

Evolution for what I must call common-sense reasons, since I am not a scientist'. She meant to write a strictly reasonable and scientific treatise but wrote in fact an 'Apologia' for 'belief', a word she constantly uses with reference to scientific theories. She holds Evolution to be important because of its wide influence and misuse, and this would seem to some extent confirmed by the Pope specifically discussing it in *Humani Generis*, where he says, while safeguarding revealed truth: 'In the present state of scientific and theological opinion this question may legitimately be canvassed by research and by discussion between experts on both sides. At the same time, the reasons for and against both views must be weighed and adjudged with all seriousness, fairness and restraint'. This provides a standard of judgement.

Miss Barclay started, self-confessedly, from scratch fairly recently with no scientific background and little natural inclination towards such studies. Her data derives exclusively from her undoubtedly wide reading (testified to by continuous quotation and a sixty-page appendix of additional citations) and is confined to what supports her own view, namely that the theory of evolution is untenable. Much that she says is interesting and instructive, but on the whole one feels overwhelmed by a mass of partly assimilated, unintegrated information, obscuring the argument, containing contradictions and loose arguments and shewing, at times, an arrogant and unjust attitude to her opponents. The reader is referred to the early rejection of natural selection, the struggle for existence and the idea of adaptation, and the subsequent use of these ideas, without further clear definition, in the discussion of alternative theories: to the change in front, between earlier and later chapters, over the relationship she holds to have obtained between Adam and other early men: to imputations with regard to Maeterlinck's alleged use of Marais' thought. These instances could be multiplied. A comparison between the relevant parts of this book and Fr Johnson's *The Bible and the Early History of Mankind* illustrates her lack of assimilation, her rather superficial approach and apparent unawareness of other important facts and opinions. The alternative theory she adumbrates is not convincing and is at times unorthodox, as when she says God used existing material in creating. MARY BEAUMONT.

THE IDEA OF USURY. By Benjamin N. Nelson. (Princeton University Press, London: Geoffrey Cumberlege; 20s.)

The practice of Usury, in the sense of unconscionable bargains by moneylenders, has been universally condemned since money was first known. The commandment in Deuteronomy permitting profitable loans to strangers, but protecting brothers, has long been the subject

of cynical comment on the part of moralists; and the Judaic trend towards a domestic communism simultaneous with extra-domestic capitalism is a commonplace of history. Deuteronomy has been all things to all men in the matter. Was the offending verse twenty a temporary concession by the Lord to placate Hebrew greed (even polygamy has been dragged in for an analogue) or, does it rest still on the Lord's dominion over all men's goods, an easier explanation for the Chosen People than for the financiers of today? Professor Nelson's rendering of the Deuteronomic Odyssey is scholarly and comprehensive and will be of use to the student of history and bibliography. But though the author refuses to end his study on a note of despair and pleads, (in five words) for the Brotherhood of Man, the reader is disappointed who sought the moral verdict of History: and we shall do better with the *Vix Pervenit* of Benedict XIV. For the latter was followed (if we except the liberalism of Zech and the Jesuit canonists of Ingolstadt) by a body of sound, coherent exegetics. The author of *The Idea of Usury* owes an evident debt to Sir Henry Maine, acknowledged in a footnote and a bibliography of six-hundred-odd names.

J. F. T. PRINCE.

FATHER FLANAGAN OF BOYS TOWN. By Fulton Oursler and Will Oursler. (The World's Work; 12s. 6d.)

'I have never known a really bad boy, only bad parents, bad environments and bad examples. It's wrong even to call it juvenile delinquency. Why not call it what it generally is—the delinquency of a callous and indifferent society.' Such was the considered judgment of Father Flanagan, whose Boys Town in Omaha remains the monument to his faith in the infinitely redemptive work of Christian charity.

Father Flanagan began with no hypothetical theories about juvenile crime. He saw a need—that of the thousands of American boys deprived of normal home life, the victims of a society too often without mercy or without the will to restore its misfits to responsibility—and that need he met, without making any distinction of colour, class or creed. The fascinating story of his success, from the early days when as a curate he began a 'hotel' for tramps, to the vast organisation, with its schools, workshops and playing-fields, which he left securely established when he died in Berlin in 1948, is told in characteristically American fashion by the Messrs Oursler. For in many ways it was a typically American achievement, and other nations, more inhibited, may learn from this record of trust in the radical meaning of love as applied to unfortunate boys whose delinquencies are too often the result of a lack of love.