

that in any case charity must supply the defects of justice, who shall blame him?

It is, however, a little difficult to know for whom this book was written. It is not easy to read and has much of the apparatus of a learned work. If it is to reach the poor souls who need it, its thesis must be more boldly uttered and more clearly expressed. J.D.C.

JEAN MOSCHUS: *Le Pré Spirituel*. Introduction et Traduction de M.-J. Rouët de Journal, S.J. (Editions du Cerf: Blackfriars Publications; 11s.)

The latest volume in the *Sources Chrétiennes* series is devoted to an author too little known in this country. Born about 540, Moschus became a monk at the monastery of St Theodosius, near Jerusalem. Later he retired to the laura of Pharan, in the desert of Judah, where he spent ten years. From 578 until his death (which probably took place in 619) Moschus travelled the length of Palestine, Syria and Egypt with his inseparable companion Sophronius. His purpose was to gather all the existing monastic traditions of the Christian East, and at the end of his life he retired to Rome where he collected the fruit of his investigations into one volume, *The Spiritual Meadow*, which may, in the form we know it, be largely arranged by Sophronius.

'I find the sight of meadows in springtime full of delight with all their variety of flowers capturing our attention.' Thus begins this charming record of the monks of Sinaia and Egypt who have brought spiritual flowers to bloom in unlikely places. Moschus's method is a simple one. He is a storyteller, and his accounts of his heroes—their lives, their virtues, their eccentricities as well as their ascetical teaching—have a fidelity which is irresistible. He is not a moralist, he draws no conclusions. He has no need to do so, for the men and events he describes speak for themselves, revealing a life of heroic austerity as well as one often of all too human weakness. Here are prodigies of renunciation together with delightful domesticities; and over all is the sense of a vocation at its most absolute, providing at every turn a reminder that the search for the *unum necessarium* must be the permanent preoccupation of all Christians.

In a magnificent introduction, Père de Journal emphasises not only the documentary importance of Moschus's work but its relevance. We are taken back to a world that is fresh and even naive, and we can join with the author, when he remarks at the end of his last story—'A Lesson in Humility'—in saying, 'Greatly edified, I gave glory to the Father, the Son and to the Holy Ghost, to whom are due glory and honour world without end'. I. E.

THE GREAT LOVE. By the Very Rev. Thomas A. Canon Wright. (The Word Press; 8s. 6d.)

Canon Wright lets us know without mincing words to what a mediocre state we have come, castigates vigorously the peculiar