

LIVING CHRISTIANITY. By Michael de la Bedoyere. (Burns and Oates; 15s. od.)

It is remarkable that the Catholic weekly press of this country is wholly directed by laymen, and this is a constant matter of surprise to foreign observers who in other respects usually think they have little to learn from the Catholicism of the United Kingdom. The editor of *The Catholic Herald* has by this firmly imprinted his personality on his paper, and *Living Christianity* will evoke little astonishment in those who have read the liveliest of the weeklies over the last twenty years. Here they will find an honest attempt to make the Catholic faith a living and imperative reality, the true interpreter of man's needs in the society in which he has to live. Here, too, heart is sometimes more passionately engaged than head: there is impatience, some gullibility but even more generosity of mind. For Mr de la Bedoyere's 'personal essay' is a frank discussion of his own recollections of fifty years of Catholic life. And that is valuable, drawn as it is from a close knowledge of Stonyhurst, the Society of Jesus and the multifarious contacts of public Catholic life. The great need for an informed and adult opinion among professional laymen gives weight to the consideration of contemporary piety, religious education, moral teaching, social action and the impact of Catholics on a post-Christian community. On all these subjects experience illuminates the usual answer, and if one sometimes feels that Mr de la Bedoyere must have read his own 'Letters to the Editor' to the point of being hypnotised by some of their recurring themes, yet one can only welcome this sincere statement of what many people think, with their own difficulties stated and understood. It is perhaps the clergy who will benefit most from *Living Christianity*, for this layman's apologia is in effect an answer from the pew. In particular the appeal for a deeper liturgical and spiritual sense as the essential source of Catholic life is firmly argued, and gives a true proportion to all else that is said.

I.E.

AN IDIOM-BOOK OF THE NEW TESTAMENT. By C. F. D. Moule. (Cambridge University Press; 25s.)

This is not a syntax of the New Testament but rather full notes towards such a work, and a useful help and guide for theological students and others who aspire to a more precise grasp of the Greek of the New Testament. There are enough elementary works on this subject, not enough of a more serious and scholarly standard. For this reason, Professor Moule's work is very welcome. It will help much to inculcate a scholarly attitude towards syntactical problems, and at the

same time make us realise that an adequate handling of such problems contributes much towards accurate exegesis.

In an opening chapter Professor Moule shows how much has been done in the study and understanding of New Testament Greek, and very rightly points out that 'a fresh chapter is . . . opened in the story of New Testament interpretation. But one word of caution is necessary. The pendulum has swung rather too far in the direction of equating Biblical with "secular" Greek; and we must not allow these fascinating discoveries to blind us to the fact that Biblical Greek still does retain certain peculiarities, due in part to Semitic influence . . . and in part to the moulding influence of the Christian experience, which did in some measure create an idiom and a vocabulary of its own'. It is because 'a fresh chapter is opened' that works such as this are opportune. We cannot mention all the good points, but might single out the different *ethos* of English and Greek verbs; the Greek mind fastening primarily on the 'kind of action' or 'nature of the event' rather than time past, present or future. Principles such as these help towards the correct reading of present and aorist participles, etc. All through, precision and correct translation are demanded, as befits all good scholarship. Yet the human touch remains, and we can cite, with Professor Moule (p. 100, note 2), the remark of Arthur Platt: 'We grammarians are always trying to bind the free growth of language in a strait waistcoat of necessity, but language laughs and eludes us'.

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A HISTORY OF MODERN EUROPEAN PHILOSOPHY. By James Collins. (Bruce; \$9.75).

LANGUAGES, STANDPOINTS AND ATTITUDES. By H. A. Hodges. (Oxford University Press; 5s.)

Dr Collins' history is intended for students who have some acquaintance with scholastic philosophy, but his Thomism is never obtrusive. On the whole, he concentrates on an objective presentation, which makes his occasional quiet criticism all the more effective. He does not overcrowd his book with minor figures, nor fill it with vague accounts of background, but deals simply with the twenty most important philosophers of the period between Bacon and Bergson. Thus he can allow each thinker some fifty pages (Kant rightly has twice the number) and can include clear and accurate summaries of all their major works. It is to the works themselves that the student is constantly directed, and he should be able to approach them with some confidence after Dr Collins' introductions. Further reading is indicated with real understanding: too often in books of this kind the student is merely