

student,' he tells us in his Autobiography, 'I resolved to devote my life until I was thirty to my pastoral work, to science, and to music, and to dedicate the rest of my life to the service of my fellowmen.' 'He who has been blessed above his fellows with the good things of life must give the same measure of life to others.' With this end in view he studied medicine, and took a medical degree. He abandoned all his beloved activities, his university work, and his music, and began a new life as a doctor in equatorial Africa, among the sufferers from leprosy and sleeping sickness. He tells us of this life in his books *On the Edge of the Primeval Forest*, and in *My Life and Thought*. He hoped also to complete his studies on St. Paul in the tranquility of the jungle. 'From my youth onwards,' he tells us, 'I have felt certain that all thought which thinks itself out to an issue ends in mysticism. In the stillness of the primeval forests of Africa I have been able to work out this thought and give it expression.'

From boyhood he was torn between pity for the sufferings of the world, and the consciousness of his own happiness, between pantheism and theism, between rationalism and mysticism. He distrusted the power of reason to provide an answer to the riddles of the universe, and trusted all the more in the power of the will. The will is the strongest force in his spiritual life. He draws no sharp distinction between religious and philosophic thought. 'By my affirmative attitude towards life and the universe,' he says, 'my existence joins in pursuing the aims of the mysterious universal will of which I am a manifestation.'

Prof. Kraus finds it remarkable that the personality of our Lord should have influenced Schweitzer so profoundly, since it was so remote from his rationalism and all his ideas in regard to the universe. It is clear from all his writings, and from his life, that the personality of our Lord was the shaping influence of his life and character. His conception, which was strangely limited, denying as it did the divinity of Christ, yet had the power to call forth in him all the forces of pity and self-sacrifice, which inspired his whole life. The life to which he devoted himself he regarded also as a work of atonement. The final aim of civilisation for him is the spiritual and intellectual perfection of the individual.

Schweitzer's sociological teaching has especial significance for us at the present time, for he stresses the vital importance of transcending boundaries between races and nations.

MARGRIETA BEER.

THIS PLOT OF EARTH: A GARDENER'S CHRONICLE. By H. J. Massingham. (Collins; 12s. 6d.)

In turning from farm to garden Mr. Massingham does not narrow his vision but throws more sharply into relief the general principles which make for wise husbandry, whether of land or life. For gardening is not merely farming in miniature. The fork or spade is not a small plough but a more precise instrument than the

plough; and the garden is in some sense the pattern of cultivation with which the good farmer seeks conformity (and in China, they say, achieves it perfectly). Unity in variety, relative self-sufficiency, the treating of every part in a proper and separate manner while always relating it to the whole, use in beauty and beauty in use—these are things which all go together in farming and gardening and country crafts, in the shaping of society and of the person. And if the self-sufficiency is bound to remain something relative, we are reminded here of the proper means to complement it—one's own neighbourhood and neighbours, one's fellow-workers and fellow-Christians; not the metropolis and the absentee customer.

These general principles are accompanied and illustrated by a record of the author's own work in his own garden. To enlarge on details would certainly be to betray my ignorance, and I will only suggest respectfully that the appreciation of nettles (p. 104) might have been carried further. Nettles are excellent cattle-fodder if cut and allowed to dry a little, and in some countries I think they are cultivated. (I remember one cow who ate them growing, but she was an eccentric). I have also one contribution to the discussion on fertility—a sentence from a local innkeeper as he summed up the needs of the soil in relation to fertilisers: 'That wants feeding, not having its — guts pulled out.'

However much Mr. Massingham returns to his themes, he always treats them freshly and forcefully. The present book is among his best. There is a wealth of new material, with some admirable quotations (edifying ones from friends and incriminating ones from public men). And his own aphorisms retain their flavour. 'An urban civilization, severed from its own roots. . . regards its own country with either a melting or a calculating eye, and the one takes frequent advantage of the other.' 'As a result of land belonging to me I found that I belonged to the land. As the late Dr. Marett once wrote to me about the demesne of which he was seigneur in Jersey, you can see the sky in the raindrop.' 'Quality . . . is an attribute both of beauty and use, the true bridge that unites them. . . Take care of the quality and the quantity will take care of itself.'

WALTER SHEWRING.

ROMAN VERGIL. By W. Jackson Knight. (Faber; 15s.)

This is a handsome, compendious, informative and refreshing book. It is a virtue in it that nothing very new is said about an old and tried subject, and another virtue that Mr. Knight says so astonishingly much that is old, and in the easy, pleasant style of the past-master in the art of lecture-room dissertation. There is nothing here of the traditional specialist discussion with no apparent background of humanity to point its value. The results of many such investigations are simply used as the comfortable and normal tools