

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

spiritual development, as St John of the Cross describes it, the soul is so transformed as to be a kind of living relation to God, imaging the intimate life of the Trinity most perfectly in its being for another. After this ascent to the heights, the author turns in the final section of the book to Christian witness and the role of the Church. He sees the Christian wholly given to God as a living testimony, realizing the presence of God through the grace of confirmation, the sacrament of witness. As a personal act, faith will find its perfection in the union of believers in the mystical body, the believer 'rooted and founded in charity' comprehending the mystery of Christ 'with all the saints'.

This is a very good book, and, although its size prevents its author from entering deeply into all the aspects of belief, sufficient have been treated to show the coherence and penetration of his thought. At times the translation is obscure, and the references given are often inaccurate, or misleading. It would have been useful to refer to works by Dalbiez, Guilton and Marcel in their English editions.

OSMUND LEWRY, O.P.

THE FAITH EXPLAINED. By Leo Trese. (Geoffrey Chapman; 27s. 6d.)

This is such a good book, and will do such an enormous amount of good, that it would be wrong to evade the duty of suggesting a few small improvements.

The purpose of the book is to explain the catechism at great length—564 pages. It is a filling-in of the catechism such as a priest does when instructing a convert or explaining or illustrating in the five-minute sermon on a Sunday morning. For both these purposes in fact it will be most useful.

American in its freshness and its modern-day presentation, it abounds in practical everyday analogies and illustrations which help to link the mind of the man-in-the-street with the age-old formularies of the faith. Sometimes, however, the analogy is unfortunate and one feels that it would have been better to leave the stock examples alone instead of trying to improve on them. In the presentation of the doctrine of the Trinity, for instance, a comparison based on the idea, 'if I were twins', is worse than useless: a half-educated person with vague ideas of split personality (and that means a large number of readers) is sure to take away the wrong idea, in spite of the author's warning that comparisons always limp.

Reference to limbo as most probably an unending state of natural happiness, even perhaps a kind of ecstasy, is comforting, but it should be made a little clearer that this is not the positive teaching of the Church. On the other side the statement that the common teaching on the guardian angels is not *de fide*, while technically defensible is, for practical purposes, untrue. That original sin is not a blot on the soul is