

Catholic Church, while adopting publicly and officially a rigorous attitude towards divorce, finds ways 'through private and discreet channels' of relaxing its laws in favour of rather arbitrarily selected individuals. If this is a reference to the work of the Rota, then one is amazed at the ignorance of an otherwise well-informed scholar. If not the Rota, then perhaps Dr Casserley will tell us more of these private and discreet channels.

JOHN FITZSIMONS

THE BRITISH WAY OF LIFE. By K. B. Smellie. (Heinemann; 15s.)

This is the latest addition, stimulating and competent, to a series dealing with 'various aspects of the history, present circumstances and problems, and future outlook of the countries concerned'. Professor Smellie comes out well from the formidable task of compressing all this into less than two hundred pages. His method is to deal with six different aspects of Britain—land and people, the family, education, economic life, political institutions, and Britain and the world. Each is set in its historical context and brought up to date, and completed by a further reading list.

What is lacking is anything about the British people themselves, their food, their dress, their newspapers, their literature, their ingrained love of gambling (and its latest manifestation the football pools), their attitude to the law and the rule of law. The result of all these *lacunae* is to provide a static picture which a foreigner would find most useful as a background for academic studies but not very helpful for understanding what the British people are like.

The illustrations have been chosen, with imagination, from *Punch*, Pissarro and photographs and really do illumine the text. Except in one instance: there is an aerial photograph of Kidbrooke School but no mention of comprehensive schools in the chapter on Education.

BETWEEN TWO EMPIRES. By M. D. R. Leys. (Longmans, Green and Co. 25s.)

Modern France, the country of changing governments, is something of an enigma to the British observer unused to recurrent governmental crises and changes of ministries. Even if he knows France well, he may still be puzzled. Nor can the problem be convincingly solved by vague references to the French Revolution, the Napoleonic interlude and the reactions to the Bourbon restoration. The key lies in the latter, certainly, during the years 1814 to 1848, when the anaemic attempt at constitutional monarchy collapsed and a second Napoleonic interlude followed.

Miss Leys, a Fellow of St Anne's College, Oxford, has produced a masterly study of that critical period, for it was during these thirty-four

years that the great cleavages in French society became defined and permanent. It was then that politics became based on groups rather than on parties, leading inevitably to frequent crises and changing cabinets.

This valuable contribution to a better understanding of more recent French political history is clearly the result of extensive research. Not that the fruits of this research make laborious reading; quite the contrary. Certainly it calls for attentive reading. Important details are not neglected and often a significant personality is sketched deftly in a few words. The political ineptitude of the restored Bourbons is made clear; the difficulties of the Church and State relationships become understandable. The reader might even feel hopefully, at the end, that he is beginning to understand something of the quaint complexities of French politics.

KIERAN MULVEY, O.P.

THE METALOGICON OF JOHN OF SALISBURY. Translated by Daniel D. McGarry. (University of California Press and C.U.P.; 37s. 6d.)

This is the first complete translation of the *Metalogicon*. 1,876 footnotes to 276 pages, most of them expressing the translator's often justified doubts about his understanding of the text, together with a liberal peppering of explanatory, square-bracketed words in the translation, combine to make it exasperating reading. The *original*, as is pointed out in the short introduction, is famous for its elegance of style.

IVO THOMAS

CHRISTIANITY AND SYMBOLISM. By F. W. Dillistone. (Collins; 21s.)

The subject of this book is one which is receiving a great deal of attention in the present day, and this is a valuable contribution to its investigation. Dr Dillistone writes well, and one of the chief merits of the book is the way in which he extends the area of discussion.

After an introductory chapter which is rather heavy going, and where he is not too successful in integrating the views of the several authors he discusses into his own rather rigid and artificial scheme of image, sign and symbol, the author warms to his subject and deals in turn with the symbolism of nature, time, persons, language and actions. Here he treats in a mastery way of the contribution of various cultures and of the distinctiveness of the Christian use of symbol, displaying a wide acquaintance both with the biblical data and with the cultural patterns of prehistory and of several classical civilizations, as well as an ability to present all this attractively.

This part of the book is followed by a final section dealing with the