

the Decree is given in Latin and English, with applications made in two more recent decrees by the Sacred Congregations of *Propaganda* and for the Eastern Church. The ritual to be observed will be found here. The excellent and most helpful commentary is conceived on the same lines as that written by the same author on marriage preliminaries. The nature of the priest's delegated power of confirming is touched on, and its determining character seen in the grant of jurisdiction. As is pointed out, it is therefore subject to the rule of canon 209 on supplied jurisdiction. Which does not mean that all errors in administration evade responsibility for invalidity. The power of confirming is restricted in the decree to those named and under the conditions envisaged, and it cannot validly be sub-delegated. It extends to exempt religious houses within the area of the priest's jurisdiction. The same faculty is enjoyed by missionaries who may be granted wider additional powers from their own Ordinaries. The recipient must be actually within the territory of the confirming priest, which Canon Mahoney takes as an added reason for making a clear definition of parochial boundaries. As with extreme unction, danger of death by sickness is a condition for valid administration.

AMBROSE FARRELL, O.P.

ST THOMAS AND THE EXISTENCE OF GOD: Three Interpretations. By William Bryar. (Henry Regnery Co., Chicago; \$5.)

The main body of this book, entitled 'Systematic Interpretative Study', is an attempt to present an explicitly logically patterned account of some part of thomist metaphysics. Since many of the sections are substantially word for word the same, we feel that this would have been more satisfactorily achieved in ten pages than in one hundred. No texts are adduced to support the interpretation until the first appendix is reached, when the connection is not made very clear. The other appendices contain useful material collected from various reviews, but do not amount to 'discussions' as they are sometimes called. The introductory chapters in which the author seeks to expound his intentions we find difficult to understand and out of all proportion to the eventual achievement. An attractive programme conscientiously carried out is in general obscured by verbosity.

I.T.

RUSSIAN OPERA. By Martin Cooper.

GILBERT AND SULLIVAN. By Arthur Jacobs. (World of Music; Max Parrish; 7s. 6d. each.)

The 'World of Music' series consists of short monographs of about seventy pages, profusely and well illustrated. As far as the format is concerned the only objection one could make is that the music examples are untidy: if a proper music type is not available it would be better to

photograph a professional copyist's MSS rather than those of the authors.

However, charming as these little books are to look at, they frequently have a much greater value as useful introductions to their particular subjects. Mr Martin Cooper's account of the whole sweep of Russian opera from the midwife to what appears to be the undertaker (that is, from the arrival of the first Italian troupe in the reign of Anna Ioannovna to the present gloomy and pitiable condition of leaden realism and political didacticism) is surprisingly detailed in so short a space. Moreover, it is written with a penetration and grace which stand nobly aloof from the modern trafficking in musical criticism.

Enthusiastic Savoyards will, of course, read Mr Jacob's *Gilbert and Sullivan* in spite of the fact that it would not survive the ruthless enquiry 'Is your book really necessary?' They will be quite right to do so, and I do not doubt that it will give them as much contentment as it has me.

ERIC TAYLOR

GEOGRAPHY OF HUNGER. By Josué de Castro. (Gollancz; 18s.)

The theme of this profoundly important book is human misery: the basic misery of the lack of food, or, more exactly, of the widespread lack of the forty or so food constituents needed to sustain adequate health. 'Hunger' for Dr de Castro does not simply mean 'famine'. His survey of the dietary condition of all the continents reveals a tragic record of malnutrition, deficiency diseases and premature death. This hunger is man-made; for Dr de Castro argues strongly that the world has sufficient resources to provide adequate food for everybody, and he resolutely opposes the neo-Malthusian view that the world is overpopulated. Rather, he says, the problem should be stated in terms of under-production, of selfish nationalism and the mere whims of irresponsible commerce. The answer is not to limit the population artificially but to work for a global plan for the proper distribution of food and for the development of all the possible means of increasing its production.

Lord Boyd Orr, in a foreword, urges that co-operation 'in a concrete plan to increase the wealth of the world to provide the primary necessities of life' might be the common ground on which a divided world could meet. Certainly the primary need of food and the assurance of human health transcend the ideological arguments of East and West. And Dr de Castro's book shows the gravity of a problem which a conspiracy of silence has until lately made too little known. It must be for expert agriculturists to assess the validity of his technical hopes, but anyone may agree that the picture he draws of the effects of human folly and worse should be a challenge for the future.

I.E.