

be praised. Certain criticisms can of course be made. The author owes a great deal to Daniélou, Bouyer, and other modern writers. His thought may not be free from current exaggerations. That history in any true sense ends with revelation would have surprised an earlier generation. That revelation itself consists in God's action rather than his disclosure of truth is a recent idea that needs to be readjusted. For example, in John 1, 1-2, no reference is seen to the eternal relationship of the Word to the Father, but only to his action in regard to man. Père Boismard, O.P., is quoted in support. A reference to the latter's Prologue de St-Jean hardly justifies the claim. However, in spite of a certain lack of balance, there is so much that is enlightening in the book, that it ought to be made available, at least indirectly, for those who cannot read the French version or the Italian original.

JOHN HIGGENS, O.S.B.

LE SILENCE À L'OMBRE DE LA PAROLE. By Hélène Lubienska da Lenval. ('Bible et vie chrétienne', Casterman, Tournai, Belgium; n.p.)

The author has been taught by others to know and to love silence as a means to living in God's presence. Silence for her is not absence of words, for she sees that muteness is opposed to it as much as noisiness. Being silent is the condition of any soul that would be a Christ-bearer—a bearer of the Word of God. A certain exterior condition is needed for its practice by a learner, but when fully understood and lived with love it appears as 'the place where the meeting of the soul with God takes place' (p. 46). That is why it is misunderstood and feared by the world—the way organized round the Self. Silence can be understood and loved only by those whose life is centred on God, by those who have become for the most part an echo and a mirror. Only then is it seen that the meaning of silence is prayerfulness, heeding the things of God, waiting on God. This true significance of silence is revealed in the school of silence—in liturgy, which is the Christian's participation in the prayer of Christ. Liturgy is the sensible outward manifestation of Christ's prayer who became for our sake a living prayer in the Eucharist. Silence is nothing else than God speaking. The business of man is to remove all that prevents him from taking part in the dialogue to which he is invited. But this dialogue is not basically a conversation between our Self and God—that would be interior gossip, the greatest enemy of silence and prayer. It is rather God speaking to God, the Word of God living through faith in our heart blessing and praising the Father. Yet silence is not something for adults only. In fact, one of the greatest merits of this lovely simple book is to show its place and its importance in the life of children. A child is by nature a contemplative—one whose approach to the world is intuitive, one whose reaction to it is expressed by an attitude or gestures, the symbols of will. All those interested

in developing the natural contemplative condition of the soul (whether in children or in adults) as a seed destined to grow up into the grace-nourished contemplative attitude can find here both inspiration and practical guidance. 'If deliverance thou wouldst have from the Lord, in silence await it' (Lam. 3, 26).

C.V.

CHRIST AND THE CAESARS. By Ethelbert Stauffer. (S.C.M. Press; 18s.)

This is the application of numismatics to the study of history. The sixteen studies together form a cross-section history of the first three Christian centuries, during which the Church and the Empire were in uneasy and unsettled relationship, *via* Domitian's attack, the 'counter-attack' of Revelation, the century of 'static' warfare that followed, and the final battle that ended with the Edict of Milan. Professor Stauffer's style is at times direct, at times difficult; but the narrative is consistently gripping, and some of the essays—notably that on the tribute money and that on Julius Caesar's policy of conciliation—are memorable.

Many of the seventeen beautiful plates are from contemporary coins or medallions. The famous medal of Constantius Chlorus, struck at the London Mint, is the frontispiece. There will be wide debate among his readers about several of his interpretations of the Scriptural texts against their background, but nothing but gratitude for the lively studies of the Emperors, personified in their fiscal and sculptured memorials.

A. C. F. BEALES

NOS SENS ET DIEU. (Les Études Carmélitaines 1954, Desclée de Brouwer, Bruges-Paris; n.p.)

Paul Claudel's essay 'La sensation du divin' is the starting point for nine other essayists, who, from various points of view, try to answer the question: 'Do our senses lead us to God—and how?' There is without doubt a problem here. It is true that the whole universe is an echo of the Word of God, a creaturely answer to the call of the Eternal. At the same time we know that 'Non potest . . . aliqua forma creata esse similitudo repraesentans . . . Dei essentiam' (S.T. I, 12, 2c). This is one reason why one may talk of 'la dialectique du monde sensible', a sense of opposition of the sensible to the spiritual. The psychologist, the student of the history of religions, the art critic and others help us each in their way to rise beyond the initial tension, but it is significant that only theologically are we offered satisfactory solutions of it in this stimulating collection; for only in theological perspective is man seen as the knot tying together the universe, a microcosm in the borderland between the spiritual and the material (p. 156). The human senses are the means designed by providence for the salvation of the physical