

The tension could not be more beautifully expressed, and it is clear that he cannot forget and that his need of a world of men is at least as strong as Browning's.

Miss Stansfield provides us with the story of his life and relates his poetry, very attractively translated, to that background. Her book is interesting and enjoyable and makes far fewer demands on the reader than Mr. Stahl's more profound essay. But it is impossible to avoid the impression that many footnotes and much of the original German have been excluded for fear of putting off the general reader. This, it seems to the reviewer, is a mistake: would-be readers of Hölderlin ought not to be discouraged, but they cannot attempt to enjoy his poetry without a considerable knowledge of German and they need guidance among the authorities cited by Miss Stansfield in a rather indiscriminate bibliography.

EDWARD QUINN.

A MISSIONARY IN THE WAR NET. By H. Van Straelen, S.V.D. (The Word Press, Hadzor; 3s. 6d.).

The author is a Dutch mission father of the society of the Divine Word. I have found his small book both inspiriting and edifying. In the first part of it he quietly relates his experiences of internment at Tokyo; no atrocity stories; simple facts told with understanding and charity. "Dear Leo"—he says to an English priest who died on the voyage home—"dear Leo, for whom by God's eternal and infinite mercy I trust the shadows are vanished, give me also the strength to persist in my love for the land of my devotion, Japan, as you did. Let us condemn the Japanese war-machine, and rightly too, but let us not identify the war-machine with the people of Japan. Give me the strength, although my own brother died gallantly as commander of a Dutch cruiser in the battle of the Java Sea, against the Japanese, to love the real good Japanese people immensely as you did. Only then can we be good missionaries if we are heaven-high above social, political and racial prejudices."

In the second part he discusses the future of the Church in the Far East. The views he puts forward here, though to many Catholics they may seem paradoxical, are a wholesome corrective to European complacency. Not only does he stress the increasing importance of an Eastern native clergy; not only does he insist that the Faith as presented to the East should be shorn of all Western accidents; he believes that the future of the church lies predominantly in the East (in China especially) and that the Church in the West will be the gainer by assimilating Eastern tradition.

"It will be clear to everybody that in treading Eastern roads within the Church, it is not for the European to play a rôle of great importance. It is especially to the native clergy that the tremendous task falls of presenting to their fellow-countrymen the new Oriental Catholic Church which is in the making, for this implies in the first place a searching and uprooting of the many divine jewels of the primeval revelation which are to be found in the Eastern

religions. These jewels will be carefully cleansed from the dust and exposed to the brilliant light of the Gospel. And it implies, in the second place, peeling off from Catholicism her Graeco-Roman skin and straining the dregs of Western culture from it."

I think one ought to distinguish here. The European inheritance in philosophy is one thing, its inheritance in literature and the rest of the arts is another; and much needless confusion has been caused by the humanist supposition that Graeco-Roman civilisation is a homogeneous whole in which Homer, Plato, Aristotle, Demosthenes, Cicero, Horace and Dante are all in one line and stand for the same thing. The tradition of metaphysical thought which leads from Plato to St. Thomas is a permanent possession, though Plato and St. Thomas both learned from the East in their time and I think their successors should learn from it anew. But in other matters, Graeco-Roman habits of mind have been a narrowing and anti-intellectual influence, fostering views and attitudes which Plato, for instance, despised and condemned. And here the assimilation of Eastern thought should mean not only a deepening grasp on truth but the discarding of provincialism and error.

This position doubtless needs elaboration, but I have time for no more than two examples (mine, not Father Straelen's). Even so great a man as Allò is taken aback by metaphors in the Apocalypse which do not conform to Graeco-Roman rhetoric and by such symbolism as that of the seven eyes and seven horns of the Lamb. But to an oriental the metaphors and symbolism are convincing and illuminating.

In discussing the natural virtues, it is often gratuitously assumed that anything unattained by Greeks and Romans must *a fortiori* be unattained by other non-Christians. Thus it is said that natural reason might in theory recognise humility as a virtue; but that since Aristotle did not, it is obvious that no non-Christian in practice would. Yet in the *Kuan Tzu Book* we read: "Men all make for the high places; water alone makes for the low. This is its humility; and humility is the very house of the Tao, the very instrument of true kingliness, so that the true king makes it his capital."

WALTER SHEWRING.

BACK TO THE BIBLE. By Cuthbert Lattey, S.J. (Burns Oates; 5s.).

Fr. Lattey's recent book will prove a very useful work of biblical apologetics. He draws our attention to four important principles. First, we are not committed to believe in verbal inspiration. Secondly Pius X wrote, a propos of recent research in biblical matters, "the attitude of those is not to be approved who dare not break in any respect with the biblical exegesis in vogue up till yesterday, even when, without prejudice to the faith, wise progress in studies invites them to do so." Thirdly, we are reminded that the principle of compenetration is an important key to a number of passages especially in the Old Testament. And lastly, many of the so-called 'errors' in the Bible are not 'formal' error.