

we can the more easily attend to the interlaced spiritual meanings which are of such importance in Mr Williams's writings. Perhaps it is a good omen that these allegories of the conflict of good and evil repay publishing today.

G.M.

A ROSARY CHAIN. By Sister Mary Dominic, O.P., with a Preface by the Very Revd Fr A. Tindal-Atkinson, O.P. (Blackfriars Publications; 5s. 6d.)

Each mystery of the Rosary is remembered in this gracious book by an appropriate passage of the Sacred Scriptures and by a brief meditation in verse. A method so objective and so *pure* cannot fail to strengthen a prayer that is available to all, and whose efficacy has in our own day received such striking testimony at Lourdes and Fatima. An example of Sister Mary Dominic's verse will serve better than a reviewer's praise to indicate its simple beauty:

THE FINDING IN THE TEMPLE

*Sorrowing I sought Thee many a day:
(The day was night when we were far apart).
I knew not sorrow was Thy wisdom's way
To lead me to Thy Temple in my heart.*

Hand-set on hand-made paper, *A Rosary Chain* will be the perfect Christian present for all who love the Rosary—or indeed for all who will be glad to be reminded of how white paper can be, and how joyous its marriage with the printer's skill.

I.E.

ROME ET LA RUSSIE AVANT L'INVASION DES TARTARS. By Baron Michel de Taube. Tome I. pp. 176. (Les Editions du Cerf: Blackfriars Publications; 9s.)

In the past twenty-five years a good deal of work has been done on the origins of the Russian nation and of the Christian church in that nation, matters that are very closely associated with one another and are no less complicated and uncertain. Baron Michel de Taube, who was formerly professor of international law in the University of Petersburg, has undertaken to examine the problem afresh in the light of new sources of evidence, and with the particular object of finding out to what extent it is true that the Western church had an active part in the beginnings of Russian Christianity.

His first volume is now published, and it deals with the neglected Varangian prince Askold, the origin of the state of Kiev, and a first conversion (i.e., over a century before Vladimir) of Russians to Christianity, between the years 856 and 882. Baron de Taube's marshalling of the evidence goes to show that Askold, rather than the shadowy Rurik, was the real founder of the Kievan state, and that during his time Christian influence was continuous among the Slavs of the Dniepr and he himself was baptised. (The argument that he took the name Nicholas after the contemporary Pope St Nicholas I is not altogether convincing.) This influence was exercised not only by Christians originating from Constantinople and Bulgaria in the south, but

also from the Scandinavian north, Armenians, Georgians and Khazars from the east, and Moravians and Germans from the west—in fact, from the four points of the compass, so that this ‘first conversion of the Russians’ was a veritably international business.

This book is no *œuvre de vulgarisation* for the general reader, but a piece of solid scientific history; the author makes full use of the material provided by archæology, language and place-names, and controls his wide learning by a careful critical sense. It appears that two more volumes are to follow, dealing with the period of St Olga, St Vladimir and Yaroslav the Wise, and with the relations between Russia and the West between 1054 and the Tartar invasions of the thirteenth century. When completed this work will be, not of course the last word on the subject, but the last word to date in the relatively summary form that the author has chosen. DONALD ATTWATER

AN INFINITY OF QUESTIONS. By C. J. Eustace (Dobson; 8s. 6d.)

The author certainly raises a great number of profoundly interesting questions relating to art and religion and their interconnection. But his method of asking questions renders difficult any systematic answering. For he takes five poetic or saintly women, beginning with the natural genius of the child in Helen Foley and ending with the supernatural child in St Thérèse of Lisieux, and uses them as occasions for his deep questionings. It would have made a more coherent book to have elaborated the thesis independently of these five examples and to have interwoven them into the constructed whole. That method would have also obviated the tendency towards the easy answer, such as that Bremond did not distinguish the natural from the supernatural. Nevertheless the book is full of interest and incidentally introduces the reader on the right plane to Helen Foley, Katherine Mansfield, Frances Pastorelli, Elizabeth Lesueur, and Sœur Thérèse. It is in fact a good antidote to such popular books as Huxley's *Perennial Philosophy*. C.P.

THE FOUR PATHS OF PILGRIMAGE. By H. Newton Wethered. Frederick Muller, Ltd.; 10s. 6d.)

With its attractive cover, good general design, and its list of contents bright with famous names, this book will draw the attention of many readers. If they are ignorant of the classics of travel literature, and of the nature and history of pilgrimage, they may find it suggestive of further study. But if they already know such works as those of Burton, Doughty, Kinglake, and the Abbé Huc, they may grow impatient. If, in addition, they have a fair knowledge of medieval history and literature, they are likely to be exasperated by the inaccuracies and ill-founded judgments, the superficial approach to Chaucer and Mandeville, which mark the first half of the book. When one thinks of the wealth contained in the volumes of the Palestine Pilgrims Text Society alone, *The Four Paths of Pilgrimage* appears as the rather sad monument of a lost opportunity. A.R.