

now when they are not readily obtainable in the original latin (the Mandonnet edition of the *Opuscula* is out of print and of the new edition published by Lethielleux so far only one of three volumes has appeared). The two translators have attained much the same level and are open to the same criticisms. Readable for the most part, they have yet made so much use of transliteration for scholastic technical terms as to render important parts of the text unnecessarily obscure for the reader who lacks a background of scholastic study. Their aim is stated to be to make St Thomas's thought available to readers who have not sufficient latin to be able to read the original with ease. Unfortunately the very passages which would provide most difficulty for such readers have almost always been rendered by transliterations which fail to convey the sense of the original. (An occasional departure from this method has however been even more disastrous, e.g. the title of Chapter 62: 'Effect of Intellectual Removal of Personal Properties on the Divine Essence'.) We cannot avoid a feeling of disappointment that respect for the *ipsissima verba* of St Thomas should lead to such timidity in translating that his thought is obscured. Much more free and at the same time much more successful in conveying his thought is the excellent little translation by Fr Victor White of a part of this same commentary on Boethius's *De Trinitate* published by Blackfriars under the title 'On Searching into God'. There it may be seen that success depends very much on the avoidance of scholastic jargon and transliteration and the substitution of language more up-to-date both in vocabulary and construction and chosen for its connotations in ordinary use so that the reader does not need to be a specialist to see what is being hinted at and new light is given to the scholastic mind when familiar notions are presented in a new dress. Messrs Herder are to be congratulated on their project of producing translations of these works—would that they had been better served by their translators.

PETER WORRALL, O.P.

CHRISTIAN MYSTICISM AND THE NATURAL WORLD. By Joseph Dalby. (James Clarke; 7s. 6d.)

This book, which earned its author the D.D. (Oxon), is in many ways remarkable. It deals with a subject that has so far hardly been explored by writers on mysticism, and it is written by an Anglican with an unusually sound understanding of the great Catholic mystic tradition. He rejects not only the alleged opposition between Christianity and mysticism as found in the writings of an Emil Brunner or Canon Quick, but also the pseudo-mysticism of an Aldous Huxley and Gerald Heard and the more unorthodox of the views of Dean Inge and Evelyn Underhill. He takes St John of the Cross as his principal guide in his examination of the relation of the mystics to the world of nature, without, however, dis-

regarding authors like Ruysbroeck and the English mystics. Perhaps the thorniest problem set by his subject is the thoroughgoing asceticism of the great majority of mystics and their frequently disparaging views on the nothingness of creatures. Dr Dalby deals with this in an eminently sane and satisfactory manner. Though his distinction between 'moral asceticism, the asceticism of the Kingdom and mystical asceticism' (p. 107) seems somewhat arbitrary, he fully recognises the essence of 'all Christian asceticism: it is closely linked with devotion to the suffering humanity of our Lord', and that it is this feature 'that makes it wholly different from that Eastern asceticism, which. . . . seems so often fundamentally self-centred.' (p. 113). His chapters on 'Symbolism and Nature Mysticism' and on 'The Dark Night and Quietism' seem particularly valuable. We think, however, that in certain parts of the book, especially in the chapters on 'Mysticism, Grace and Nature', 'The Necessity of the Supernatural' and 'The Goodness of the Natural', far more use ought to have been made of the teaching of St Thomas, who is barely mentioned. In him, Dr Dalby would have found the theological foundations which would have permitted him to raise his edifice on a far broader and sounder basis. Would it be too much to hope that in future editions of this so valuable little book such unacceptable distinctions as between 'Roman' and 'Catholic' (implied e.g. p. 14) might be omitted, together with phrases like 'just another example of the intolerance of the Vatican' (p. 135)? It seems to us that such remarks are unworthy of an otherwise fair and balanced work.

H. C. GRAEF.

A TALKYNG OF YE LOUE OF GOD. Edited by C. M. Westra. (Martinus Nijhoff; Gravenage; n.p.)

This fourteenth-century gem is a compilation, with additions and omissions of two earlier works *On Ureisen* and *Ye Wohunge*, the second of which has been published in the E.E.T.S., Vol. 34. The treatise is edited from the Vernon MS, a fact which, as the editor indicates, reveals the nature and the purpose of the compilation. For the true title of the Vernon MS is *Salus Animae* or 'Sowlehele' and it comprises a great number of treatises some of which are intended to lead to affective prayer. *A Talkyng* appears towards the end of the MS and presupposes the spiritual development intended to be fostered by the preceding works, and is specifically designed by the art of the compiler to lead from reading and discursive meditation to actual, affective prayers towards the end. The editor, who is a Dutch Dominican nun, has performed her task with considerable skill and scholarship, with a technical introduction, the text itself with a modern version beside it; and with specific notes on the text, on its phonology and on its grammar in the second half of the volume. Apart from the Dutch