

perfection. The first dialogue deals with the precept of love, and the disciple opens it by stating that, if the desire to be perfect were perfection, he would be most perfect in every kind of virtue, because he had spent all his life in good desires and intentions. Here is the common ground: but, whereas it is the exception rather than the rule for us to meet a disciple pursuing, with the same or progressive standards of integrity, the counsels of perfection until the end, here we are gripped by the possibilities of the way for those who will not give in. There is sound reading in Fray John's approach to the four entrances to the kingdom (through the passage of amendment of life), humility, self-abnegation, suffering, and the passion and death of Christ. The master takes the disciple through the inescapable paths to perfection, using simple language and simple example; a soul who wishes to find *all* must leave *all*: sound doctrine set out in the first chapters. And we are taken through to the end, where the disciple finds himself in the kingdom of God while still in the flesh, as if he had said he had so arranged the affairs of his kingdom that, although he had many cares and obligations, they did not take his attention and intention from God, who was always in his soul. A solidly helpful book.

K. J. BARTLETT

*EVE AND MARY.* By Peter Thomas Dehau, O.P. (Herder; 30s.)

Deeply Thomistic and highly original, this long meditation on our Lady, quaintly expressed, indifferently translated, scintillates with memorable flashes of insight. Its theme is annunciation—angels' visits, decisive and crucial, linking the chapters of the story of heaven and earth.

The fallen angel brings death to Eve, and through her to all; the angel Gabriel brings life to Mary, and through her to all. The meaning, implication, lessons, of this parallel are brought out and developed. Other annunciations, including the temptation of Christ by Satan and the (non-angelic) annunciation of sorrow to Mary at the first dolour are considered, but the Eve-Mary parallel is the main theme and makes the book almost a necessity for those who seek an adequate understanding of this great patristic principle. But the book is a theological meditation rather than a thesis. Casual, conversational, sometimes rambling presentation of a hundred and one reflections, all connected with the theme, gives originality and character to what might have been a mere didactic treatment of a well-worn subject.

The place of women in the divine economy is repeatedly stressed and may be thought by some readers to be too heavily traditional and even unimaginative.

On page 141 there seems to be a printer's error (Daniel-David?), and perhaps 'salutary tears' on page 134 should be 'salutary fears'.

G. M. CORR, O.S.M.

MARTYRS: From St Stephen to John Tung. By Donald Attwater. (Sheed and Ward; 16s.)

This book consists of fifty-eight accounts (varying in length from two to nine pages) of the sufferings of the martyrs, together with a short introduction and extracts from St Cyprian's *Exhortation to Martyrdom*. It is, as the author claims, a representative selection, both in time and place—a witness to the catholicity of the Church. Half of them are from pre-Reformation times, twenty of these being from the first four centuries; the other twenty-nine include eleven Reformation martyrs in England, Wales or Scotland, missionary martyrs from all quarters of the globe, and finally three victims of the persecutions of recent years. There are well-known saints such as Lawrence, Alban and Thomas of Canterbury, and unknowns like Saints Jonan and Berikjesu (martyred in Persia, 327), and Blessed Gomidas Keumurgian (Constantinople, 1707).

These accounts are both scholarly and readable; many of them are vivid and moving. But the author concentrates on the acts of martyrdom, sketching the historical background very briefly, and in consequence there is a certain sameness about them, for all their circumstantial variety. This is not a book to read straight through. Nor on the other hand is it a book of reference, like Butler. It occupies a rather undefined position, somewhere in between.

A.G.