual evidence (p 226): could they not have paid

their readers the compiment of explaining clearly why most modern scholars now accept the *Testament* as authentic (see e.g. *Medieval Women*, ed. D. Baker, Oxford, 1978, p 277)? The effect of this, and of their refusal to admit that her relations with Francis and the hierarchy passed through some notable vicissitudes, make her seem a much less interesting figure than most scholars find her. Happily, Francis and Clare can speak to us direct in these excellent translations, and show the rich variety of their own experience; and in the translations they are faithfully revealed, even to Francis's famous paradox, about tiresome brothers – 'do not wish that they be better Christians' (p 75).

Early Dominicans must have been a much more difficult book to write. Dominic cannot talk directly to us; a selection has had to be made from a wide and scattered literature of variable interest concerning a number of the early friars. This literature has been mastered as few scholars could have mastered it; and a very shrewd and interesting selection made. One regrets the omission of most of Jordan of Saxony's *De principijs* the less, since Fr Tugwell has given it in another publication; one regrets the omission of the Toulouse depositions of the canonisation process all the more, since he has advanced our knowledge of the texts of the process so much in his account and translation of the depositions from Bologna. Every student will have his particular delights and sor-

rows. I specially welcome Jean de Mailly's *Life and the Nine Ways of Prayer* of St Dominic, and the splendid selection from Humbert de Romans, who comes into his own at last. Introductions and notes are full of new learning, and the wealth of textual knowledge makes one regret that some of the translations are not accompanied by the original Latin; one certainly hopes that the Editor will go on to edit in full many of the texts from which he has selected, for he rightly says 'there is a remarkable lack of serious critical editions of early Dominican texts' (p 35). He talks of his translation as 'a kind of progress report' (*ibid.*) and this sums up the achievement of the book. For not only do the texts show us the width of early Dominican literature in a new way, but the selection and commentary open up all manner of interesting problems about early Dominican history and spirituality. For the student of the early Dominicans the works of Vicaire and Hinnebusch provide ample foundations; but they have hardly brought the early friars to life. This is Fr Tugwell's special achievement: all who would know about the early friars will find copious interest in these texts; and all serious students of the early Dominicans will be stimulated to rethink their suppositions and start again with a refreshing, novel view of the material familiar and unfamiliar.

ROSALIND B. BROOKE

IULIA DE BEAUSOBRE: A RUSSIAN CHRISTIAN IN THE WEST by
Constance Babington Smith. *Darton, Longman & Todd*, pp 195. £9.95.

I have a bookcase which carries works by the poet Kathleen Raine, Helen Thomas' writings upon her husband the poet, Gerald Brenan's *St John of the Cross*, Philip Sherrard's *Christianity and Eros* and Aelred Graham's *Contemplative Christianity*. To these I shall add this book, for it belongs in that company, being a work that touches life at the bone, the poetry of idealism, and the deepest conviction about the presence of God in man's history. It is about the journey from shelter to suffer-

ing, from enclosed social safety to compassion even for one's torturer, from a weak convention about faith to a religious adhesion that surpasses denominational loyalty. It is a tale of the journey of an unquenchable spirit in time and experience to something akin to sanctity; and it is shortly and delightfully told.

The author is a biographer of substance, who gave us *Rose Macaulay* in 1972 and *John Masefield* in 1978: between the two, she was received into the Orthodox Church