

all benefit from this treatment, from time to time, indeed we all need it. That is why everybody should read at least one or two of the books of Dom Hubert van Zeller.

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

LATE MEDIEVAL MYSTICISM. Edited by Ray C. Petry. (S.C.M. Press: The Library of Christian Classics, vol. XIII; 35s.)

The scope of this book is much wider than its title may imply, for it covers a period stretching from St Bernard (d. 1153) to St Catherine of Genoa (d. 1510). A long introduction explains the province and character of mysticism, and gives a detailed account of the setting of late medieval mysticism. The chapters on the writers of the period consist of biographical and bibliographical notices, synopses of doctrine, and long extracts from well-known and characteristic works taken from translations already published elsewhere. The authors discussed include Bernard, the Victorines, Francis, Lull, Eckhart, Rolle, Suso, Catherine of Sienna, Ruysbroeck, and the 'Theologica Germanica'. Such a vast field is almost bound to lead to many notable omissions, both in the introductions and in the extracts. For instance, there is not one mention of Gregory of Nyssa, who was such an important source in medieval spirituality, and the only Cistercian writers named are Bernard, William of St Thierry and Gueric, such important figures as Aelred, Isaac of Stella and Helinand being passed over completely. It is a great shame that the flourishing school of English mystics in the fourteenth century should deserve such little notice: the editor has completely ignored Julian of Norwich, 'The Cloud of Unknowing', and Walter Hilton. In fact, one gathers the general impression that this book is hampered by its ambitiousness: a more coherent and accurate picture of this long period might have been provided if this book had aimed at a less historical approach, and had instead tried to show the themes of late medieval mysticism by means of short and illustrative passages from the authors of the period. But this book does provide a convenient introduction to these writers in so far as it collects in one volume lengthy extracts from their works, and provides an excellent and thorough bibliography.

ADRIAN WALKER

THE DIOCESAN PRIEST. By Eugène Masure. (Geoffrey Chapman, London; 18s.)

The sub-title of this book is 'A study in the theology and spirituality of the priesthood'. This indicates the book's scope and shows that the book ought to be of interest to all Catholics—to religious and to the laity no less than to the pastoral clergy. It is therefore something of a disappointment that the treatment of the subject is so involved. All in

all, it is a difficult book and must be approached with that in mind. Those who are ready to face difficulties will find much of interest and value in *The Diocesan Priest*.

The book is really the child of controversy and shows its parentage only too clearly. As this controversy has had little place in England, the result is sometimes puzzling to those who are not French. The answer to the puzzle is to be found in the documents given at the end of the book, but not even these may altogether take away the obscurities and confusion that are the result of the controversial element.

The first part of the book treats of the theology of the priesthood, and contains much that is stimulating and interesting. But at times the author leaves the reader unsatisfied. The non-theologian as well as the theologian might well be puzzled by some things, as for instance by the treatment of the idea of 'sign'. Yet no small part of the understanding of the argument depends on a clear understanding of what a 'sign' is. A person might agree or be prepared to agree with Canon Masure's conclusions and yet not be able to see how the conclusions are obtained.

The part on the spirituality of the priesthood is much the better part and more grateful to read. It treats of the fact or existence of the spirituality of the diocesan priest, and then of its essential principles and their current application.

Each part ends with a synopsis or summary, and there is a general summing-up at the end. The would-be reader might be well advised to begin with the documents at the end of the book, then to turn to the conclusion of the first part (page 119) and then read the second part right through. The first part may then be easier reading.

The English translation reads, for the most part, quite well. One or two Latin words or references, as on pages 96 and 108, ought to have been anglicized. And there are one or two apparent transliterations of the French, as the unmeaning 'edulcoration of the definition' on page 49.

The book raises many topics for discussion—for instance, the treatment of the treatise on Holy Orders, the difference between the spirituality proper to the pastoral clergy and that of religious and the consequent question of retreats and direction for the pastoral clergy. The emphasis that the author places on the relation between a bishop and his clergy seems to me to raise the further question of the size of a diocese. It is arguable that the modern diocese is too big for the relation to be really felt and to enter into the daily life and thought of either bishop or priest. The English reader would do well to study *The Priest of the People* (Blackfriars Publication) alongside the *Diocesan Priest*.

J. CONNELLY