

This book should introduce a truer, purer conception of the spirit and message of St Francis to a wider reading public than it has hitherto reached.

P.C.C.

GEORGE FOX AND THE QUAKERS. By Henry Van Etten. Translated from the French and revised by E. Kelvin Osborn. (Longmans; 6s. *Men of Wisdom Series.*)

'I was glad that I was commanded to turn people to that inward light. . . . The Lord taught me to be faithful in all things, and to act faithfully two ways, viz. inwardly to God and outwardly to man, and to keep "yea" and "nay" in all things. . . . Then you will come to walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in everyone; whereby then ye may be a blessing, and make the witness of God in them to bless you.'

These words were written by George Fox, the founder of the religious movement called the Society of Friends or Quakers, and are quoted among other extracts from his journal and letters in this enterprising little book. Its 192 pages include many illustrations, an account of William Penn and the Quakers in America, some prominent Quakers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Quakerism in the modern world and an anthology of Quaker writings. There is also a list of books for further reading and a chronology of events mentioned in the text.

In the first chapter there is a concise and vivid account of the times leading up to the birth of George Fox and his great mission during which his followers 'came to be numbered in tens of thousands'. . . . 'George Fox never thought he was founding a new church or sect; he was convinced that he had rediscovered a fundamental truth and that he preached "the truth". It must be remembered that he did not use the word "truth" in any exclusive sense, and that he never believed himself infallible.'

For the reader who is not himself a Friend, this first chapter is the most helpful. A large part of the book consists of a somewhat confused account of the events in George Fox's life with extracts from his journal, taking him in and out of prison and covering many miles of travel. The continuity of the narrative is broken by dissertations on various aspects of Quaker belief. The short extracts included in the anthology of Quaker writings, emphasizing their subjective attitude towards religious questions and their personal interpretation of the gospels, could well be misunderstood by readers outside the Society. The book would be improved if the illustrations were placed together in a separate section and not inserted at random all through the text. It is a pity that there is no index.

Mr Henry Van Etten was a prominent member of the Paris yearly meeting before he went to live in the United States. Messrs Longmans have found an able translator in Mr Osborn who, in revising the text for English readers, has taken the opportunity of correcting the historical inaccuracies in the French edition.

As one who was born and brought up in a Quaker family, I have met people who have expressed surprise that a Quaker could become a Catholic. In reading this book, and in particular the extracts from George Fox's writings in which he states the simple fundamentals of Quaker Christianity, I see again how the deep spiritual faith of quakerism can be wholly absorbed into the Catholic life of the sacraments.

CATHARINE C. EPPSTEIN

I BELIEVE. By Jean Mouroux. (Geoffrey Chapman; 10s. 6d.)

Living faith implies commitment to a personal God, a loving affirmation and a personal response to God's inner witness; it is the merit of this book that it explores this personal structure of faith. Canon Mouroux has not neglected classical sources of a theology of faith, but the emphasis is new; familiar passages in St Thomas are rediscovered with a vital stress on the believer's relation to God. It is a valuable approach, drawing more on the concrete reality of the life of faith than is customary, setting the elements of belief which we derive from more analytic accounts in their living context of believing. Even the truths to which we assent are of secondary importance to God, the first truth, to whose word our assent is given; the relation to God is primary.

Seeing belief in terms of this relation, the author shows that it is the response to a divine call. Springing from an impulse under grace to give oneself to God by a loving assent, it should lead to a full realization of personality in Christ. Yet, because it is a 'quest for an absent God', he is reached in obscurity; we believe what we do not see, because in the object of our love we have the presence of God as witness. Credibility then cannot be merely a matter of what can and ought to be believed in the abstract. The signs of the presence of God will be meaningless to the unbeliever until they are seen as personal invitations, and it is the openness and self-giving of the believer's response, an engagement of mind and will with their highest object, which makes the life of faith an enrichment and maturing of the human personality. Full Christian life should be a growth towards wholeness under the influence of the Spirit, bringing with it an increasing penetration into the divine mysteries. In the first stages of contemplative prayer the reality of faith is already grasped beyond the imperfect ideas by which we strive to represent it, and the soul gradually enters into communion with God on a level which is no longer notional. At the summit of its