

view irrelevant.) There is little sustained consistency in Dr Whiteman's experiences. Figures appear and vanish. One object may even change into another—e.g. animals into flowers. 'A dog like a setter' is 'seen' but when the subject 'approached to fondle it, a return to the physical state quickly ensued' (p. 72). Surely the dreamer woke. Moreover, as in the case of Miss C.A., many, I believe most, of the experiences occurred when the subject was in bed, and in my belief had just fallen asleep.

The most fantastic and disconcerting feature of Dr Whiteman's experiences of his spiritual body is their reversal of sex. It is the body of a beautiful young girl—on one occasion a young mother also gives birth to twins—or a mother nursing her baby. The emotions of a woman are vividly felt and described. One might believe the writer a woman. Dr Whiteman sees in this womanhood the expression of the feminine factor in his masculine psychology and of the fact that the human psyche is feminine in relation to God. An expression of these things it may well be, but a subjective creation, a dream fantasy. And although mystics regard the soul as in a sense feminine towards God and some, St John of the Cross, for example, have employed the imaginative symbolism of a woman's love, they do not experience an imaginative change of sex. A compulsive and somewhat unhealthy quality of the author's imagination has pushed him across the frontier of legitimate symbolism into a positive hallucination.

In conclusion, the book is an interesting and valuable record of extraordinary psychical experiences, investing a genuine mystical aspiration and union, but as a contribution to mystical literature of very little if any worth.

E. I. WATKIN

THE PASSION ACCORDING TO JOHN, by J. C. Fenton; S.P.C.K., 7s. 6d.

There are many excellent points to this small book. First, it is an example of *lectio divina* as it should be today, a preparation of scripture, taking every advantage of modern exegesis, but leading the reader beyond mere scholarship into a deeper faith and prayer; it follows a really sound method, presenting the scripture, then a brief clear commentary, which is textual, literary and theological, then some meditations or themes for meditation, though these latter, an attractive modesty in the author, are given in an appendix; thirdly, its setting, which is liturgical, here Anglican. The exegesis is sound except for one or two small points, but one minor and one major criticism must be made. The minor one—which does not affect the commentary—is that it is implied that this Passion is a re-writing of Mark's, and it is never allowed, at least explicitly, that the author may be the beloved disciple himself, drawing on memories more exact than the synoptics' at the same time as he sees a profounder significance in them. The major criticism is that the author is not bold enough; he seems so anxious to avoid any theology of sacrifice that he skimps the significance of the frequent passover references; if, in tracing the setting of the

passion narrative at the climax of the gospel, he had worked out the series of signs and the significance of the Crucifixion/Resurrection as the final sign, he would have been able to write a richer and more catholic commentary on the final paragraphs of the narrative. As it is, he is content with rather bare statements which are in line with traditional theology, but which do not fulfil the promise even of his own method. The result is to leave one feeling that though the text and the literary commentary are excellent, its theology—a protestant theology of conversion and faith—while achieving many fine insights, is partial and one-sided. With these reservations, it is an excellent book, very pleasantly produced and printed for so low a price.

BENET WEATHERHEAD, O.P.

LITURGY AND SPIRITUALITY, by Gabriel Braso, O.S.B., translated by Leonard J. Doyle; The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, \$ 3.50.

Nothing is more important in the life of the Church at the present moment than to re-unite in the minds of the faithful what has been achieved in the fields in which the Church is advancing—scripture and patristic study, liturgical worship and vital pastoral methods. Or rather, to relate these advances to whatever is vital in the carryover from the preceding centuries. The faithful often do not want to surrender to the seeming innovations of the experts, the experts become impatient with the lagging faithful. What is needed is a simple statement or way of working which will preserve but re-orient all that is good from the past with what appears to be vital for the future. Dom Gabriel Braso's book sounds from its title as though it were going to attempt this in one field at least—'spirituality'. For those who would be avant-garde, 'spirituality' is a smear-word, associating with itself the notions of narrowness, secondary devotions, the outworn: rightly understood as a particular way of training the Christian soul to whom it is suited, with perhaps an emphasis on one or other aspect of Christian life and prayer, there is nothing wrong with it, and Dom Gabriel proceeds to show that the liturgy is the best, fullest and broadest spirituality there is, that of the Church herself. It is a pity that the book, despite a good ground plan, is so long-winded, since the author has a sound grasp of the scriptural and theological basis of the liturgy and much of the book is taken up with this. These principles had to be stated, but it is only towards the end, in the last three chapters, that he really gets to grips with the problem, the place of the Christian as an individual—the field of 'spirituality'—in the communal worship—the field of liturgy. He has not, I think, made up his mind whether he is writing a book about the liturgy in itself, or whether he is trying to reconcile the old and the new, and if so for whom. From the *art nouveau* dust-jacket one might think that it was meant for the faithful reader beginning to be interested in the liturgy, from the turgid abstraction of the writing one might