

ain collects the odd bronze medal—in the strangest events.

The sort of method Dr Folliet has chosen can only offer us general information. For example the chapter on the spirituality of contemporary catholicism does no more than mention various modern saints and trends. As I have indicated, this level of mentioning is so remote that when it is put to the test in the final chapter one feels that the denunciations are getting nowhere near the problem. You can't talk very meaningfully *in* such abstractions; you can talk *about* them but in that case you would be using one of them as a way into a problem. Religious sociologists must obviously resist the temptation to operate on this level, since there just isn't room for the jargon it manufactures.

Most of us are ill-informed about Catholics in other countries and this book for all its unwieldiness gives a fair amount of such information. Dr Folliet goes out of his way to be fair all round, sometimes enigmatically—I am still trying to work out what he meant by saying: 'Salazar is no Franco'.

CHARLES BOXER

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IN PARABLES, by Franz M. Moschner; B. Herder Book Company, 36s.

WITNESSES OF THE GOSPEL, by Henry Paneel; B. Herder Book Company, 28s.

The former is a book of meditations, based on, but not tied down to, our Lord's parables. The author explicitly prefers to make no distinction between the kingdom of heaven and the Church. It is the kingdom as present in particular Christians that is the first subject of his meditations, and he makes legitimate use of the theme 'The kingdom of God is within you' to relate the teaching of the parables to the spiritual life of the individual soul. In the twenty-six parables dealt with, the thought is clear but conventional. The translation (from the German) is adequate, apart from occasional lapses into religious jargon ('*espousal*' for '*marriage*', etc.).

Rational meditations on scripture are one thing, but pious re-casting of gospel stories is quite another. The second book gives us journalistic accounts of familiar episodes, reported to us by one of the characters present on each occasion. For example, 'The Raising of Lazarus, by Martha his Sister' is the title of one episode. The effect is not so much to give us a deeper understanding of the gospel message itself, as to deflect our attention to the imaginatively obtrusive journalism of the book's author. With the advance of the biblical and liturgical revival, surely the time has come for us to refuse any longer to be diverted from the very source of Christ's message by sloppy and sterile substitutes.

ROBERT SHARP O.P.