

MORAL THEOLOGY. By H. Jone, O.F.M.Cap., J.C.D. Translated and adapted by U. Adelman, O.F.M.Cap., J.C.D. (Mercier Press; 17s. 6d.)

In the preface to the original German edition of this work, the author wrote that it was intended in the first place for those engaged in parish work. In addition he hoped that it would be of use to those priests and clerical students who may be preparing for examinations in moral theology. The author then wrote that 'he will be happy to know that his book is of benefit to the educated laity, interested in religious matters, whom it may help in solving such questions of conscience as occur in their daily life'.

There are already several 'pocket' Moral Theology treatises written in Latin, and it is to be presumed that all those engaged on parish work or in preparing for theological examinations are fully capable of using these Latin volumes. Moreover, theological students have been trained in the principles underlying these very potted statements of moral practice. The layman, however, has had no such training, and it is to be presumed that such a volume as this will have a considerable sale among lay folk. The wisdom of placing such a volume in the hands of the theologically uneducated is certainly a matter for debate and, for our part, we believe that it will not help to solve questions of conscience, but rather give rise to them. The book is full of 'cases', and without an adequate knowledge of the principles which are the foundation for their solution, they will very probably give rise to misunderstanding, and, indeed, may even bring the moral teaching of the Church into contempt when 'casuistic mathematics' are used for the solution. The idea of the 'penal' law is put forward as a matter of fact, there is a tendency to call certain actions 'only venially sinful', and the whole of the treatise *De Sexto* is put before any reader, in English, and in a necessarily abbreviated and factual way.

B. D. BAILEY, O.P.

BREVIARIUM ROMANUM: four volumes (Burns Oates, £5 5s. 0d.; with diocesan supplement, £6 6s. 0d.)

On its first appearance two years ago the Burns Oates Breviary was justly praised. It was bound in a choice of leathers traditional to liturgical books, and its cost was accordingly high. The identical work is now available in a sturdy red buckram binding which justifies the publishers' title, 'The Bookshelf Breviary'. Here once and for all is resolved the dilemma of priests who recite their office in the Underground and who wish to avoid the biblical castigation reserved for those who ostentatiously pray in public places. This Breviary might be a pocket edition of any poet: its contents are certainly more durable.

The new edition will be of special value to the laity, for whom the Breviary in appearance and association is too often an exclu-

sively priestly book. Six thousand pages for five guineas is nowadays a rare bargain, and one can imagine no better present for the educated convert or indeed for any one who wishes to establish his spiritual life on the firm foundation of the Church's official prayer.

It is easy to overlook the remarkable achievement of the publishers in producing a work of this character in present-day circumstances. Typographically, the publishing of a Breviary must be the most exacting of tasks. Apart from the main body of the book there are innumerable difficulties of arrangement—such as in the calendars and tables for computing Easter—and here they have all been resolved with an economy and beauty of design that make this English-born breviary a joy to look at. No doubt one ought not to judge any book, and least of all a Breviary, by appearances. But it is late in the day to be reviewing the contents of this most venerable of all books, and one is inevitably concerned with the use that has been made of the opportunity to give to the Breviary all that is best in craftsmanship and design. It must be said at once that this is probably the most distinguished piece of book production that has appeared since the War, and it is very appropriate that it should be the Breviary that is so honoured. The type used is perhaps too small for some preferences, but in this matter legibility is far more important than size. The engravings that preface each volume (representing the four patron saints of Great Britain) are entirely successful, and even such a detail as the Crucifixion that heads the *En ego* prayer in the Appendix is carefully considered in relation to the page as a whole.

One for whom this *Breviarium Romanum* is literally only a book-shelf book can only envy those for whom its use is a daily duty. Prayer is surely made easier when its instruments themselves reflect the harmony of created things as dedicated to God.

I. E.

PRAYER AND THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. By Eric Hayman. (S.C.M. Press; 8s. 6d.)

At the end of 1946 the author was invited to deliver a course of lectures to the Student Christian Movement Prayer School, and the present volume is the outcome of those lectures. Bearing in mind the constitution of the audience originally addressed, and the religious tenets of the author, one expects and indeed finds statements with which a Catholic cannot agree. Thus a point which is stressed early in the first chapter is 'to learn how we may pray, and why we should regard our prayer as the primary means of Christian living', and the Christian living referred to must be the living within the Church: but for Mr Hayman the Church is not a visible society. 'The Church is the essential environment in which the Christian life is lived, and the organ of expression for that life in its impact upon and service of the world'. But even if he dis-