

candles in front of it but is penetrated with a light of its own, a light not of this world, shining through it from behind, as if through a window. . . .’ He might well have stopped there and drawn some moral lesson, but no, the ‘strong meat’ of theology is yet to come. The window is in a wall, the ‘wall of our corrupt nature . . . and through that wall the Incarnation and the Passion of Jesus Christ have made a great window . . . made a breach in our citadel, let light into our prison’. Yet again this is not a thing that happened once and was done with, it is for all eternity, and we have a pledge of that in the Eucharist where ‘In this mystery of Transubstantiation, he has broken into the very heart of nature’, and so the wall of partition is no longer a wall of partition. What a superb and masterly way of bringing home the truth that Christ’s Incarnation is the raising and transformation of our human nature here and now for us. There we have an example of Mgr Knox’s power to command and at the same time his suavity of style; they spring together from a firm grasp of the truths of religion and a severe discipline of thought. But there is yet one more quality which sweetens everything: for all that his mind has been devoted to learning all his life, his eyes have never been taken off his fellow men, and we can find reflected in them love and humility. So in the end every extended metaphor, every image, every scrap of scholarship and learning is drawn to some direct, practical and gentle conclusion. ‘I wonder, is that why some of us are so frightened of Holy Communion, because we still cling to the world of sense?’ ‘When you pray for the Pope’s intentions at Mass, take your stand beside him in imagination, the man on whom we Christians, millions of us, have laid the burden of our common solicitudes.’ One cannot take up, still less put down, this book without very great gratitude to Monsignor Knox for making the truths of our faith real and bringing them home to us firmly and yet tenderly. This is work that will last and stand beside Cardinal Newman and will be read again and again.

GERARD MEATH, O.P.

THE SACRAMENTS IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. By M. M. Philipon, O.P.

Translated by J. A. Otto. (Sands; 16s.)

Readers who are used to this kind of book will like it. It gives an adequate theology of the sacraments, ‘and provides as well many passages suitable for meditation’: this from the dust-cover. The theology will be swallowed because it is given in familiar abstract terms, but it will remain undigested because the author himself has never succeeded in digesting it; he has only made it palatable with a wrapping of devotional platitude (probably less wearisome in French). Genuine theology implies personally understanding the content of

revelation within the framework provided by the Church's development of it, but in this book scripture is simply made use of to illustrate developed doctrine. The Marian passages which produced adverse comment and a correspondence in *The Times Literary Supplement* are fairly typical. The reviewer was wrong to doubt their orthodoxy, and exaggerated their importance in relation to the rest of the book, but had any real theological justification for them been given his remarks would not have been made. We shall never have a theologically educated laity as long as mediocre books continue to be put out. A. M. Roguet's book on the sacraments a year or two ago was short, clear, and written with theological insight. A pity that bad money tends to drive out good.

LAURENCE BRIGHT, O.P.

LOVE OF OUR NEIGHBOUR. A Symposium. (Blackfriars; 12s. 6d.)

This book was published two years ago in French by Les Editions du Cerf under the title of *L'Amour du Prochain*. In the words of the Editor Père Plé it is offered not as a short theological treatise on love of one's neighbour, but to help prepare the way for such a thing. The general principles on which the present work is based are among the central data of our faith: God is love, he loves us, and he asks us to love him; to love God is to love our neighbour, to love our neighbour is to love God. The brilliant little essay in the third section on the *Divine Dialectic* shows how far removed from the Hegelian dialectic of master and slave is christian love of God and neighbour. The three essays in the first section of the book present us with the notion of love of neighbour as set forth in the Bible; in the second part we have three essays on the theological principles of charity; and the six essays which make up the last section are studies on the relations between people from the points of view of modern psychology, philosophy and sociology. In spite of the excellent work of the translators there are a number of essays in the third section that are not easy reading; but this is perhaps the most interesting and informative part of a book that contains much that is good.

HIS HEART IN OUR WORK. (Browne and Nolan; 15s.)

This book is a collection of some forty short essays by various authors selected from the pages of the American quarterly bulletin for priests, *Alter Christus*, for the years 1937-50. Clearly no one asked to write a four-page article for a periodical such as this would want to attempt anything very much in the way of speculative theology or scriptural exegesis. But is it expecting too much to ask for a breath of Scripture somewhere, even in a four-page essay written for what would be called a