

NOTICES

HUBERT NORTHCOTE, C.R., in *MAN, GOD AND PRAYER* (S.P.C.K., 9s. 6d.) has set out to provide a simpler book of introduction to prayer, a kind of preface to his larger and more detailed work *The Venture of Prayer*. He writes for Anglicans primarily, but working as he does in Sekhukhuniland he has an eye for the mission field and attempts to de-westernize the teaching to a certain extent. But, as we already know from his previous work, his sources are mainly Catholic mystical writings so that he does not fall into the mystical universalism which characterizes so much similar work today. His final chapter on *Contemplative Prayer* is eminently practical.

Two handsomely produced books both give the thought and prayer of earlier times in a truly modern garb: John Searle's metrical translations or adaptations of St Augustine, some of which are familiar to readers of *THE LIFE*, are now available in permanent form—*VERSES FROM ST AUGUSTINE or SPECIMENS FROM A RICH MINE* (Oxford University Press, 6s.). The author adds a preface to explain his method. Not only does he give us the spirit of some of St Augustine's pithiest sentences, but he also leads the way to a method of meditating on the treasures of that 'rich mine'. The Dean of York, Dr E. Milner White, finds himself of sufficient age to put forth a prayer-book of his own private devotions, many of which come from the Scriptures or the *Imitation* or similar works. But they are all assimilated by the Dean and made attractive and of use as a method of making earlier writings our own today. Here and there we find a rather one-sided view, as when he begins his prayer for Lent, 'Lord, let me fast most truly and profitably by feeding in prayer on thy Spirit'. But much of it could make suitable meditation also for a Catholic. (*MY GOD AND MY GLORY: S.P.C.K., 10s. 6d.*) It is a pleasure to find such excellent book production comparatively cheap; both books are delightful to handle and use.

When *THE FREEDOM OF DOUBT* by E.-A. Preyre (Harvill, 18s.) first appeared in the original French it received great praise from reviewers in *The Times Literary Supplement*, *Réforme*, etc., as the testimony of a man who had reached some sort of faith after twenty years of unflinching doubt. Without questioning the truth of this appraisal, one might well ask whether all this doubting was necessary; M. Preyre's book is subtitled 'Reflections of a Natural Sceptic', but the scepticism seems more properly attributable to French education à la Descartes than to nature.

FOR several years now, Paul Tournier has been in the van of the movement for 'personalist' medicine, a medicine in which the doctor not only seeks to analyse the causes of a disease but tries also to understand the *meaning* of the disease to the patient. A doctor, in Tournier's opinion, should not only prevent people from dying but also help them to live. In order to do this Tournier searches the Scriptures—so as to be more open towards the meaning of illness and death. The results of his searches are to be found in *A DOCTOR'S CASEBOOK IN THE LIGHT OF THE BIBLE* (S.C.M. Press, 16s.).

NIELS STENSON, the seventeenth-century Danish geologist and convert to the Faith, is attracting the devotion of Catholic scientists who wish to see him canonized. One of the conditions for canonization being *fama sanctitatis*, Gustav Scherz (who edited Stenson's letters) has written a short pamphlet to show that Stenson has constantly enjoyed this *fama sanctitatis*: *IM RUF DER HEILIGKEIT* (Herder, Freiburg).

EXTRACTS

THE Dominicans of the German Province are opening a Conference and Study House next door to their Provincial House of Studies—it is called Walberberger Institut. The Father Director, in a letter to the Editor, has outlined one of his courses which will be of special interest to English and American readers: 'My idea is that we are arranging here at Walberberg a course of lectures of about 10-14 days for English Catholics (or non-Catholics if they are interested in œcumenical work). This course of lectures is meant to give those attending an idea of the life of the Church in Western Germany. I am not thinking of one of the usual sort of rallies for "international understanding" at which, as experience shows, very little is achieved as regards the purpose of the meetings. No, the idea is to admit only English-speaking people and to give them introductory talks on Catholic life in Western Germany. Perhaps there will be many English Catholics who, as in past years, would like to spend their holidays in Western Germany. At the end of their holidays (or, better still, at the beginning) I should like to invite them to come to Walberberg in order to give them the opportunity to obtain first-hand knowledge of every aspect, so far as this is possible on such an occasion, of Catholic life in Western Germany. If I speak of the life of the Church in Germany then I mean it in a wide sense, so that one could include talks on the social question, on the Liturgy, cultural task of the Church among other topics. Walberberg being situated in the vicinity of Köln and Bonn and the industrial parts of Germany (the Ruhr region) with a very active