

THE PHILOSOPHY OF LOVE. By Dallas Kenmare. (Williams and Norgate. 7s. 6d.)

The title is a misfit, for here is more protest and appeal than examination and argument: protest against the limiting of love to emotional excitement on one hand or social duty on the other; appeal for a fresh understanding, more generous and less shamefaced, of a nobility all should suffer. His spirited sweep, which picks up many quotations, generally manages to avoid sentimental romanticism, so long as it keeps to its own principle of not making human love an end in itself. It is a defence of Christian values, but surprisingly runs into a fog at two points. First, when having made the distinction clear between sex and love it proceeds to forget it and to blow off at Church discipline for being occupied with the canalization of sex and the canonical requirements of marriage and not treating the problem of love (how grateful we should be for so self-denying and just and rare appreciation of the limits of legality!) The second patch of fog is about asceticism and celibacy. What has already been well said is again forgotten, asceticism is made a form of evasion and celibacy some sort of substitute—which 'may be well enough so long as the true mate has not been found'; or taken as a slight on the dignity of married love. Heloise, at least, had more sense when she said: 'who, in short, when he is intent upon sacred or philosophic meditations, can bear the squalling of babes, the lullabies of nurses, the perpetual and disgusting uncleanness of very small children?' To which our author observes: 'These problems, though they might to a certain extent arise, would be miraculously solved, inevitably so, because such love of its very nature cannot fail to resolve all difficulties, etc., etc.'

R.N.

THE SOCIAL GOSPEL RE-EXAMINED. By Ernest Johnson. (James Clarke; 8s. 6d.)

This book contains the Rauschenbusch Lectures for 1939, delivered at the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, Rochester, New York. Its general purpose is to state a social gospel acceptable both to liberal and to neo-orthodox Protestant theologians; and in doing this the author endeavours to fit the theology of the latter on to the social programme of the former, particularly in relation to the American scene. Underlying the whole work is the conviction that religious faith is effectively nourished only by the corporate life of a disciplined community. But throughout one finds far too much appeal from dogma to experience as in the principle of the author that 'doctrine gets its validation in ethical experience' and 'do, then know, is the order that Jesus himself prescribes.' It is easy to see the transition here to an attenuated view of authority. All depends on the religious moods of the community, for authority is