

except for some rather cumbrous sentences in the first volume. The other virtue of this series is its way of presenting the history of the church 'from the inside', thus avoiding those confusions which arise from judging the church solely as a performer in secular affairs, or solely from the behaviour of her leaders. The authors look at what the church has been and done in the light of what she truly is and sets out to be; and they keep in constant touch with those strata of church history whose full story has still to be written—popular piety and the way the ordinary Christian has viewed life—thus following a recent trend in the history of secular ideas which concentrates on the attitudes of ordinary people. Guillemain's turn of thought and turn of phrase is often original.

Guillemain deals particularly well with the fusion of the church and culture in the early middle ages, their divorce in the later, and the pros and cons incurred by the Church from her identification with Western Europe. Indeed by the nature of the subject his books become, as their title implies, histories not only of the church but of the whole age. He illustrates the (to modern eyes) amazing unity which the great men of the eleventh and twelfth centuries achieved between religion and life as a whole. He does well to antedate the 'schizophrenia' which set in in the late middle ages to the thirteenth century, when the 'new men' of the time were already becoming imbued with a purely human ideology. His picture of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is excellent, when he sketches the exuberance and excess which dominated every aspect of life from those ornate, dull altar-pieces which lord it over continental museums to the papalists and imperialists, who introduced a new schism between theory and practice; dangerous because soon people would be justified in saying that this schism was so deep that theory no longer mattered. But whether the fifteenth century was so intellectually 'disappointing' as he says, remains to be seen; a whole host of by no means unpromising authors of that time have not yet received the study they deserve. He mentions Nicholas of Cusa whose thought has sprung to light recently, and who was a key figure in attempting to reunite faith and knowledge in a single philosophy. But he lacked followers, and the story of the middle ages ends with a mass of uncertainties, about the church, about grace, about the rights of the state and the bases of science—and about the future.

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Notices

THE HIDDEN SPRINGS, by Renée Haynes (Hollis and Carter, 30s.) is a comprehensive discussion about every kind of 'psychic phenomenon', which brings them into relation with group behaviour in animals and with theories of

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human psychology. All these are linked by the concept of a psi-factor. Even those who have a constitutional dislike of grand syntheses will be fascinated.

LOVE OF CHRIST, edited by Lev Gillet (Mowbray, 3s.) is a short but valuable anthology from Christian writing of the first three centuries. LAMPS OF FIRE, edited by Juan Mascaró (Methuen, 21s.) ranges over all religions and all centuries with its three hundred extracts in verse and prose from 'spiritual' writing.

The Aquin Press has recently issued several useful reprints, well-produced at a reasonable price. From French come ST THOMAS AQUINAS AND HIS WORK, by A. M. Sertillanges O.P. (7s. 6d.), and three books by J. M. Perrin O.P., GOSPEL OF JOY (7s. 6d.), VIRGINITY (7s. 6d.) and LIVING WITH GOD (10s. 6d.). They also give us Vincent McNabb's FAITH AND PRAYER (8s. 6d.), the Oxford conferences originally published sixty years ago, and a classic of their kind—though this is one we are not nowadays much accustomed to.

Sheed and Ward re-issue Fr Alexander Jones' lively book on the way of understanding scripture, UNLESS SOME MAN SHOW ME, in a 6s. paperback reprint, and a section of Fr de Lubac's *Splendour of the Church* under the title of THE CATHOLIC AND HIS CHURCH, at 3s. 6d.

L.B.