

it is attachment to wealth that renders salvation impossible. Even great saints have found it necessary to strip themselves of material possessions in order to gain true spiritual detachment. The rich therefore can no more appeal to Abraham, who combined riches with virtue, than could the Jews when challenged by John the Baptist: 'Had Abraham been in the place of the rich young man, he would cheerfully have resigned his wealth, not gone away sorrowing'.

All these writers are agreed in principle, but they display a most exciting diversity of approach. Pope St Gregory shows from the parable of Lazarus that the New Law is in this respect more severe than the Old. A thousand years later Massillon takes up the same text and draws attention to the limited nature of the crimes of which the rich man is charged: there is no evidence that he gained his wealth unjustly, his clothes of purple and fine linen probably did not surpass conventional luxury, his sumptuous feasting need not have been to excess or contrary to the Law, but he was 'one whose greatest vice was to have no virtue'. Here is Peter Damian using very strong language for a saint, perhaps even rather strong for the not over-refined congregations of the eleventh century, when upbraiding the covetous and bribe-takers. Vitoria is more subtle, more exact in his terminology and aware of the necessary distinctions, but he is quite definite and even brusque in his aside to the wealthy clergy: 'They have no heirs to leave to, and if they fail to give generous alms they cannot escape guilt. I know well enough they will not believe this, but the truth is that all such are damned, and it is better that they should be.'

For the present day the Popes are clear enough, but neither preachers nor theologians seem to be stimulated in the complexities of modern life to such forthright declarations as their predecessors. Where do we stand under a government bent on providing its own brand of social security? what are we to do about functionless property? how can we overcome the vast and scandalous differences of fortune persisting, if not so much at home, still in the world as a whole? In the absence of further authoritative guidance, we may learn from these attractive translations how little we need fear to err when it is on the side of generosity. EDWARD QUINN

THE MEANING OF MAN. By Jean Mouroux. Translated by A. H. C. Downes. (Sheed and Ward; 12s. 6d.)

This is the first book to be published by Canon Mouroux. Perhaps that it why it is so splendid and rich. Other authors have made notable and repeated contributions to the study of theology in our time: their output has been prolific but their quality has remained distinguished. Constant practice, too, has sharpened and clarified their literary style. But there is another way of achieving fullness of content, outstanding quality and clarity of expression: the way of constant examination of the sources of revelation, the study of

its greatest interpreters, accompanied by a readiness to learn of all those who have struggled in the search for truth and followed by long reflection on the knowledge thus acquired. This apparently has been Canon Mouroux's method for over twenty years and his book is a testimony to its abundant fruitfulness.

The notes are not mere references, they indicate the vast range of reading on which this essay on man is based. The author has read thoroughly, but he has also reflected deeply and wrestled with the thought thus attained until, having thoroughly mastered it himself, he was able to present it in all its limpid clarity and force to the weaker and less wise. He has even conveyed something of the same spirit to his translator: for if the Gallic precision and theological acumen are obvious enough, the language and style might well be those of an original English writer.

EDWARD QUINN

CATHOLICISM AND ENGLISH LITERATURE. By Edward Hutton. (Fredk. Muller; 8s. 6d.)

This sketch is a reprint of a book which on its first appearance six years ago met with deserved appreciation. The author first recalls how for a thousand years or so English literature was based on Catholic culture and thought. He then shows the complete disappearance of this 'universality', and its replacement by an 'insularity' which hardly knew of Catholicity except to hate and condemn it. A study of the literary mind and tone of English society during the last two and a half centuries follows, and is succeeded by some account of the partial Catholic revival and its prospects. The chapter on 'Catholicism in the English Novel' forms a complete essay in itself, and is full of original research. In some parts it is sad reading, and in others highly amusing. All sorts of weird authors have been disinterred, and their incredible folly exposed. The 'Conversion of Gibbon' which originally appeared in the *Nineteenth Century* is an extremely full and valuable section, and will appeal to many. The letters of the Swiss pastor at Lausanne to Gibbon's angry parent are very naïve and diverting. They were rescued from a long sleep in the British Museum, and are admirably translated.

F. ROBERT BRACEY, O.P.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON. By David Daiches. (Maclellan; 7s. 6d.)

This book was first published (abroad) in 1944 and today Mr Daiches might perhaps reshape some of his *obiter dicta* about the 'clash between middle class standards and the "artistic temperament"', and make clearer what he certainly holds, namely that the Victorian conflict is one episode in a perennial conflict. For his view is not confined to Victorian Britain. Mr Daiches sees Stevenson's relationship to Burns and the eighteenth century Deists and even to the Wandering Scholars. Within this framework he traces the development of Stevenson's art through self-consciousness