

which evidently for the most part he makes his own. Yet he too readily cites a variety of Liberal writers, with whom in fact he disagrees, rather than decides a question himself. He quotes, for instance, Dr Burkitt, who denies that John 1, 1, introduces any distinction in the Godhead and holds it to be strictly parallel to Gen. 1, 26, where 'the one only God produces the creation by consulting himself'. Mr Lee does not share this opinion; but is it of such weight that he need mention it?

Hardly enough is made of the institutional element in St John, which, as von Hügel is quoted as saying, underlies the entire work. The Christian community and the two great sacraments are not neglected, any more than Christ's promise of the Paraclete; but there seems to be no discussion of John 20, 23, of the sacramental forgiveness of sins, of Confirmation, or of the pastoral charge to St Peter. The Parousia is simply identified with the coming of the Paraclete, while Christ's second coming at the End is merely the 'crude eschatology' of earlier Christian preaching. The author has a few other surprising opinions; yet on the whole he has written a work in which well-instructed Catholics could find profit. As vicar of an industrial parish he has also set an example of persevering study and literary creation which many priests might take to heart.

JOHN HIGGENS, O.S.B.

DOES GOD MATTER FOR ME? By C. C. Martindale, S.J. (Rich and Cowan; 6s.)

It would be as impertinent to review Father Martindale as it would be otiose to welcome him, but even a reprint of his work cannot go ungreeted. In 1951 English readers are perhaps more interested in systematic theology than they were in 1937 when this book first appeared. The theology however must be intelligible and bear some relationship to the ordinary things of everyday life. In a tightly packed little book Father Martindale shows what the *fact* of God means for man. When he has outlined his theological principles he fills in the outlines, not only with snippets from Mrs Humphrey Ward, but with his own experiences in an aeroplane or in New Zealand—the picture is not only coloured: it is 'a movie'. Few theological writers can fascinate like Father Martindale.

A.R.

THE LITTLE BOOK OF THE CONTEMPLATION OF CHRIST. Newly translated by a Religious of C.S.M.V. (Mowbray; 4s. 6d.)

This classic was originally attributed to St Augustine, but was in fact a work of the thirteenth or fourteenth century, derived from the *Confessio Theologica* of John of Fécamp (†1078). But whoever the

author may have been he had certainly tasted of the authentic spring of the Christian's knowledge and love of God. It reveals the objective spirituality of the one who seeks God through Christ and is yet not unaware of the great happiness and the wholeness which comes from this desire for a union with God. In other words, it is untouched with post-reformation trends in spirituality which have led us to our modern self-conscious search for the 'disinterested' love of God. The translator has done his work well and the result is neither too archaic nor slickly modern.

C.P.

ANNE-ELISABETH SETON. Une fille américaine de Monsieur Vincent.

By Jeanne Danemarie. (Editions Spes; Paris.)

This book is intended to popularise the life and work of one of the greatest personalities of the last century, too little known in Europe. It traces the life of Elisabeth from childhood, through trials of married life and widowhood to her conversion, vocation and the many persecutions which followed, in a series of vivid pictures written most attractively. As the Superior General of the Sisters of Charity, Father Slattery, points out in his valuable preface, people of all ages, in all states of life have much to learn from this biography. Her work has prospered and there are now ten thousand Sisters of Charity in America working chiefly amongst the poor and suffering.

X.Y.

WHAT IS CONTEMPLATION; By Thomas Merton, O.C.R. (Paternoster Series 7; Burns Oates; 1s. 6d.)

Thomas Merton has established himself in the forefront of modern spiritual writers. This fact, coupled with the subject-matter of the pamphlet, ought to ensure for it a wide circulation. It is a satisfying little book in so far as anything so slight can be satisfying: sound teaching set down with a calmness and understanding that makes more appeal on that very account. What better tribute can one pay to any book than to say that it is easy to read and well worth reading?

A.D.

VIVRE DIEU. By Régis Gerest, O.P. (Editions de Cerf; pp. 310.)

This little book deals with our life as Christians, considered in its essential element, 'to love God' by the practice of the theological virtues. For those who are sufficiently well instructed, it should prove invaluable as a help to mental prayer; the division into numbered sections and short numbered paragraphs seems to make it particularly suitable for this purpose, or better still, perhaps, for meditative reading. The Holy Scriptures, St Thomas, together with St Teresa of Avila and St John of the Cross are frequently quoted, and the author's well merited reputation as a spiritual writer is a sure guarantee of the soundness of his doctrine.

A.F.