

Prophetical, Priestly and Royal offices of the Church.

This of course is not meant to be a complete account of these areas of Newman's thought, but it is a very useful introduction. The important preface to the third edition of the *Via Media*, contains a discussion of the independent and even conflicting duties imposed on the Church by the separate functions involved in her responsibility for the theology, devotion and administration of the people of God. Christianity is at the same time, a philosophy, a political power and a religious rite, and is holy as a religion, apostolic as a philosophy and imperial as a political power. Again, Newman's devotion to the person of Christ was accompanied with an awe of the Christian mystery. Any evaluation of his approach to writing a life of Our Lord would be incomplete without dealing, for example, with his review of Sir John Seeley's *Ecce Homo* which was reprinted in *Discussions and Arguments*. But such a discussion, as has been said, would range far beyond Father Coupet's intention.

Though this anthology does not reveal any new or hitherto unappreciated features of Newman's theology it does bring out in a vivid and dramatic way some important aspects of his thought. Of particular interest in this context is the fact that the Bible was the inspiration and foundation of Newman's theology. He is certainly, to use Father Coupet's own phrase, 'a great precursor of biblical theology'. An acute awareness of the eschatological aspect of

Christianity is coupled with a vivid consciousness of the obligations of the Incarnation. 'Year passes after year silently; Christ's coming is ever nearer than it was. O that, as He comes nearer earth, we may approach nearer heaven!' There is material for many meditations, for instance, in the delicate and moving language in which Newman described the sufferings and death of Our Lord. 'He came on earth without arms, except the arms of truth, meekness, and righteousness, and committed Himself to the world in perfect innocence and sinlessness, and in utter helplessness, as the Lamb of God.'

Inevitably some events and parables of the Gospels are treated more fully than others but the selections and commentaries are remarkably full and extensive. Granting the competence of the selection and arrangement, to review the book further would be to review Newman's sermons themselves, and this would indeed be presumptuous. *A New Companion to the Gospels* is a book which all who are interested in Newman will find helpful. It will be particularly valuable for those who wish to use it for spiritual reading, preaching and private prayer. The more general reader who wishes to understand how Newman came to be described as 'the invisible peritus' of the Second Vatican Council, or who wants to be able to appreciate his importance or significance in much of contemporary theology, might find Father Coupet's work a useful introduction.

J. DEREK HOLMES

EDITH STEIN, by Jean de Fabregues. Translated from the French by Donald M. Antoine, St. Thomas Seminary, Kenmore, Washington. *B. Herder Book Co., London, 1965.*

The only reason for the publication of this book I can imagine is that the earlier biographies of Edith Stein are out of print. For it says nothing new about her; instead, it is full of padding, which may be due to the author's attempt to avoid violation of copyright. Moreover, the book falls between two stools: it is neither a biography nor a presentation of Edith Stein's thought. The chronology occasionally goes haywire, and there are quite a few inconsistencies; for example, the author says on p. 45: 'As if her new professorship at Göttingen were not enough', implying that she actually was professor there, and on p. 47 'after her request for a lecturing position at Göttingen was turned down'. The treatment of Edith Stein's main works, *Finite and Eternal Being* and *Science of the*

*Cross* is so extraordinarily sketchy that it must be doubted whether the author has ever read them. This doubt almost becomes a certainty when, on pp. 50f, he quotes a long passage from one of her less accessible works which is in the first person, regarding it as a deliberate description of her own experience which it is not, and leaving out an essential 'perhaps'. Strangely enough, I have quoted the same passage in my own book on her, and the present author not only begins and ends the quotation in the same places as I, but also leaves out the same passage I have left out without, however, indicating the omission.

A word must be said about the translation, which is bad beyond belief. It goes without saying that the quotations from Edith Stein's

works are made from French translations, not from the German, but, even worse, Fr John M. Oesterreicher's book *Walls are Crumbling*, first published in the U.S.A., is quoted from its French translation! Surely the translator might have taken the trouble to look up the passages in the original, probably accessible to him in the library of his own seminary. After this it is not surprising that the book should abound in gems like the following: ' . . . the night was filled with gelatinous and gloomy mass of

pantheism', 'The ultimate components of the universe, whose necessity Edith's mind grasped through the influence of her teachers, is what lay ahead of her mental development' and in ungrammatical monstrosities like 'irregardless of' and 'What the Synagogue produced, so could the Church, but the Law had to be made more loving'. I suggest the translator attend a course in elementary English.

HILDA GRAEF

PASCAL, by Jean Steinmann, translated by Martin Turnell. *Burns & Oates*, 1965. pp. xii + 304. 42s.

PASCAL, by J. H. Broome. *Edward Arnold*, 1965. pp. x + 250, 30s.

PASCAL by Jean Mesnard. (*Les Ecrivains devant Dieu*", *Desclée de Brouwer, Paris*, 1965. pp. 100.)

With or without the fresh impetus provided by the 1962 Tricentenary of Pascal's death, it is pretty clear that investigations into the manifold aspects of his life and work would have continued to add to our now very considerable knowledge of him. Fluctuations of taste there may have been, but Pascal's status is unquestionable. It is all the more to be regretted that Mr Turnell's translation omits Fr Steinmann's account of the three centuries of French reactions to Pascal. Perhaps he thought them parochial, a series of episodes in French intellectual history without any resonance in the world outside; and certainly it is possible to appreciate Pascal deeply without knowing what Voltaire thought of him, how Sainte-Beuve disfigured him, or what light the new Marxist interpretations of the relations between Jansenism and the *noblesse de robe* shed on Pascal's thought. But these things are a witness to the ability of Pascal to stimulate an infinite variety of apparently irreconcilable thinkers who yet find a focal point – it hardly seems to matter whether the point is a focus of hostility or amity – in the enigmatic fragments we call the *Pensées*.

The abbé Steinmann himself, who was killed in a tragic accident in Jordan three years ago, brought to Pascal a profound Scriptural scholarship and was able to give value to that – quite considerable – portion of the *Pensées* which deals with the Jewish people and the Old Testament, a part which has been largely disregarded in favour of the more speculative and introspective fragments. Not only does he redress the balance in this way, he

is among the most readable of the recent biographers of Pascal and skilfully knits together history and analysis. He is also known as editor of a very handy edition of the *Provinciales* and gave an interesting new look to the *Pensées* themselves by the use of an elementary device which, in its simplicity, should have occurred to previous editors but never did; the *liasses*, or folders, in which Pascal kept the drafts of his projected 'Apology for the Christian Religion', or at any rate the twenty-seven sections which he regarded as more or less in a completed state, had in the past been read and printed from top to bottom, without the rightness of the sequence being questioned. Fr Steinmann, following Zacharie Tourneur, made the contrary assumption that the sheets at the top of each *liasse* would be those Pascal had placed in the folder *last*, and that the bottom sheet was therefore the beginning of any given section. His own de-luxe edition, which came out after the French edition of this biography (1954), uses this new reading sequence, and although it is disturbing to find the familiar order inverted, some of the sections make much better sense when read back to front. Oddly enough, Mr Turnell, in his excellent foreword, does not refer to this piece of work, and it is important, because the abbé was not merely a fervent enthusiast but also a Pascal scholar of no mean attainments. Mr Turnell calls the book 'one of the most balanced and persuasive' of recent works on Pascal. M. Mesnard, in the bibliography appended to his own excellent little book, refers to it as 'lively, facile and rather slight'; and there is truth in