

succession, a process whereby 'what is useful is continually being transformed into what is ethical'. The book is perhaps more of a postscript to, than an epitome of, Croce's philosophy and criticism, but a postscript containing nothing with which we are not very familiar. Signor Croce still believes intensely in his Liberalism. In elucidating the problem of liberty and the relations of individual morality to the State, he does not, however, get much beyond bidding us to find out how to act 'in a manner suitable to reality, which is neither radical nor socialist, nor conservative, nor liberal'.

While showing some appreciation of the vital importance of Catholicism in a world and an Italy all but disintegrated by the disease of war, Signor Croce is still capable of writing of the Church as 'completely unproductive in the field of thought and culture, though she partially succeeds in concealing her aridity in these fields by borrowing methods, ideas and results from lay thought'. (What the precise distinction between 'lay' and 'clerical' thought is, we are, incidentally, not told.) Here and there the translator has given us some very difficult reading.

J. F. T. PRINCE.

WHATSOEVER HE SHALL SAY: the first Theophila Correspondence. By Ferdinand Valentine, O.P. (Blackfriars Publications, Oxford; 5s.)

This attractive book may be described as the first instalment of a correspondence-course in the spiritual life. It is cast in the form of letters passing between an imaginary Theophila—a girl in her later 'teens—and the author. Theophila, a devout Catholic, is dissatisfied with her religious practice, feels that her religion is a mercenary and self-centred thing, and calls upon Fr Valentine to impose a divine order upon her devotional chaos. Her letters are charmingly conceived, impulsive, very feminine and not a little inconsequent. Resisting their inconsequence—which is more superficial than real—Fr Valentine contrives to impart a considerable amount of solid instruction in the fundamentals of religion. He is concerned, first of all, to give Theophila a proper conception of God, both in his transcendent Majesty and in his loving Immanence. Having thus established Theophila in a sound religious attitude, he passes naturally to the vital topic of prayer, about which he has much to say that is of the first importance. These, in fact, are the two major topics of his book: God and prayer.

We have nothing but commendation for the teaching of this book, and we welcome the mode of its presentation. The average reader, disinclined to take up and peruse a formal treatise on the spiritual life, will—we believe—be attracted by the informal approach of this book, and reading it with ease and interest should profit greatly by its admirable instruction.

JUSTIN McCANN, O.S.B.

A CATHOLIC HISTORY OF WESTON-IN-ARDEN (1849-1929). By Rev. J. B. Hickson. (Walker; n.p.)

This little book, written by a former parish priest of Weston-in-Arden, holds matter of interest for English Dominicans, seeing that

it deals with the missionary activity of their predecessors during the last century. Weston was one of the numerous missions begun in the neighbourhood of Hinckley by Fathers resident there. It owed its beginnings to the conversion of Richard Brome de Bary who, entering the Church during the Tractarian Movement, opened a chapel at Weston Hall in 1849. The Hinckley Dominicans served it till 1880, and the story of their missionary zeal is inspiring. No one had heard of Catholic Action, but the reality was there. In five years 81 baptisms were recorded in the register; a free school was opened in the Hall under the charge of Mrs de Bary; the converts were taught to sing the plain chant of the Mass; a public procession of our Lady was made from Weston to Nuneaton, probably under the inspiration of Mother Margaret Hallahan, a frequent visitor from Coventry; and finally, Fr Austin Maltus began to preach in the market place of a neighbouring town, under the necessary guard of his stalwart converts. It is an example that might well be followed.

R. G.

PHILOSOPHIA MORALIS GENERALIS. By E. T. Toccafondi, O.P. (Rome, Angelicum 1943; 300 lire.)

This covers the treatises on Beatitude, the Voluntary, Morality, Virtues and Vices. Law. It has the merit of being expressed in St Thomas's own words almost throughout. But it shows the influence of the Manualist tradition, notably in the chapter on Conscience placed after those on Law. A scheme gives 42 divisions of Conscience!

D. M.

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