

will be translated and that perhaps a few young priests will take the trouble to acquire some German and go and study at the Herwegen Institut. Only in this way will the ideas of the Maria Laach school become really known and criticised and thus enter into the common stock of Christian thought.

J. D. CRICHTON

THE HAPPY ISSUE. By Warner Allen. (Faber; 12s. 6d.)

In *The Timeless Moment* the author described what he took to be a mystical experience and the immediate effects of that experience. Here he traces his mode of synthesising the inner experience with outer reality and reason. He has read widely and eclectically in mystical literature and is as we should expect greatly influenced by Inge's *Plotinus* and Aldous Huxley's *Perennial Philosophy*. He seems to have sought confirmation for his experience in books about mysticism rather than in the total exposition of the genuine mystics themselves—at least he quotes from *The Epistle of Privy Counsel* and *The Scale of Perfection* as taken secondhand from Miss Underhill and Dr Inge respectively. Such reading and such writing are very comfortable and very dangerous. They dull the fine point of the spirit which should be able to detect the truly supernatural from the natural touch of God. Leaving out all the hard things of Christian asceticism it becomes absorbed in a comfortable assurance of the presence of God. It would seem likely that the author's experience, which occurred while listening to Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, was a natural poetic experience which can of course achieve a quite considerable 'happy issue' in adjusting self from inside to awkward outward environment. A great deal of genuine mystical writing can be read on this infinitely lower plane and still seem to be true. But inevitably passages in such writers as St John of the Cross are hard to swallow, and Dark Nights are not very attractive. We are not surprised therefore when after tampering with St John of the Cross as a man with a spanner trying to unravel the mysteries of a watch the author turns with relief 'to the steady common-sense of Henry More, the Cambridge Platonist'. In this book, then, there is plenty of sound common-sense and healthy psychology, a delicate sensibility and a more than usually penetrating philosophical insight. But let it be a warning to those who dabble in mysticism and think they can find a comfortable way to a happy issue.

CONRAD PEPLER, O.P.

THE HUMAN WISDOM OF ST THOMAS. Arranged by Josef Pieper. (Sheed & Ward; 6s.)

Described on the title page as a Breviary of Philosophy from the works of St Thomas Aquinas, this book consists of some five hundred texts from St Thomas grouped in seventeen sections and designed to reveal the structure of the thomistic explanation of the universe. The texts are numbered consecutively throughout and are presented without comment or elaboration of any kind; even the