

less of its reputation as to sponsor such a publication as this. The bibliography alone gives it away. Works of vulgarisation, general manuals of an out-of-date character, and too many of the University's own doctorate theses make up the majority of volumes referred to. Little or no account seems to be taken, in it or in the text, of the vast amount of Thomist research that has been carried on in France and elsewhere. The method of compilation seems to have been to read comparatively popular presentations, to follow up their references, and to give the texts so found in a series of footnotes. The central and important section on analogy, for example, is evidently taken from Dr Phelan's slight lectures published by the Marquette University Press; one result is that a passage with which Dr Phelan made much play but whose phraseology is unique in St Thomas's work is described as typical of his treatment (p. 83). The author is not above translating a neuter nominative as a dative (p. 103) (in the same passage he clings to the obviously faulty punctuation of the printed editions), confusing simple apprehension with sensing (p. 59 n. 70) and writing such slovenly phrases as 'the third member of being *per se* is the distinction of being into act and potency' (p. 68). The whole is *précis*-work of the most material kind without any attempt at interpretation or even explanation; there is no suggestion that either the thought or the exegesis of St Thomas may be difficult.

It would be ungenerous not to recognise the painstaking work that must have gone to this study. The fault seems to lie not with the student but with an academic tradition that promotes tasks so little worthy of the human spirit and publishes the fruitless results.

COLUMBA-RYAN, O.P.

THE INTELLECTUAL LIFE, ITS SPIRIT, CONDITIONS AND METHODS. By A. D. Sertillanges, O.P., translated by Mary Ryan. (Mercier Press; 10s. 6d.)

Sound common sense has usually a poor market. Buyers flatter themselves they know all about that. Often they do, but too seldom think about it. It would be a pity if for this reason students, especially those at the beginning of their studies, should pass over this store of good sense on the practical business of studying, at last made available in English. The book should certainly be in every library that serves Catholic students. It is the collected wisdom of a generous-minded scholar and a humble disciple of Truth. Nothing is too great, nothing too small for his attention: where God comes in, how to take notes, when to sleep, how to pray and read and play. Here is the life of study set in the life of holiness by an author equally practical about both and who writes as well for the part-time as for the professional student. To the kind of question 'Is there such a thing as a Catholic mathematician, scientist etc.?' these pages provide an inspiring, affirmative answer.

Père Sertillanges has had rare good fortune in meeting with a trans-

lator as conscientious as she is accomplished; the book reads consistently like English and like sense, a notable achievement. C.H.

POLAND, RUSSIA AND GREAT BRITAIN, 1941-45. By R. Umiastowski. (Hollis and Carter; 25s.)

This important book, the best which has yet appeared on the subject, deals with the development of the Anglo-Polish Alliance, the failure to integrate that alliance with the subsequent Anglo-American-Russian alliance, and the events which led, as a result of that failure, to the latest partition of Poland. It is heavily documented and is well provided with maps. Avowedly written from the Polish point of view, it nevertheless aims at giving a factual and objective account of the business, and it is a book which will be necessary for anybody who wishes to understand the latest development of the Polish problem. It is a book which should certainly find a place in any good library.

The principal weakness of the volume is that the author, determined to give chapter and verse and to let the documents speak whenever possible for themselves, has not provided his readers with a book which, at any rate in the earlier chapters, is easy to read. He has also been badly served in matters of translation and proof-reading. To give one astonishing example, the first chapter is headed 'Danaos' Gift'. The Virgilian quotation which appears below elucidates the problem: 'timeo Danaos et dona ferentes'.

Nevertheless the book well repays reading, and after a chapter or two the march of events takes charge of the reader and carries him forward to the conclusion. It is important that English readers should have at their disposal a book of this type, for the importance of the subject is not confined merely to those who take an interest in Polish affairs. To read this book, slowly and with thought, is to gain a close and detailed view of modern political technique. It is an unpleasant sight but it is essential if we are to understand the world in which we are now living.

There is however another and a less obvious reason why this book should be carefully read. During the war only a few in England had either the time or the knowledge to follow at all closely the manœuvres and negotiations which led up to the final tragedy of Poland. Indeed it is only during the last few months that any appreciable body of opinion has become to any extent acquainted with the facts. What little journalistic commentary or explanation there was during the war years was of a most extraordinary kind, and this book may help to put its readers on their guard against taking their political facts and views on foreign countries straight from the journalism of the day without checking it all against the background of history.

The truth is that the dispute between Russia and Poland was never discussed: instead one solution, that of the surrender of the Poles to the Russians, was discussed. As Professor Trevelyan has remarked, 'disinterested intellectual curiosity is the life-blood of civilisation',