

and of the principle of polarity, i.e., 'of the necessary copresence and mutual dependence of opposite determinations' has much that will recommend it to Thomists. Matter and potency impair and shroud the intelligibility of act and perfection. The mind's dual activity of division and composition is an illustration which might be added to those given of the operation of this principle. Those only are subject to the accusation of excessive logicism who are conscious of the mind's dividing function to the exclusion of its compounding one. The opposite extreme, leading in metaphysics to pantheism, is obtained by denying the validity of irreducible distinctions. Another application to which a good deal of space is devoted is in the field of 'ethics. Thomists are as familiar as anyone with the antithesis between the universality of ethical principles and the particularity of human acts. The whole chapter entitled 'Values, Norms and Science' is a most interesting defence of normative science in general and of ethical science in particular, against positivism that denies the applicability of universal norms to the twilight zones of the particular.

Ivo THOMAS, O.P.

THEY WENT TO PORTUGAL. By Rose Macaulay. (Jonathan Cape; 18s.)

Miss Rose Macaulay's proved erudition; her achievements as an anthologist; the high malice she brings to the exercise of debunkery; the competence with which she receives and acts upon a fresh idea have combined to make her symposium on Portugal unique among books of travel. No other writer before her has obeyed an impulse to collect and annotate the lives, letters and diaries of English visitors to a foreign clime in order to construct a mosaic panorama of the country so seen, so praised, so maligned; so served and exploited as Portugal has been ever since Simon of Dover leading his men of Kent in the Second Crusade 'put in at Oporto and was persuaded to help Alfonso I to capture Lisbon from the Moors'.

The story of the English in Portugal, whether they lived there in nightmare luxury as did William Beckford at intervals through twelve fantastic years, or settled like an army of ants in the valley of the upper Douro, there to found great fortunes on the manufacture and export of port wine is, as Miss Macaulay has collected it, a history of Portugal itself. Her method zig-zags a good deal through the centuries. She groups her figures by character and occupation rather than by eras. Like Cardinal Wiseman when depicting Christian society in third-century Rome, she admits that 'chronology has been sacrificed', but, in spite of this concession, possibly because of it, vivacity has been almost always preserved. However, there are pages where Miss Macaulay's appetite for gossip about dead and never very important matters gets the better of her judgment and she invites her readers to giggle with her over such small beer as the scandals of seventeenth-century diplomatic circles in Lisbon society; further, her shrewd rationalism tarnishes her pictures of missionary efforts, Catholic, Protestant or merely business-like as were George

Borrow's journeys; she reduces them all to a dead level of ineptitude. With Henry Floyd the Jesuit she is at once carping and candid, quoting from the letters of the English Consul in Lisbon who, at the time of the Gunpowder Plot, had good reason for mis-liking the proselytizing Roman but herself summing up his character thus: 'He knew no loyalty but to his church, his order and his God'.

In her disarming preface Miss Macaulay assures us that she has, for the three years since she visited Portugal, lived with the persons she sets before us 'and they have given me the entertainment of very varied and miscellaneous society'. It is to be hoped that this entertainment has not so much distracted the author's mind from her own experiences in Lisbon and Oporto when war was at its height that she has lost the full record of her sojourn in the country whose outlines she has presented to us by so original a method, and that, one day, another writer, re-editing what may well become a classic in its kind, will be able to add a pungent chapter headed *Rose Macaulay*—1943.

In its present state the book contains some 300,000 words, on far too closely printed pages. It is natural, under present conditions, that the first edition of such a work should need revision. No stipulator so keen as she is for correct English can have willingly left the question: 'How much can be blamed on De Visme?' on page 187, and when did any tourist ever see groves of oak trees in the Douro ravines or find the best port vineyards only forty-five miles from the river's mouth? And there is an Anglo-Portuguese tradition of Cromwell's treaty connected with the English cemetery at Lisbon which might well be added to the necrology of the many Englishmen who—

*'Neath the green Estrella trees  
Sleep with the alien Portuguese.*

NAOMI ROYDE SMITH

THE VISION SPLENDID. By Nevile Watts. (Sheed & Ward; 7s. 6d.)

This book is an eloquent plea for a return to poetry and poetic values. It is one that might well stir enthusiasm; and this is an enthusiastic book. In an excellent chapter on the value of poetry, the author shows how its high and permanent value was not questioned until the present era: 'There have been times', he writes, 'in the history of the human race when the value of prose might well have been questioned. There have been times, and great times, too, when literature meant poetry, and poetry alone'. This is a good and indisputable point, and the author has many good points to make on this subject.

For the very reason that we agree so heartily with the theme of this book, and believe so strongly that what the author has said needs to be said, we cannot but be disappointed with the way in which the case has been stated; he does not seem to have done himself or his argument justice, and the statement seems hardly worthy of the wide reading and deep culture that is evident on almost every