

Of the remaining papers, the marvels related of thirteenth-century Christina of St Trond, turn out to rest entirely on a credulous biography written forty years after the alleged events. Marie Julie Jahenny (who died in 1941) and claimed to exhibit stigmatization and an inedia of over five years, had powerful medical support, but the author considers her 'pathological rather than supernatural'. At least three others were certainly psychotics. The attractive Christina of the romantic 'Peter and Christina' idyll was only too obviously a chronic hysteric subject to long episodes of definite insanity; it remains a moot point whether genuine poltergeist phenomena were interwoven in her experiences. A very interesting group of pious women of the cloister combined remarkable wisdom in practical affairs with possibly genuine abnormal physical phenomena, and an even more extraordinary gift for weaving egotistical fantasies, obviously as an escape from severe mental tension. Whether the escape-mechanism took the form of a dictated autobiography or of a trance with revelations, seems largely accidental. A remarkable example was Maria Coronel de Agreda, Franciscan nun and valued friend and correspondent of Philip IV of Spain. She not only could be puffed about like a feather, but claimed to visit and convert natives in Mexico in a state of bilocation. (Had Teresa Higginson read her story?) Her work 'The Mystical City of God' which, she alleged, had received unique proofs of divine approval, 'must', says Father Thurston with unwonted warmth, 'awaken the violent protest of every student who possesses even the rudiments of historic training.'

The final paper on the 'False Visionaries of Lourdes' (based on Père Cros' 'Histoire de Notre Dame de Lourdes') is well worthy of attention. It has always astonished me that the true facts about the Soubirous family, and about the disconcerting flood of pseudo-miracles and bogus visions which followed rapidly on the apparitions to Bernadette, are so often either ignored or distorted in histories of Lourdes. As Father Thurston shows, much injustice has been done to the officials who acted sensibly and from the highest motives in closing the Grotto. 'The incident', he points out, 'in the Providence of God has only served to ensure the triumph of a true divine communication over a mass of hysterical counterfeits.' The capacity for distinguishing between divine communications and counterfeits is still required; it should be substantially helped by this fascinating book.

LETTITIA FAIRFIELD

THE COLOURED QUARTER. By M. P. Banton. (Jonathan Cape; 21s.)

The recent influx of coloured colonials into England has aroused a great deal of controversy and criticism. Yet of the millions who have

voiced their opinions, very few people in this country are qualified, by knowledge or experience, to do so. The average Englishman has no more than a hazy idea of the geographical position of the colonies whence the immigrants came. Worse still, he knows nothing of their history nor of their present conditions. Dr Banton is to be commended for an intensive research which has led him to an intelligent understanding of the problems of our coloured visitors, and also for having produced this book. It should be widely read if only to silence much stupid and misdirected discussion. He has concentrated on the East End of London but his findings are equally applicable to coloured groups anywhere in Great Britain.

On the other hand this book has one defect which, we think, considerably reduces its usefulness. It does not begin at the beginning. English people will never understand the problem of this colonial migration until they have some knowledge of its historical background. Even a short account would have greatly increased the value of this book.

For instance, England began to take charge of West Indian islands over three hundred years ago. Since then British settlers and merchants at home have made fortunes out of them, while doing nothing for the welfare of the native people. Added to that is the record of neglect, and even indifference, on the part of official administration. So now, unable to make a decent living in their own country, many West Indians are turning to the Mother Country. Not as foreigners seeking alms, but as loyal British subjects seeking work. They ask not for sympathy, but for justice.

On one other major point we cannot agree with the author's opinion. Dr Banton begins Chapter VIII by asserting that colour prejudice among English people is 'mild' and 'superficial'. If that is so, need this book have been written? There are in this country tens of thousands of Irish and Poles, who are not, or were not when they arrived, British subjects. Do we hear of an Irish or a Polish 'problem'? Would there have been any criticism if Jamaicans or Nigerians had been born with white skins? The accent is undoubtedly on 'colour', and therein lies a grave injustice which should be honestly faced.

DENIS FITZGERALD, O.P.

SEELE UND GEIST. Ein Aufbau der Psychologie. Von Alexander Willwoll, s.J. (Freiburg, Herder; 12 DM)

This is a very pleasant, well-informed and eclectic account of psychology from a Neoscholastic standpoint, although it is not precisely a book for a philosopher. It is not a philosopher's book, because it is not based on a sufficiently explicit metaphysic and does not enter