

performed on the cross and in the Easter sepulchre.' Or, again, such cyclic use is seen to be made likewise of the themes of calling and healing, and of healing and feeding. It is shown how these themes, embedded in the Gospel history, not only anticipate the end but also spring from the beginning, unfolding for St Mark from the initial Gospel data, variously expressing the mysteries of water: spirit; baptism: temptation (and eucharist); the Baptist: the Christ. One can follow St Mark's mind as it picks up with them. There is no question here of allegorisation; rather it is that 'Christ's action, according to our evangelist, constantly expresses the essentials of the Gospel, and the essentials of the Gospel are always the same'.

But it is impossible to give any brief impression of the immense interest and religious inspiration of this book. One or two of the critical standpoints may be out of bounds for us; and although the splendid vigorous style never fails, there is a good deal of unnecessarily laboured exposition. Still one ventures to say that it is a masterpiece, capable of establishing for us a new depth of scriptural interpretation. Unless their symbolic meaning is attained there can be no proper understanding of the Scriptures—that is certain. What is here achieved is a sustained scientific use of that way of understanding.

RICHARD KEHOE, O.P.

**THE ORIGINALITY OF ST MATTHEW: A Critique of the Two-Document Hypothesis.** By B. C. Butler, Abbot of Downside. (Cambridge University Press; 18s.)

Abbot Butler thinks it can be conclusively shown that Matthew, our Greek Matthew in precisely the form we possess, was used as a source by both St Mark and St Luke. If so, the existence of Q becomes a needless supposition, the originality of Mark is disproved, and the two-document theory breaks down. He proceeds by examining successive groups of parallel passages, adducing in each case the reasons for inferring that the Marcan and Lucan passages are dependent on Matthew. The passages where this argument is strongest are taken first, and the case is gradually built up very carefully and methodically. The author's profound scholarship and his wide acquaintance with the immense literature of the synoptic problem are apparent everywhere. It is a great advantage to have the parallel Greek texts printed in full in the chief passages, the normal English type is large, and the whole book is beautifully produced.

The author seldom mentions other views held by Catholics, e.g., the widely held view that St Luke knew Matthew's gospel in an earlier edition, or knew extracts from it, and that Mark is an independent work by which the editor of our extant Matthew was influenced both in wording and matter. He would of course reject both parts of this

theory: he believes that our Matthew is not only substantially but exactly identical with the apostle's writing, and that therefore there is no difference between earlier and later editions of it. The theory is more complex than his own, and this would appear to him an argument against it, for he is convinced (p. 1) that the simplest solutions of literary problems are the most probable. This seems a principle of very uncertain value, especially in the case of historical works, where all writers except eye-witnesses depend on 'sources' oral or written; as a rule the most trustworthy works are those based on *numerous* written sources. Both Streeter and Lagrange, not often in harmony, warn us against the lure of simple solutions (*Four Gospels*, p. 229; *S. Luc.*, p. lxxxv).

The long array of passages examined, and the arguments about them, cannot fail to impress a reader in favour of the author's view. But when we pass from passages to whole gospels, we are met with the question: assuming that St Mark and St Luke knew and used our form of Matthew, can we account for the precise modes of their use—their omissions, expansions, alterations, and transpositions? Mark has omitted almost all Christ's teaching (nearly half the contents of Matthew) and has considerably expanded the narrative portions. Luke has broken up St Matthew's well-arranged book and has entirely rearranged the constituent parts, omitting most of the parables. He has sometimes made drastic changes in our Lord's words recorded by Matthew. Abbot Butler attempts to explain these supposed facts in his second and eleventh chapters. The difficulties are formidable, and many will, I think, feel far from convinced. A capital problem like that of Luke's reshuffle of Matthew's material is dismissed in a few lines (p. 24), and hardly anything seems to be said about Mark's reason for omitting the Sermon on the Mount and Christ's other discourses. As for Luke's supposed alterations, it seems impossible both to believe in them and to justify them. His warm sympathy for the poor is said to explain his change of 'Blessed are the poor in spirit' into 'Blessed are the poor' (p. 31), and his dislike of the Greek word for *heaven* led him to cut out from the Lord's Prayer the words: 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven' (p. 32). The reasons given seem inadequate, and moreover these and other alleged alterations can hardly be called editorial. If we could believe that Luke took such liberties with our Lord's words, we should be forced to conclude that he had used the same freedom in those large sections (nearly half his gospel) where he has no parallel in Matthew or Mark, and where therefore we have no check on his 'editing'. We should have to believe that a good deal of the wording of the great parables (Good Samaritan, Prodigal Son, Dives and Lazarus, etc.) was not our Lord's but Luke's, without ever being able to distinguish between the two. An unhappy conclusion for all who

grieve at the pitiful fewness of our Lord's words that we at best possess!

It is a hard fate that prevents one from agreeing more fully with a book whose fine qualities make its appearance an event all too rare in English Catholic life.

W. REES

ST THOMAS AQUINAS: PHILOSOPHICAL TEXTS. Selected and Translated with Notes and an Introduction by Thomas Gilby. (Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press; 12s. 6d.)

From many standpoints the appearance of this book is something of an event. Perhaps only those who are acquainted with the peculiar genius of scholastic Latin (which, though once a living language in limited circles, was never either an elegant or a popular one), can appreciate Fr Gilby's achievement in rendering so much of it into a modern idiom, and sometimes into passages of rare beauty. The fact that his medium is so unpromising a language as English enhances the greatness (we use the word advisedly) of the achievement. It is no small event in the history of English literature, this rendering of an ancient academic tongue, which has hitherto proved for the most part untranslatable without subjecting the English language to a desiccation not unlike that to which the Schoolmen had subjected Latin. For that reason it is a still greater event in the history of English-speaking, and English-thinking, thomism.

We would not have it supposed that the translations are all of equal quality, nor all indisputable, nor even faultless from the standpoint either of accuracy or readableness. More detailed appreciation and criticism must be left for our more leisured and capacious sister-periodical, *Dominican Studies*. We would say, in general, that Fr Gilby's translations are usually best when they are most free and venturesome, and that, though sometimes confessedly paraphrases, they often afford a most illuminating interpretation of the text, which even those who prefer to read St Thomas in the original can ill afford to neglect. It is his more pedestrian and literal efforts that sometimes seem to us not only less readable, but more questionable in their accuracy.

Outstanding as is this book as translation, it is still more so as a compilation. With remarkable ingenuity, and a thorough knowledge of St Thomas's *omnia opera*, Fr Gilby has succeeded in putting together a book which could serve a variety of different readers in a variety of different ways. It could, not without profit, be opened at random in desultory fashion: it could be a bedside book, or a weekend book, or a book for odd moments. Or it could be a book for intensive and concentrated study—and for anything betwixt and between. Least of all can the expert connoisseur of St Thomas despise it. A brilliant juxta-