

REVIEWS

THE HUMAN WISDOM OF ST THOMAS. Arranged by Josef Pieper, translated by Drostan MacLaren, O.P. (Sheed and Ward; 6s. 0d.)

This book is described in the sub-title as a breviary of philosophy from the works of St Thomas Aquinas. It consists of over five hundred short extracts from the writings of St Thomas arranged under seventeen general chapter headings. Apart from a short preface there is no commentary on the texts. The author hopes that this will have the effect of leading the reader to reflect on the texts and thus come to know in a personal way the general outlines of the philosophical thought of St Thomas.

The author is of the opinion that there is mystery at the heart of all reality. St Thomas's philosophy is not an exhaustive explanation of one part of reality so perfect that the only mysteries left are those lying outside this particular section of reality. On the contrary it is an attempt to grasp in thought the total order of entire reality but in such a way as to recognise that this order itself 'is interwoven and crossed by mystery'. To show the presence in St Thomas's writings of a realisation of both order and mystery has been one of the aims of the present book.

From a practical point of view it will certainly be welcomed by those who have some acquaintance with the work of St Thomas but who are unable to keep the whole range of his writings constantly before their minds. It sometimes happens that in reading, say, a passage from the *Summa* we forget the slightly different treatment of the same question which can be found, for example, in the *de Veritate* or the *de Potentia*. This can and does in some cases lead to a one-sided interpretation of St Thomas's teaching. It is in consequence a great boon to have texts from various works gathered together.

Whether the book will be of equal use to those unacquainted with the general outlines of St Thomas's teaching is not so easy to decide. Given a sympathetic approach it is probable that an intelligent reader will at least feel inclined to know more about Thomist philosophy, and if this leads him to consult the actual works themselves the author will have achieved his aim.

Lastly a word about the contents. Texts of St Thomas are given dealing with the following problems: the relationship of creatures to God; the connection between good and evil; the nature of intelligence and morality; the nature of happiness, pleasure and blessedness; the possibility of knowledge and love of God.

G. EKBERY.

A LEXICON OF ST THOMAS AQUINAS. By Roy J. Deferrari, M. Inviolata Barry, and Ignatius McGuinness. (Catholic University of America Press, Fascicule I. \$12.50.)

The *Thomas-Lexicon* of Ludwig Schütz is now more than fifty years old and the importance of this new and more ambitious effort

of scholarship will be appreciated. It proposes to provide the different English meanings of every word used in the *Summa Theologica* and of selected key-words from the remaining works. St Thomas's own definitions are given first.

The preface does not match the contents. The careful scholarship of the editors appears even from a cursory reading of this first section from *a, ab* to *Cyrus*. You may look for some of the classical traps and find them sprung. Such a work of course can only be tested by the regular consultation which its appearance merits. As a first ABC for the editors' second thoughts, it may be suggested that Alexander of Aphrodisias, who is missing, is more important than popes of that name, that the application of the term *bonum commune* to God should be referred to, and that it is not a happy start to describe *causa* as a wide synonym of *principium*.

T.G.

CERTAINTY, PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL. By Dom Illyd Trethowan. (Dacre Press; 15s.)

Many of the Thomist circles which have sprung up in recent years must have felt the need for a guide-book which would show them how St Thomas's thought is relevant to contemporary thought, whilst at the same time providing a lead through the forest of the *Opera Omnia*. Such circles will find Dom Illyd's book extremely useful. Some of Dom Illyd's gay 'tilting at long-established views' will appear misdirected when they have recourse to St Thomas's own works, and the Benedictine is quite obviously in for a rough-handling from the strict Thomists; but that is a minor matter if everyone derives as much enjoyment from discussing the book as the author must have done from writing it.

So many problems come into range and vanish again with breathless speed (pp. 46-48 'The Theory of Analogy') that even a list of its contents would occupy pages. In response, then, to Dom Illyd's invitation to suggest improvements, we limit ourselves to asking whether the method of discussion is the correct one. Repeatedly we are told that certain views are 'gaining currency', or that M. Maritain's views are 'promising' that someone else's are 'encouraging'; the torrent of names makes one imagine that a Thomist Third-Programme is being broadcast. The author might have found it easier to communicate his thought if he had 'aimed at things' rather than at other people.

D. NICHOLL.

LE CONCEPT DE DROIT SELON ARISTOTE ET ST THOMAS. T.R.P. Louis Lachance, O.P., S.T.M. (Les Editions du Lévrier, Ottawa, Montreal, 1948; n.p.)

This is the second edition, revised and corrected, of a work which first appeared in 1933. The notion of right is an involved one and