

Blackfriars

' treatise on the soul.' ' Material ' in the sentence (p. 207) : ' how the intellect knows its own individual and material act,' ought to be ' immaterial.' But such faults are not of much importance, and it still remains true that the English reader owes to Mr. Watkins a reliable version of an excellent introduction to the supreme synthesis of human thought.

L.W.

A TREATISE ON THE CANON OF MEDICINE OF AVICENNA. By O. Cameron Gruner, M.D., Lond. (Luzac & Co.)

Students of St. Thomas can hardly afford to overlook a book written with the two-fold purpose ' (1) To furnish a translation of the First Book of the Canon of Medicine of Avicenna ; (2) To present a study of its mystical philosophy (tassawuf) especially showing where this and modern biological knowledge are reciprocally illuminative Furthermore, the Thomistic philosophy of human nature is especially discussed, and its applicability to the Medicine of the future definitely enunciated ' (p. v).

This is a book of wide scholarship. Our present praise must be limited to saying that Dr. Gruner's work has almost a place of honour apart in modern Thomistic writings.

V.McN.

THE TRAGEDY OF THE STUARTS. By J. Desmond Gleeson. (Cecil Palmer.)

Mr. Gleeson has explained his book in an illuminating introduction. In his own words :

' The Monarchy, national and popular in England, was pulled down and destroyed. The process of destruction lasted for a period of more than a century. It began with the raising of the new rich in Henry VIII's time, and it ended when the last Stuart king vanished over the water. At the commencement of the period the Monarch was supreme ; at the conclusion of the period the Aristocracy was supreme. And during the years that the upsetting and substituting was going on, the Stuarts were on the throne. It was their business to defend the rights of the Monarchy, their duty to preserve the prerogative, their fate to fight the losing battle. . . . The Stuart Kings of England each had his private tragedy, but the war with the new rich lords was the tragedy of the whole line.'

Mr. Gleeson, whilst giving the main emphasis to the main tragedy, has known how to blend the private tragedy with the larger dramatic doom that finally overwhelmed the line.

So much sound thinking has gone to the writing of Mr. Gleeson's book that the mere reading of it begets thinking. Perhaps no class of readers will be stimulated as Catholics will be stimulated, by the dramatic situations so artistically recovered for us by the writer. We Catholics can hardly help remarking how the party of the Established Church under Elizabeth betrayed and executed the Stuart Mary, Queen of Scots. Again, the Puritan party under Cromwell bought (from the Calvinist Scots) and executed the Stuart, King Charles I. But the fugitive Stuart King Charles II was neither sold nor deserted, but was sheltered and saved by the persecuted Catholics. In a century of disgraceful betrayals the small, despised, suspected Catholic body were the defenders of English honour.

Again, there is almost a blatant exercise of *lex talionis* in the fate of James I and his grandson, James II. The grandfather, son of a Catholic Queen, bought the English Crown with something like apostasy. But no doubt England was worth the Book of Common Prayer. It would be difficult to find anything worthy of Scottish chivalry in the son of Mary Queen of Scots succeeding Elizabeth as Supreme Governor of the Church of England. But Scottish honour might well be proud of the great-grandchild of Mary, who gave up his throne rather than give up his faith. A James II who would have accepted the Book of Common Prayer might have died at Windsor and been buried in Westminster Abbey.

Another striking doom may perhaps be seen in the fact that it was a James that disgraced his mother Mary in order to gain the English throne; and it was a Mary who gained the throne of England and disgraced her father James.

From all this it will be seen that Mr. Gleeson, in making his book, has shown the rare art not only of making his hearers hear, but of making his hearers think.

V.McN.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN THE SOUL. By Father John Evangelist of Bois-le-duc (Balduke). Edited from the first English Edition by the Benedictine Nuns of Stanbrook. With an Introduction by Father Cuthbert, O.S.F.C. Capuchin Classics I. (London: Sheed & Ward; 5/- net.)

Obviously, the knowledge of how to attain the end for which he was made is the most important a man can have. Therefore books which treat competently of the soul's union with God are the most important of all books; and when the writer speaks from his own experience, the value of the book is doubled. This first of the series of Capuchin Classics is, then, one of the greater