

NOTICES

DIVIDING THE CHURCH, by A. Michel (Sword of the Spirit, 3s. 6d.), is a sober and objective study, by a writer with first-hand experience, of the techniques adopted by Communism behind the Iron Curtain to muzzle the Catholic Church. The opposition between the Church and Communism is a fundamental one on the ideological level, yet in many of the countries of eastern Europe which have become Communist since the war this has been masked by the government setting itself up as the protector of religious liberty and of the Church. While in a sense this temporary tactic has deceived nobody, nevertheless its effect has been to cause paralysing division in the Church, and particularly within the ranks of the Church's official representatives, the clergy. In the author's own country the impact of Communism in power has, in fact, split the clergy into three groups: the collaborating 'patriotic priests', those who categorically refuse all collaboration, and those who in order to prevent the liquidation of the Church seek a *modus vivendi* with the regime. A chapter entitled 'An Examination of Conscience' traces this confused situation to a lack of unity and an ignorance of Marxist doctrine and tactic on the part of Catholics, and the final pages of this excellent pamphlet apply the consequent lesson to the Church in the free world.

Mr Douglas Hyde's **THE MIND BEHIND NEW CHINA** (Phoenix House, 2s.) reminds us that Communism now has two centres of gravity in the modern world, Mao-ism in China having grown in an astonishingly short time to a position of importance in world affairs scarcely second to that of Leninism in the U.S.S.R. and eastern Europe. This brief but careful and deft analysis shows that contemporary China does not differ from Russia by being less consciously Marxist (this was what used to be said of it so often by the 'old China hands' before it came to power), but rather by being a fresh incarnation of the same Marxist principles in a completely different setting. It is this essentially non-proletarian setting and the success attending the thorough and ruthless work of its transformation under Mao Tse-Tung today that, as Mr Hyde points out, is rapidly turning the new China into an even more powerful pole of attraction to the land-hungry nationalists of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples of Asia, Africa and elsewhere than Russia is, or has been, to the industrial workers of the West.

THE BURNT OFFERING, by Albrecht Goes (Gollancz, 7s. 6d.), is little more than a short story (translated by Michael Hamburger) which tells us of an episode in the Nazi persecution of the Jews and of one simple

woman's attempt to expiate the guilt of her people. It reflects the almost neurotic sensibility of many Germans nowadays, but it has a nobility and generosity of purpose that must move anyone who realizes what human compassion should mean.

REFLECTIONS ON HANGING, by Arthur Koestler (Gollancz, 12s. 6d.), is a powerful polemical essay which marshals afresh all the evidence that can be brought to support the case for abolishing capital punishment. Here are the arguments, statistically buttressed, from the experience of abolitionist countries, from the evidence of Select Committee and Royal Commission and from the astute observation of an experienced writer. But there is little enough insistence on the final sanctions of punishment as such, which may seem an abstract question but is nevertheless one that needs to be discussed in any serious consideration of capital punishment.

THE BLESSED SACRAMENT AND THE MASS (Blackfriars Publications, 10s. 6d.) is a translation by the Rev. F. O'Neill of St Thomas's treatment of the Eucharist in Questions 78-83 of the Third Part of his *Summa Theologica*. Originally published in 1935 and printed at St Dominic's Press, this re-issue makes readily available the classical teaching of St Thomas, which will be especially valuable for lay people who wish to deepen their theological understanding. There are useful notes on such technicalities as 'quantity', 'accidents' and 'substance'. The opportunity might have been taken of some revision of the translation and of a clearer arrangement of the text, which is sometime invaded by commentary in a confusing way.

THE ROSARY OF OUR LADY, by Romano Guardini (P. J. Kenedy, \$2.50), appears in an American translation by H. Von Schuecking. Professor Guardini remarks that 'the simple things are the truly great', and he applies his great learning and spiritual perception to the mysteries of man's redemption (which the Rosary declares) with a proper understanding of this truth.

JESUS THE SAVIOUR, by Fr James, O.F.M.CAP. (Gill, 12s. 6d.), as the title suggests, is a short consideration in simple language of the saving mission of our Lord. The first chapter is an admirable summary of St Thomas's teaching on the Godward aspect of the Incarnation, and the remainder of the book deals with such mysteries of our Lord's life on earth as either form part of, or in an especial way point to the work of our redemption.

Recent events have focussed attention on the problem of the place of the priest in the modern world. *THE PRIEST OF THE PEOPLE* (Blackfriars Publications, 4s. 6d.) is a symposium based on the traditional theme as recently stressed in the present Holy Father's Encyclical *Menti nostrae* that the place of the priest in the community is determined by the call that separates him for 'the things that appertain to God'. It is the spiritual life which flows from this fundamental separation, then, which should be paramount in all the activities and interests of the priest, and in this valuable booklet the priestly spiritual life is treated from various different angles.

The book just noted originally appeared as a single number of *The Life of the Spirit*. In *THE CHRISTIAN VISION* (Blackfriars Publications, 18s.) we have a series of readings drawn from the whole range of the first ten volumes of that review. The work of selection has been admirably done by Miss Mary Ellen Evans, who has wisely devoted the bulk of the book to complete articles. Inevitably an assiduous reader of the review will be disappointed that certain personal favourites have not been reprinted here in this handy form which relieves one from the tedium of reference to back numbers. On the other hand so much attractive material has been included that it would be captious to complain. The Editor of *The Life of the Spirit* contributes an introduction describing the birth, history and aims of the review. BLACKFRIARS cannot but rejoice at the appearance of this volume which so fittingly marks the tenth birthday of one which it once nursed in its bosom, and which it now confesses itself somewhat at a loss whether to describe as its daughter, younger sister or even better half.

Appearing in the Mercier Books series, *HANDBOOK FOR CONVERTS*, by Anthony F. Bullen (Mercier Press, 3s. 6d.) is designed as an aid to both priests and convert in the work of instruction which goes beyond the skeletal structure of our present catechism (while keeping rather closely to its scheme) without setting out to be an 'independent' statement of Catholic belief and practice. In the same series and at the same price *THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT*, by August Adam, is a balanced treatment of the Catholic doctrine on sex. The first chapter is devoted to pointing out the contrast between Christianity and Manichaeism, and in the spirit of that distinction the author goes on to put the question of sex-relations in its due place inside the whole context of Catholic moral teaching, insisting on the subordination of chastity and its allied virtues to the sovereign virtue of charity. This book will be of help to priests and all who have to do with the healthy upbringing of young people.

STANDING ON HOLY GROUND. By Robert Nash, S.J. (Gill, 12s. 6d.), is a record of travels in the Holy Land made two years ago by some thirty-eight pilgrims from Ireland. The book contains some interesting vignettes of modern Jew and Arab in present-day Palestine, but the writer is less concerned with political and religious controversy, and indeed with archaeological and architectural details of the Holy Places, than with the impact upon the believer of direct contact with the local setting of the mysteries in which he believes. It is this after all which is the principle motive behind the permanent Christian instinct of pilgrimage, and Fr Nash writes movingly of how that deep desire was fulfilled for him and his companions when he could say '*hic*' of all the incidents in our Lord's life as he visited in turn the places where they happened.

Fontana Books have already given us a modern translation of the New Testament Epistles. In A SHORT BIBLE (Collins, 2s. 6d.) they now give us a selection from the whole Bible in the King James Authorized Version. This is not an anthology of 'choice passages' from the sacred text, but an arrangement made with the intention of underlining the unity of theme throughout the whole Bible. Some fifty pages are devoted to the Old Testament and more than twice as many to the New. The work of editing has been skilfully done by Austen Farrer, although one is surprised that Hebrews and the Johannine Epistles are not represented; and while one admires the ingenuity behind the adroit use of Ecclesiasticus 47, 2—49, 7 to summarize so much of the Old Testament, one would have preferred that for example so important a figure as David should have appeared in some selections from the book of Kings.

Those who have admired Fr Martindale's hitherto almost *obiter* writings on the text and background of the Gospels will welcome THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST MARK (Longmans, 7s. 6d.), the first to appear of the new Stonyhurst Scripture Manuals. This volume, which contains an introduction, text and commentary, is clearly printed and pleasant to handle. Lucky schoolboys who will now be introduced to the textual study of the Bible by a master of such vivid candour and lucid succinctness.

FATHER CHARLES OF MOUNT ARGUS (Gill, 6s. 6d.), by Fr Christopher, C.P., tells the story of a nineteenth-century Passionist who was born in the Netherlands, came to England in 1852 but spent most of his priestly life in Dublin where he died in 1893.