

allowed to over-ride the aim of systematic exposition, and in consequence it is not an easy book to find one's way about. This defect is greatly aggravated by the page-headings which often seem to be intended as humorous and are generally quite uninformative.

One wants to know, of course, what the author of any such book thinks about certain major topics, the nature of sacramental causality in the first place. Fr Leeming favours the older medieval theory that the immediate effect of the sacraments is character or quasi-character rather than sanctifying grace. In regard to the manner of causality he would like to get rid of the terminologies 'physical' and 'intentional', and while he offers nothing in their place, makes this interesting remark: 'In both these systems . . . there is the fundamental conviction that a symbolism can do nothing except signify. . . . Is it not possible to conceive that God's symbolism may produce an effect which is more than symbolic? The sacraments are images of the effect, and cause the effect because they are images of it instituted by God and caused by God.' The attribution of that fundamental conviction to physicalists cannot go unremarked, for such a conviction is a principal target for attack by St Thomas and it would indeed be a telling criticism of any school of his followers if it could be substantiated that their attempts at interpretation or development presupposed it. But it is not clear that substantiation is forthcoming, and indeed the second part of the quotation, requiring an effect 'more than symbolic' and deriving this from divine employment of divinely instituted signs, seems both a correct summary of St Thomas's thought and to prompt the language of physicalism.

In the chapters on Intention Fr Leeming proceeds with extreme caution and hardly indicates his preferences in disputes that are of great intricacy. The effort to keep questions about the nature of intention distinct from those about presumption of intention is of course wholly commendable and it would be perhaps impossible to divide the relevant material quite satisfactorily between the two without being repetitive.

The publishers seem to expect that the non-professional public will chiefly use this book. One rather doubts that. On the other hand the professional public of students and teachers of theology certainly have in it a very useful tool for preliminary investigations. That it is likely to be improved upon in use is no detraction from the merits of its original provider.

IVO THOMAS, O.P.

HELPS AND HINDRANCES TO PERFECTION. By Thomas J. Higgins, S.J.
(Bruce Publishing Company; \$4.50.)

The title of this book, its sickly dust-jacket, the over-blown descrip-

tion of its aims, and the excessively high price, are enough to deter most readers from giving it a second thought. Yet it is well worth reading. Every page of its twelve essays on such diverse subjects as patience, friendship, boredom, pleasure, fear, and work, gives ample proof of the author's expert and deep knowledge of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church and of Holy Scripture. The selection of subject-matter will not please everyone, but it is only fair to say that many of the topics that greatly exercise the interest of the faithful are discussed in an earlier work. There are a number of statements that arrest attention and invite challenge, but the author's subsequent explanation of what he means is for the most part perfectly acceptable. In the essay on *Fear*, however, he goes completely astray on one important point. Having described a situation illustrating what he calls an unreal, insubstantial and imaginary fear, he prescribes by way of cure a large dose of common sense and will-power. The example given is, in fact, a clear case of psychic disorder common enough in the daily practice of the psycho-therapist. Moreover, the author's assertion that fear is first and foremost a moral problem involving cowardice, and only secondarily a psychic problem, is the very reverse of the truth. This blindness to the fundamental obstacle to perfection in the lives of many of the faithful considerably lessens the value of this book for just those people who are so much in need of help.

MURDOCH SCOTT, O.P.

OUR FAITH. By The Rt Rev. John C. Heenan. (Nelson; 12s. 6d.)

Bishop Heenan's book is intended primarily for school leavers: it is the sort of book a wise parent will buy for his son about his fourteenth birthday, the sort of book a wise teacher will use in the leavers' class and the sort of book a wise leader of youth groups will have handy for use and reference. It is more than a book of instruction in the faith; there are several admirable ones already on the market. It is an illustrated guide to the meaning of life and the Catholic Church, and in addition to directing the reader's steps it stimulates him to walk. Working inwards from the outside we first notice the remarkably attractive format: the dust-cover is beautifully adorned with fine reproductions of stained glass windows, the boards themselves are handsomely covered in white vellum paper with the title inscribed in red and gold, the text is excellently printed on graceful heavy paper and the thirty-two magnificent illustrations are an education in themselves. The photographs, especially the close-ups, are particularly fine. It is then such a shock to discover the moderate price—12s. 6d.—that other praise is almost drowned in admiration for the man who could persuade publishers to do all this for so little.