

her book, and unfolds to us through the image of a child the redemption of the cross. Christ is born anew in us through grace, divine life is given and entrusted to us in order that we might live a Christ-like life. In re-living Christ in the world, we must assimilate the principles that governed his life at Bethlehem and Nazareth. Just as Bethlehem has neither meaning nor significance apart from Calvary, so also does our life become empty and unintelligible if unrelated to the Mass, if our living is not fashioned after the Eucharistic life of Christ. These age-old truths the authoress repeats for us, but in a setting that is new, that is discerning (particularly when she is tracing the qualities that make for childlikeness) that is penetrating and meditative.

TERENCE NETHERWAY, O.P.

THE NINE FIRST FRIDAYS. By Rev. J. O'Connell. (Burns Oates, 2nd Edition; 5s.)

This book is concerned with devotion to the Sacred Heart as centring in 'the Great Promise'. In his opening chapter the author gives a brief account of the life of St Margaret Mary, thus providing an historical setting for the promise and showing that whilst devotion to the Sacred Heart existed some centuries before the saint, she it was whom God chose especially to spread and promote this devotion throughout the whole Church. The following chapters examine the text of 'the Great Promise' as it appears in the oldest MS., and the author sets out cogent reasons for establishing its authenticity. Objections that have been raised against the nine Friday's devotions are met and answered both from the historical and theological angles and a sound interpretation of the promise is embodied in the final chapters. The need and use for such a book as this are obvious and it makes a worthy re-appearance.

T.N.

THOMAS PERCY, Seventh Earl of Northumberland. By M. M. Merrick. (Duckett, 1949; 15s.)

This exceedingly well-produced book is the first full-dress biography of its subject, the ill-fated leader of the 'Rising of the North' against the power and ecclesiastical policy of Queen Elizabeth. The author writes learnedly and enthusiastically of her hero. She will not accept the traditional views of the ordinary historians, who have seen in Thomas Percy but a weak and nerveless character, a failure as a leader, uninspiring, unattractive, and guilty of at least constructive treason. She on the contrary holds him to have been a manly man, brave and true, but the victim of circumstances too strong for him, the prey of Cecil's craft and Elizabeth's ruthlessness. And, in the main, she proves her case. It is a pity, however, that she does not take more pains to prove that Northumberland was a martyr in the strictest sense of the word. It has always been held by Catholics that he was definitely offered his life if he would but give up his religion and abjure his faith. Detailed proofs of this must have been produced at Rome before the (already deferred) Cause of Beatification of this good man could be proceeded with. But they are not given clearly

or at length here, though probably not difficult of access. The point is just inferred and almost slurred over, which is a pity and perhaps a lost opportunity.

ROBERT BRACEY, O.P.

TE DEUM LAUDAMUS. (Herder, Vienna; n.p.)

Meditations by Leopold Nowak on Anton Bruckner's music, which is given throughout. The *Te Deum* is printed at the beginning of the book, Latin phrases in black alternating with German ones in red. Type faces and initials have been chosen most carefully and the production is a great joy.

Nowak takes us through the *Te Deum* step by step, not only commenting on Bruckner's work but singing his own *Te Deum*—in words not music. Perhaps one must, like Nowak, have lived through horrors such as Hitler's rule and the bombing, before one can sing 'Te Deum Laudamus' so completely, having found God's gay peace within the terror of almost superhuman pain.

The book is a triumph of faith and love over chaos. U.M.S.

A LA CROISEE DES CHEMINS. By Jean le Presbytre. (Casterman; 48fr.)

After his success with *Toi qui deviens homme* and *Au large*, the author now addresses youth on the question of vocation. The first half of the book deals with the lay state wherein is set forth in dialogue form the rôle of Catholic laymen in university, social, religious and family spheres. The second half outlines the significance and implications of priestly and religious life, and is full of good sense, advice and instruction. Considering the scope of this book, it is surprising how the author has managed to condense his subject without giving the impression of omitting anything of value and importance or at the same time of treating superficially the many problems and points involved.

T.N.

MENTAL PRAYER. By Cyril Bernard, T.O.C.D. (Little Flower Press, Manjummel; n.p.)

This is an excellent treatise—simple and practical—which should be extremely helpful to souls of good will.

THE CALL COMES TO YOU. By W. Salmon, S.M., M.A. (*Filii Matris Boni Consilii*; 1s.0d.)

Here is a short account of the real meaning of a religious vocation together with answers to all the standard objections. One is left however with the impression that a vocation may be had for the asking by anyone who desires it, whereas is it not above all a *grace*, i.e. the free gift of God given to whom he chooses?

S.M.C.

CHRISTLICHES GEBETSLEBEN. By Franz Moschner. (Herder, Freiburg-im-Breisgau.)

One phrase at the very beginning of this book typifies the intense concern with *practice* which runs through the whole of it. Fr Moschner points out what those of us given to reading 'spiritual' literature can never call too frequently to mind, that 'reading' is not the same as doing, and that no one will become a saint through just