

nity through temporal processes. Christianity opposes both the acosmic 'metaphysics' of M. Guénon's 'East' and the pure dynamism of the modern, apostate West. In so doing it affirms and reconciles the values of each.

Oblivious of the meaning of Christianity, M. Guénon can actually commend (for instance) the Hindu caste system. Self-confined in the 'metaphysical,' disregarding the world of 'Maya,' he can see its eminent soundness of principle while remaining blind to the ravages which time has made upon it, rendering it an instrument of hideous social injustice and oppression.

There is perhaps more truth than he himself recognises in his contention that it is through the living traditions and spiritual techniques of the East that the West may rediscover itself. But the thesis is more convincingly established in the concrete exemplification of his other more detailed works than in the bald reiterations of the present volume. Our Gerald Heard and Aldous Huxleys have already shown how light may come to the West, less *from* than *through* the East. M. Guénon's other works on Hindu teaching, on the Vedantist apprehension of man, on spiritual authority and temporal power—still more, perhaps, his profound study on the symbolism of the Cross—open up vast and healing vistas. We await the appearance of their translations with eagerness.

VICTOR WHITE, O.P.

POEMS OF CLOISTER AND JUNGLE. By Mrs. Rhys Davids. (Wisdom of the East Series; Murray; 3s. 6d.)

Though described as an anthology, this is less a collection of Buddhist monastic poems than a discussion of their origins and their teaching, illustrated by frequent quotations. The discussion is learned and often interesting, but too specialised for the general reader, who will scarcely have the requisite previous acquaintance with Buddhist thought, history and terminology. The book will be valued chiefly by those who know other writings of Mrs. Rhys Davids and who share her interest in what may be called the higher criticism of Buddhist doctrine and literature. It would be presumptuous in myself to venture any opinion whatever on such matters as the relations of Vedic and Buddhist thought, the passage from *amata* to *nirvana*, or the transmission of the poems themselves. But there are two criticisms which I think I can reasonably make.

One is that the author's allusions to Christianity and her use of Christian terms are too often unsatisfactory. Thus her contrast of faith and knowledge (pp. 33, 34) is extremely confused. And her association (p. 115) of nuptial imagery in religion with the *youthfulness* of our Lord implies a quite superficial reading of Christian spiritual classics; in any case, the notion may easily be exploded by reference to the Old Testament and to Mohammedan mystics—not to trespass further East. More generally, one wishes that Wes-

tern writers on Eastern thought would acquire a reasonable knowledge of Catholic theology and its technical terms; it would provide them at least with an exact mode of reference and save them from the suspicion (I do not say the just suspicion) that thinkers unsure of the central tradition of the West are no safe guides to that of the East.

The other criticism concerns the verse translations. They are lamentably flat, with a flatness which can be technically ascribed to the use of end-stopped blank verse with an excess of archaisms and of weak syllables. I understand that the Pali original is in couplets, for which form blank verse is in any case a most unsuitable medium. Why not learn something from Mr. Waley? Few scholars can hope to achieve a style so felicitous, but his general principles of free rhythm and plain words should show the way to something better than stunted essays in academic verse.

WALTER SHEWRING.

THE REFORMATION IN ENGLAND. Vol. II. Edward VI (1547-1553).
By G. Constant. Translated by E. I. Watkin. (Sheed and
Ward; 16s.)

As the sequel to the Abbé Constant's account of the Henrician schism, this is a book for which many readers will have waited with some eagerness. It provides a detailed and absorbingly interesting account of the progress of the religious changes in the reign of Edward VI. First, there is a sketch of the position at the accession of 'the young Josiah.' The Abbé Constant's verdict on the character and career of Somerset agrees for the most part with that of Professor Pollard, admittedly the principal authority on the reign, and his account of the Protector's policy and fall is a masterly summary of a difficult and intricate piece of history. The progress of the Anglican church towards Lutheranism is described, and the subsequent change, during the period of Warwick's power, to a position which was substantially Calvinist is convincingly and clearly painted. The author's account of the influence of the foreign reformers who took refuge in England during the reign—particularly the impact of the Polish reformer, John a Lasco, on Cranmer's intricate mental processes—is not the least interesting part of the book. There is an appendix on the subject of Anglican orders and an extensive bibliography. Another appendix is devoted to Cranmer's project for reforming the breviary. Less successful is the appendix on the liturgical use of the vernacular, a profoundly interesting subject, which the layman may well feel is at once too short and too long. The Abbé Constant remains unconvinced by Dr. Messenger's contention that Henry VIII's doctrinal decrees were not only schismatical, but also heretical. The war has deprived us of an index, which we are promised in the next edition. Here and there, as is perhaps inevitable, there are some misprints: for instance, Miss Frances Rose-