

been recently discussed by Dr Ronan O'Rahilly (Catholic Medical Quarterly, April 1948, page 62). This operation was devised in 1935, was first performed in this country in 1940 and possessed an extensive literature well before the date of this edition's 'imprimatur'. It is suggested that in future editions it should be considered in relation to other apparently mutilating operations like those of vagotomy for peptic ulceration and lumbar and peripheral sympathectomy, in all of which, including leucotomy itself, healthy nervous tissue is destroyed in order to eradicate or ameliorate an abnormal function. It would be useful to distinguish the ethics of such 'mutilating' operations from that of sterilisation; in the present edition of this book mutilation as such is mentioned only in a footnote on page 100 which appears to beg the question at issue.

The general usefulness of this book remains; but, as the relative antiquity of most of the literary references confirm, a more radical revision of the text seems indicated in the next edition.

SEYMOUR SPENCER.

A HISTORY OF THE CHURCH, Vols. I and II. By Philip Hughes. New revised edition. (Sheed and Ward; 21s. and 25s.)

It was indeed a happy chance that gave Father Hughes the opportunity of revising and correcting the first two volumes of his Church History, for it means that an indispensable and improved instrument of study is once again available to students.

Before Fr Hughes published his first volume some fourteen years ago, there was no English text-book written by a Catholic worthy to be compared with the many non-Catholic church histories in circulation. By the time Fr Hughes's second volume was published it was clear that he had set up a new standard of historical writing for English Catholics. His work is marked by its scientific competence not only in matters of fact but in the more difficult matters of emphasis and perspective. The attention given to the intellectual movements in the Church was a new and welcome feature. We have come to take for granted his gift for rapid and vivid narrative, for the swift delineation of character, for the apt epithet, and for the serene appraisal of ecclesiastical controversies and scandals. Coupled with its high scientific quality, these things go to make the whole work one of which we can be proud and for which we should be grateful.

The corrections have been carefully done, and in just those places where they were most needed, e.g. in the account of the Photian 'Schism', and in the affairs of the Eastern Church generally. The author draws attention to only one change in the first and to twelve in the second volume but a detailed examination of both editions reveals a dozen other touches, such as the cleaning up of pronouns, or the addition of a word, which all go to make the narrative more lucid and convincing. Unfortunately there is a new, if small, crop

of printers' errors. Both volumes are embellished (the right word, for once) with reproductions of ancient Christian pictures. The type black, thick and clear is preferable, we think, to the old, though we have our doubts about the startling new orange binding. The bibliographies, formerly a little thin, have been added to and brought up to date, and there is constant reference to the great *Histoire de l'Eglise* of Fliche and Martin, to the great benefit of those who read both works. The indexes have been improved and so have the maps. We regret the disappearance of the synchronised time-charts—so useful if one had to write an article!

One reviewer has said that 'of course', Fr Hughes 'is our foremost English ecclesiastical historian'. We agree, and we hope many generations of Catholics will avail themselves of the fruits of his work.

J. D. CRICHTON.

THE DARK KNOWLEDGE OF GOD. By Charles Journet, translated by James F. Anderson. (Sheed and Ward; 7s. 6d.)

This excellent little book provides a trustworthy guide through the forest of modern 'mystical' writing. For the most part M. Journet follows the teaching of St Thomas and the first half of the work contains an interesting account of our knowledge of God seen in the light of St Thomas's theory of analogy. This is followed by what is perhaps the best part of the book: an analysis of the 'superanalogy' of faith. The chapter on 'the knowledge that is nescience' touches on subjects which are perhaps more controversial.

It is important in reading this work to give close attention to the notes appended to each chapter, as they serve to remove certain ambiguities in the text itself, as well as presenting a great deal of information drawn from works which are not easily obtained in this country.

IAN HISLOP, O.P.

A SHORT HISTORY OF RELIGIONS. By E. E. Kellett. (Gollancz; 7s. 6d.)

RELIGION. By Nathaniel Micklem. (Home University Library, Oxford; 5s.)

LA RELIGION ROMAINE. Par Maurice David. (Editions Catholicité, Lille.)

It cannot be said that Mr Kellett's account of the history of religions is satisfactory. In spite of the many interesting interpretations he advances and the number of facts he has assembled his treatment of the subject is superficial. The first chapter on 'Religion: its nature and origin' emphasises too strongly the divorce between religion and morality, and while none would deny the tension found in historical religion between priest and prophet, institutionalism and personal approach it is well not to press the distinction too far lest it become an empty frame into which the