

## Book Reviews

It remained for Moses Maimonides and still more emphatically for St. Thomas to give the Torah an exposition which justifies the student of political and social institutions in looking upon the Jewish Law as the closest approach to the Law of Nature.

Students of the Matthean texts on divorce will find food for thought in Philo's study on the use of the word 'adultery.' According to Mr. Goodenough Philo bears witness to the fact that in his day there was (1) an intermediate state between simple betrothal in which the girl was *μενηστευμένη*—and complete marriage. In this intermediate state the two are called *ἀνήρ* and *γυνή*; (2) there was a doubt whether infidelity in this state was to be called adultery (*μοιχεία*). At the very least it would be called *πορνεία*: fornication.

This seems to throw light on Mt. V, 32, which supposes two things: (a) there is a state of pledged troth in which infidelity is called *πορνεία*; (b) only this state can be dissolved by divorce. The other state of pledged troth in which infidelity is *μοιχεία* cannot be divorced, but the divorcer makes his wife an adulteress; and whoever attempts marriage with his wife is an adulterer.

The traditional canon law about unconsummated marriages seems to throw light on this interpretation.

V. McN.

MODERN PHYSICS: A GENERAL SURVEY OF ITS PRINCIPLES.  
Translated from the German of Theodor Wulf, S.J., by  
C. J. Smith. (London: Methuen & Co., 1930; 35/-.)

The average man usually regards the working of the scientific mind with a certain amount of suspicion. While he is ready to accept experimental facts, he fights shy of the theories and deductions drawn from these facts. Yet, from the very nature of the case, the hypothesis must play a very large part in any scientific investigation. The dry bones of fact are by themselves of little use; but clothed in the flesh and sinews of a working hypothesis they become productive of new facts, in the light of which the hypothesis is examined anew and its adequacy or inadequacy discovered. And so the process goes on, until the accumulation of observed facts adequately explained by an hypothesis warrants its enunciation as a scientific truth.

Father Wulf shows how this method has been applied in physics, and in language which may be easily comprehended

## *Blackfriars.*

even by the beginner traces the growth of modern theories from their small beginnings. The first part of the book deals with the material world, and here the fundamental ideas of motion, force, gravity and wave motion are discussed. The second part deals with the atomic structure of matter, and shows how the atomic theory developed from a consideration of the properties of solids, liquids and gases. The structure of the atom itself is the subject of the third part, and from a study of magnetism and electricity, electrons and radio-activity, the electronic structure of the atom is demonstrated. The final section of the book deals with the physics of the aether, in which are discussed the propagation of light, and optics generally. The book concludes with a chapter on the aims of modern physics, with some speculation regarding future developments.

This book will appeal to the non-technical reader, who will find the principles of the science expounded in plain terms and without the use of unnecessary technicalities. And we would specially recommend it to students of philosophy, as providing an admirable explanation of the physical aspect of many problems over which science and philosophy are apparently in conflict.

J.P.M.

### PHILOSOPHY OF VALUE. An Essay in Constructive Criticism.

By Leo Richard Ward, C.S.C., University of Notre Dame.  
(London : Burns, Oates & Washbourne, 1930 ; 7/6.)

This book is an important one, if only because it is a serious effort to present St. Thomas in modern dress to an English-speaking public. It may be hoped that it will at least serve to dispel the illusion that Thomism is so much ado about bygones, and has nothing to say about the problems with which modern philosophy torments itself. To the mere scholastic its modernity may seem something of a scandal. Not only is the medieval Latin of St. Thomas translated into the raciest modern American, but his doctrine is presented according to the approved manner of modern American scholarship. This may jar on conservative tastes ; but it must be humbly acknowledged that Thomism is still inarticulate in the presence of its English-speaking contemporaries, and that no experiment in method, however revolutionary, may be prudently sneered at until proved ineffectual.

Modern American scholarship tends to suffocate itself with thoroughness. Extravagant wealth of quotation is apt to stifle original thought. The extent of Fr. Ward's acquaintance with modern writers, and the ingenuity with which he makes use of