

essential nature problems of authority, are complicated by the peculiar nature of the relationship between Church and State, a relationship having its origins in the distant past' (p. 154). The sole ultimate foundation they can offer to the perplexed inquirer is that 'right conduct is ultimately the kind of conduct which is approved by the good man' (p. 174). And who is the good man? 'He is one who is ever enlarging his vision and hence it is a circle which is ever enlarging itself and not a vicious circle' (ibid).

On this precarious foundation certain things on moral theology are culled from the theologians 'of the Roman obedience'. But you cannot cut flowers from the Roman garden and stick them in the ground of the Anglican garden and expect them to grow without roots.

P. J. F.

DE ABBREVIATIONIBUS ET SIGNIS SCRIPTURAE GOTHICAE. M.-H. Laurent, O.P. (Rome, 'Angelicum'. 1939; 60 lire.)

The purpose of this small work is to give beginners unable to afford standard works, but eager to read medieval writing, the essential rules and some suggestions. It is the fruit of personal experience as teacher of palaeography at the 'Angelicum'. The author deals only with the Gothic period (13th-15th century), which followed the Carolingian. The decline in the quality of writing in the 14th century is explained by the psychological effect, Père Laurent maintains, of the plague, famine and war which prevailed in that century. The essential rules for reading abbreviations are clearly stated, but it would have been better if each rule had been illustrated by an example. There are three appendices. The first of these will encourage students. In the second some rules are given, for the editing of medieval texts, which might be contested. In the third appendix there are useful suggestions on how to quote medieval sources, both civil and ecclesiastical. As an introduction to palaeography this book will be found useful, though the student will have to consult also the larger standard works, to which Père Laurent refers him in the footnotes.

ANDREW VELLA, O.P.

MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY. By Edgar Schmiedeler, O.S.B., Ph.D. (McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York.)

The director of the United States Catholic Family Life Bureau has written this work as a textbook for a course on Marriage for use in the Catholic schools and clubs of America.

The simple, straightforward style of the author, coupled with his elaboration of points from the Encyclical 'Christian Marriage' by Pope Pius XI should ensure a wide public for the book. At a time when the spiritual aspect of marriage receives such casual attention, a corrective is a vital necessity. Dr Schmiedeler and his colleagues at the National Catholic Welfare Conference of America, aim to administer this corrective by the use of such admirable textbooks as the present volume. Happy and successful marriages, we are