

*danger lies in success. Provided that as mature religious we have the humility to keep on struggling at what looks to us very like the beginning of religious life, there is no doubt that we are making progress and very great progress indeed.*' (p. 19.)

All these quotations are taken from the first chapter. Those who whom this book is intended will need no further encouragement to buy it and finish it for themselves. Fr Kelly has addressed himself primarily to active religious who are also priests, but almost everything he has to say can be applied to all religious without exception. It can also be made their own by all those lay-folk who are eager to grow in the love of God, and who are humble enough to accept and bow to the fact that the religious life must *always* remain the 'school of perfection and of the Lord's service'. But enrolled there as day-scholars, as all God's children must needs be, this book will be their *vade mecum*, a sure and safe guide leading them even to the end of the journey and the topmost peaks of the mountain and the hill. To which may God, in his loving-kindness, bring each one of us.

S. M. ALBERT, O.P.

ESQUISSES DU MYSTERE DE L'EGLISE. By Yves M.-J. Congar, O.P. Cerf; Collection Unam Sanctam 8; n.p.)

Since this is a re-edition of a book first published in 1940, a reviewer may be content with some general remarks, entirely of welcome. There is this difference, that the original two appendical chapters written for the Möhler centenary in 1938 have been replaced by a more recent study: *Le Saint-Esprit et le Corps apostolique, réalisateurs de l'œuvre du Christ*. The other four essays are entitled: *L'Eglise et son unité, L'idée de l'Eglise chez saint-Thomas d'Aquin, Le Corps Mystique du Christ, Vie de l'Eglise et conscience de la Catholicité*. All were written for different purposes in the first place but combine excellently in a single volume, in which the Thomist idea of the Church can be taken as basic. No one well acquainted with the *Ila* and *Illa Pars* of the *Summa* will find anything materially new here; the originality consists in re-thinking St Thomas's treatment of the Return to God as an ecclesiology. To do so, of course, to escape from that welter of apologetic treatises that has been assembled in the last four hundred years to meet special needs of this and that day, and which confronts the dismayed student in so many text-books. These treatises have their place, indeed, but it is not usually the place of the occasional to structuralise the permanent, and since the Church is as permanent as any visible feature of Christianity—*quia haec Ecclesia incoepit a tempore Abael et durabit usque ad finem seculi*, in the words of St Thomas,—therefore a properly proportioned theology of the Church must be most closely linked to the fundamental and essential feature of Christian life. Père Congar's

readers, may they be many, will at the start wonder where is the church of their weekly experience, the church of rubrics, of pre-nuptial enquiries, of so many and sometimes so complicated disciplinary laws, but they will find it in the end, and after seeing the foundations properly laid, will understand its purpose and necessity better.

For ourselves it is many years since we have read anything at all so invigorating on this subject, and never anything that goes deeper and preserves so thoroughly a Thomist course of statement.

IVO THOMAS, O.P.

LE CANTIQUE DES CANTIQUES. Nouvelle traduction par André Chouraqui; introduction et notes du R.P. Lucie-Marie de St Joseph, o.c.d. (Desclée de Brouwer; n.p.)

It was a good idea of the publishers' to produce in such an attractive format André Chouraqui's French translation of the Song of Songs. There is no better version than this, for it effects the rare achievement of uniting fidelity and poetry, and here even poetry is reached through fidelity. Evidently such a union presupposes a knowledge of Hebrew and of French capable of fusing the genius proper to each language at the source. It demands also an understanding of the mystery of Israel and of her divine election. Some of the obscurities of the French translation are in fact the obscurities of the Hebrew. The reader cannot regret these difficult passages, particularly as the editors have happily added some judicious notes from the pen of Père Robert de la Vierge, o.c.d., as a discreet appendix to the volume, to elucidate some of the more difficult expressions in the text. In this way the text itself loses nothing of its poetic rhythm and its music. As to the Introduction by Père Lucien-Marie de St Joseph, it must be admitted that these learned pages written by so erudite an exegete bring great refreshment. For they help the reader to discover the meaning of the inspired book according to the intention of the Spirit who has thus enriched the treasures of Israel, an intention which is revealed in the hearts of those who return to and still live deeply in spirit the mysterious life of Israel, the Church, the Spouse of Christ.

JEAN DE LA CROIX KAELIN, O.P.

THE WORD. A Meditation on the Prologue to St John's Gospel. By Adrienne von Speyr. (Collins; 10s. 6d.)

Here is a book which must have been very difficult to translate. I say this not so much because the book often makes turgid reading, but rather to point to the fundamental obstacle to understanding which the reader will have to contend with right from the start, the obstacle that this is a private work. We are given a meditation on the prologue to St John's Gospel, as the title-page claims, but it is an unedited meditation recollected with what