page. It is difficult to escape the impression that the book has been 'put together' and that there is too much enthusiasm and too little accurate and precise thought. There are too many exaggerations and woolly statements. If poetry is really dying, it is doing so because of the restless externalism which seeks to deaden thought in distraction, as the author himself so well points out. But romantic and airy enthusiasm will not help matters; there is need for a return to accurate and precise thought. Such statements as 'we all of us have divinity in us' we find very irritating; we believe we know what the author means, but why can he not say so precisely? So many people are saying just the same thing but meaning something very different from the author. Then to say of the teaching profession that it and no other 'lives in the daily presence of the vision', if it means anything at all, is simply not true. The author's admiration for Dickens is obvious; and no one would quarrel with it even if he does not share it, but to speak of Dickens's 'abundant charity' is surely to go too far; Mrs Dickens could have had something to say on the matter. Even the most lofty social consciousness and philanthropy is not always charity; and although charity need not begin at home, it cannot exclude the home. Undoubtedly the author's tastes are 'romantic' in the literary and best sense of the word, but need this lead him to quote Keats with approval when he says: 'I am certain of nothing but the holiness of the heart's affections and the truth of the imagination'?

The chapter on Virgil is good. All the usual quotations are there and they are translated for the benefit of the illiterate reader, but it would be refreshing to find someone writing on Virgil and not quoting Aen. 1:462 without something fresh to say about it. Even on Virgil the author seems to us to have succumbed to an over-statement, although a not uncommon one. We yield to none in our admiration and love of Virgil, but we do not believe it justified to depict the poet as a philanthropist of liberal outlook on the grounds that he wrote with exquisite sympathy of the troubles and sufferings of man and beast. We should not forget that he also wrote Georgic ii. 498-499. Undoubtedly Virgil's was a fine and sensitive spirit; more than this he may have been, but the evidence does not justify us in saying so.

BRUNO S. JAMES

HOW OUR MINDS WORK. By C. E. M. Joad. (Westhouse; 6s.)

Dr Joad's essay contains nothing that has not been said in substance in hundreds of books, articles and lectures on modern psychology. This does not detract from its value as a convenient summary of the problems discussed by modern psychologists, simply written and with little or no trace of the scientific *mystique* which usually surrounds the treatment of such problems.

There is much that is interesting and informative in the account given here of the various 'mental' activities, sensation, perception, the emotions, thought. Yet at the end of it all we are still in the dark

as to the nature of mind itself, and the problem of the body-mind relationship is never really solved. This perhaps is only to be expected in an outline of modern psychology with its vague notion of mind as a state or series of states of consciousness, while the mind-body problem must always remain insoluble as long as it is formulated in terms of a false dualism. E.C.

RENAISSANCE IN THE NORTH. By W. Gore Allen. (Sheed & Ward; 10s. 6d.)

Based on lectures delivered to the Workers' Educational Association, Mr Gore Allen's book contains introductory studies of six Scandinavian writers: Sigrid Undset, Soren Kierkegaard, Selma Lagerlöf, J. P. Jacobsen, Verner von Heidenstam and Knut Hamsun. These are prefaced by a brief survey of Scandinavian literature during the last hundred years, and concluded by a note on the music of Grieg and Sibelius and its effect on Nordic thought. The portraits of Knut Hamsun and the two women novelists are drawn clearly and with sympathetic fairness, but the other three figures are less distinct. The study of Kierkegaard is especially disappointing, for it gives no impression of greatness or of a quality which could be mistaken for greatness.

The author believes that both the Liberal humanism of Ibsen and the Liberal Protestantism of the Lutheran Church are spent forces, but finds 'a second spring of Christian faith . . . manifest throughout the modern literature of Scandinavia'. This 'renaissance is less explicit than the title suggests; and 'the prophecy of Christian forms to come has not as yet been uttered by the Scandinavian writers, but rather by an architect and a musical composer'. [Lars Sonck and Sibelius.]

Indirect or partially explained statements occur too often in the book. Mr Gore Allen has a quick, independent mind and no doubt finds it tedious to expose its workings. But unless he learns to be more simple he will leave the common reader behind altogether.

COLIN SUMMERFORD

ADVENTURES OF THE REDCROSSE KNIGHT. By Sister Mary Charitina, B.V.M. (Sheed & Ward; 10s. 6d.)

Here is the perfect Christmas book for children from eight to twelve or so. It is the story of Una and her Knight, the first book of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, retold in modern English prose. Very sensibly, it is free from fancy archaisms, and its charm as a tale may surprise those grown-ups who may have found Spenser a little tedious. Graced by illustrations in three colours by Jeanyee Wong, this book is notably beautiful to look at—not the least of its merits. The publishers are to be congratulated on making available for English children so acceptable an example of American intelligence and good design. I.E.