

able Ingres picture of Joan of Arc at Rheims Cathedral, which adds 'tone' to this dear little book.

Joan is the authentic voice of Catholic France. She is condemned by the tribunal of the Church. She is a saint. How are these propositions reconciled? 'Our Church is the church of the saints. The whole vast machinery of wisdom, strength, supple discipline, glory and majesty, is of itself nothing unless it is animated by love.' With all his customary fire and eloquence (indifferently served, it is true, by his translator) Bernanos gives the answer. I. E.

BEHIND THAT WALL. An Introduction to some Classics of the Interior Life. By E. Allison Peers. (S.C.M. Press; 6s.)

From St Augustine to Thomas Traherne Professor Allison Peers leads the 'ordinary reader of books', for whom he is writing, with unflagging enthusiasm and unflinching discrimination. His purpose is a simple one: to give some idea of what the great Christian mystics had to say, and why they said it, so that they may become available to all who would seek to go 'behind that wall' where, in the words of the Canticle, 'my Beloved standeth'.

The form of most of these essays (originally given as broadcast talks) allows for little development or subtlety of argument. It is, frankly, a popular book, and it is to be warmly welcomed as such. Even so, one is constantly aware (as in the essays on St Bernard or St Teresa) of the rich store of learning on which these deceptively simple pages draw. It is no small achievement to give in a few pages an accurate account, together with illuminating quotations, of writers so various as St Ignatius Loyola and Henry Vaughan, of the author of the *Cloud of Unknowing* and St Francis of Sales. Professor Peers is able to do this because he sees so well the fundamental unity that joins all who have ever written of the spiritual life. Moreover he sees it not as a speculatively interesting idea, but as a truth and a vital one.

*Behind That Wall* will be especially valuable for the many people who appreciate the depth and joy of the great mystical writers, but have a sadly inadequate appreciation of their presuppositions. Professor Peers is a scholar who *believes* in the values of the writers his scholarship has done so much to reveal. And that is a great advantage. I. E.

FRIENDSHIP HOUSE. By Catherine de Hueck. (Sheed and Ward; 7s. 6d.)

This discursive, generous, breathless book reflects the work of its author so faithfully that it far outweighs more solemn theses on the Mystical Body and its implications. For that work is simply the Christian one of reconciliation, of breaking down the walls of partition (and here especially that of colour) which divide the unity that our Lord came on earth to establish, and which his Church is