

larly grateful to Dr Farrer for rich typological suggestions, for an immense light thrown on the text in many places, and for treating St Mark as a unity.

ROLAND POTTER, O.P.

REVELATIONS OF DIVINE LOVE. By Julian of Norwich. Edited and introduced by Dom Roger Hudleston, o.s.b. (Orchard Series; Burns Oates; 16s.)

How can we reconcile the evil which follows from the abuse of the free will with the certainty of divine providence? This problem has fascinated philosophers in the past and it is today one of the most serious obstacles for many outside the Church in the acceptance of the Catholic faith. It is therefore most helpful to return to this great classic which shows such insight into this very question. It should be noticed that Mother Julian offers no easy solution, and unlike Origen, who conceived of suffering only as a purification leading towards a universal resurrection to glory at the end of history, she combines her firm faith in the providence of God with a recognition of the reality of eternal suffering in Hell.

She asks us to accept the thing in its true light as a mystery, which defies the capacity of the human reason to see in this life, but which must be accepted on faith without vision. 'The use of our reason', she writes, 'is now so blind, so low and so simple that we cannot know that high marvellous wisdom, the might and the goodness of the Blessed Trinity.' It is easy to dismiss this as a convenient way of avoiding a difficulty, but it is fundamental to the whole problem, and rests on the truth that our own conceptions of wisdom and justice can be applied to God only analogically. We inevitably reverse the true order of procedure and judge divine wisdom according to the faint reflection of it in our human intelligence, instead of understanding at the outset that our intelligence has the same kind of relation to divine wisdom as the human eye, in Dante's image, which sees clearly the depths of the sea from the shore, but further out can no longer see them. They are still there but are hidden from our sight. We try to judge the wisdom of God by what is only a created participation in his wisdom.

But once this necessary foundation is laid, Bl. Julian of Norwich gives us indications showing the direction towards which we should look for light. We are shown that the satisfaction made for the sin of Adam was more pleasing to God than that sin was harmful, and the conclusion follows: 'Since I have made well the most harm, then it is my will that thou know hereby that I shall make well all that is less'; it is the theme of the *felix culpa*. It is very significant, too, that she sees the unity between Adam and the whole human race. Adam is all mankind, and Christ, the second Adam, in taking flesh becomes all mankind.

The initial acceptance of the question as a mystery should not mean that we are not to try to use our reason to its utmost limits, and there is an interesting note at the end of the book giving a quotation from Fr Sharpe's work: 'Mysticism: its true nature and value'. He argues that if God had abstained from this creation on the grounds of his foresight of the sinful actions of his creatures, and had created another and better world, he would not have acted as God since he would have acted as dependent on the free actions of possible creatures. It is a pity that this most interesting reference contains the ambiguous sentence that the mystics are agreed that evil is the negation of good and no more, for it does not make clear the vital distinction between *negation* or limit which is common to all creation and *privation*, that absence of a perfection due to a thing, which is the foundation of our concept of evil.

DOM ODO BROOKE, O.S.B.

SHE TAKES THE VEIL. By Sister Mary Laurence, O.P. (Blackfriars; 2s. 6d.)

A dumpy, attractive little Dominican nun with a large red BY on her scapular invites the reader from the jacket to take the veil of the enclosed preachers. The first person to be enticed is Doreen, a young convert, business-girl of 25. She writes intelligent and undemonstrative letters to Sr Mary Laurence about becoming a nun and the latter gradually instructs her in matters that to an enclosed religious are straightforward enough but to the outsider are usually a complete conundrum. Nothing is shirked; 'Is there really pettiness or friction in the religious life?' Doreen asks. 'Of course there is', the good sister replies. No blinkers or rosy glasses here; and for that very reason the picture is attractive, as the life dedicated to the perfection of charity should be. Particularly attractive is the way the sacrifice of the vows is linked immediately with the sacrifice of the Mass. But every letter is wise and based on sound doctrine—'vocation itself is the acceptance by an Order for final profession'—nothing emotional or exalté here. The book will do a great deal to give people a true idea of the Dominican contemplative life, as well as of religious life in general. May it draw many another Doreen into the cloister to increase the work of the apostolate.

F.X.T.

MEDIAEVAL LATIN LYRICS. Edited and translated by Helen Waddell. (Penguin Books; 3s.)

This selection and translation appeared first in 1927; there followed three more editions before the war; and now Penguin Classics have given us its 350 pages for only 3s. The lyrics are all worth while, many of them full of the spirit of the tumblers. For the most part the translations