

gave evidence in the process of canonization. It is not only more complete (as indeed Fr Foster testifies), but it is not disfigured by the *apocrypha* given by Tolomeo. Tolomeo not only lists *De fato*, which is by St Albert, but he is the first to mention a group of philosophical *opuscula* of very doubtful authenticity. But there is a more serious defect. Fr Foster was condemned to use, *faute de mieux*, the Muratori edition of the *Historia Ecclesiastica*, which leaves much to be desired. Particularly numerous are the errors that have crept into the section concerning the works of St Thomas, and the translation unhappily conserves them all. Thus St Thomas is saddled with such palpable absurdities as *De infantibus* and *De natura materiae accusantis*. Père Mandonnet had long ago corrected this list (*Des écrits authentiques de S. Thomas d'Aquin*, Fribourg, 1910, p. 62), and we might surely expect Fr Foster to enter a *caveat* and to refer the reader to Mandonnet. A critical edition of the *Historia Ecclesiastica* is in preparation for the *Monumenta Germaniae historica*; meanwhile it may be useful to correct the list, as given on p. 138, with the help of the Latin MSS. 5125 and 5125A in the *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris:

De instantibus: which begins 'Quoniam omnem durationem'.

De verbo, quid sit: which begins 'Quoniam circa naturam verbi'.

De principio individuationis: which begins 'Quoniam duae sunt potentiae cognoscitivae'.

De genere: beginning 'Quoniam omnis creatura'.

De natura accidentis: which begins 'Quoniam omnis cognitio humana'.

De natura materiae. . . .

VINCENT SHOONER, O.P.

THE LIFE OF CHRIST. By Andrés Fernández, S.J. Translated by Paul Barrett, O.F.M.CAP. (The Newman Press; \$12.50.)

Before us lies a handsome 800-page Life of Christ in Baskerville type on glossy paper. The result is a heavy book which is best read at a desk. The glossy paper is for the many illustrations, some of which are striking and original, but many are far too dark, so we miss any impression of the brilliant light of Palestine; and some are simply poor photographs.

So much for the externals. When we study plan and structure we notice that the whole Life is in twenty-nine sections (the word Chapter does not occur), each of which is subdivided into anything from two to fifteen un-numbered sub-sections. Three of these provide condensed and needful information on the geography of Palestine, on the historical background, and on characteristics and chronology of the Gospels. Sections 4-6 cover the infancy of Christ; the entire remainder has the title 'The Public Life', without further divisions.

Each subsection gives us the content of the relevant gospel passage with considerable and sometimes long-drawn comments. The work is a mine of information, wherein, as the dust-jacket tells us, 'theology, history, archaeology, and geography are pressed into the service of elucidating the meaning of Sacred Scripture'. The information is plentiful, but we begin to yearn for more pruning, synthesis, and concision. Others' opinions loom large.

As we read on, a certain disquiet grows and grows in our mind. Already (p. 41) we begin to wonder what the evidence of Etheria (fourth century) contributes to our knowledge of languages in Palestine in our Lord's day. Certainly bilingualism and bilingual populations should have been more studied than they have been by New Testament scholars. But if we speak of what obtained in New Testament times, we need evidence from then and not from Etheria. Then we come (p. 162) to a paragraph on the appearance of Christ which ends, as it must, rather inconclusively. Yet Lagrange's suggestion that he resembled his mother is more valuable than the imaginative and wholly fictitious twelfth-century description (said to be of Publius Lentulus) which our author cites. Again, we are told (p. 308) of three stages of vocation when reconciling John 1, 33-42 with the synoptic accounts. 'This is the interpretation that is mirrored in the three stages of the following of Christ found in the *Spiritual Exercises* of St Ignatius.' Further, our author lived long in Palestine, and he is an acknowledged authority on that country's flora and fauna and topography, etc. How then has he penned such a misleading description of the relationship of the fortress Antonia to the Temple area? Anyone who has walked in the northern part of the Haram as Sharif knows full well that the site of the Antonia is well *above* him—is in fact Gabbatha or 'up there'. We can hardly believe our eyes when we read that the Antonia was 'on the same level as the outer court of the Temple' (p. 673). We read on and soon after ask ourselves, what value has the evidence of Catherine Emmerich for the Passion of our Lord?—the more so when we remember that the Jerusalem of her visions, purporting to be that of our Lord's time, corresponds in fact to the Jerusalem of the Crusader period. And why cite Maria de Agreda who asserts that our Lord received 5,115 lashes? Let us not multiply miracles. Finally, that our Lord after his Resurrection first appeared to his mother (p. 757) is a product of a certain non-biblical tradition, originating perhaps in a text of Sedulius. We wonder how Suárez can aver 'such is the almost unanimous opinion of all the faithful and the Doctors of the Church'. There are other and different traditions of theology. St Thomas time and again asks, when considering a doctrine of faith, what is its *convenientia* or appropriateness, or, if we may so speak, what

sweet and divine reasonableness can we find in such and such a deed of God? This is a very different procedure from that of lesser theologies which too easily argue from how nice it would have been to therefore it must have been.

Such are a few pointers to the spirit that has presided over the writing of this Life of Christ. Let us conclude by asking, For whom was this Life written? The general reader will not appreciate Greek in the body of the text nor allusions to many matters of debate. The scholarly reader will perhaps boggle at what we have suggested, as at other points too. Still there is much positive information for the student, for the preacher in search of texts and ideas. Such as these may be helped by this book.

ROLAND POTTER, O.P.

PARACELSUS: AN INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHICAL MEDICINE IN THE ERA OF THE RENAISSANCE. By Walter Pagel. (S. Karger, distributed in England by Basil Blackwell; 119s.)

John Donne, in his *Essays in Divinity*, those fascinating metaphysical disquisitions, speaks about the 'Paracelsian Phisick of the understanding'. To the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Paracelsus was indeed the prince of healers and the flower of natural philosophers. True, he excited much criticism also. But the enthusiasm for his teaching was so intense that it generated a whole Paracelsian literature after the sage's death. Yet at the present time Theophrastus Bombast von Hohenheim, who wrote as 'Paracelsus', is hardly known to the public except from references by the poet Browning and by William Blake. This is a pity as he was a most remarkable figure whose pre-occupation with laboratory technique helped to turn men's efforts from alchemy to chemistry proper and who believed disease sprung from 'seeds' of living organisms, scattered about among healthy creatures like tares in the wheat. His judgment on syphilis and its treatment was sensible and accurate and he insisted on the power of the mind, or rather the imagination, over matter, in the whole range of medicine. A crank from one point of view, a genius from another, it was high time a serious study of his life and philosophy appeared.

Dr Walter Pagel has filled this need admirably. His book, presents a whole mental universe which is new to us and yet is the origin of our own. Like the scholars who have been working for the Warburg Institute, Dr Pagel fully understands the religious atmosphere of the age and the way in which scientific, or proto-scientific, speculation grew out of devotional enthusiasms. Paracelsus lashed out against both the Catholic and Protestant orthodoxies of the day. He felt that both Churches had compromised with the world in a disastrous way. But