

MAN AND MATTER. By F. Sherwood Taylor. (Chapman and Hall; 15s.)

Can science be a vocation? Dr Taylor has no doubt that it can, and one might add that his own example, not least in the present collection of essays, does much to prove the truth of his words. But he rightly says 'we need more Catholic scholars . . . laymen who will carry out research in a Catholic spirit—in a true spirit'.

Those who are concerned with Catholic education will find here some admirably practical suggestions for the reform of the school science course. Dr Taylor wants to see even elementary science a genuine piece of research having as its end 'the getting acquainted with nature . . . the real groundwork of all science, which must never be book-learning'. Children can then be taught a true notion of scientific law and method, showing its limitations as well as its power, and will no longer be an easy prey for the bad philosophy of the 'popular scientists', as they are at the end of the present abstract and artificial courses, useful only to those few who go on to a university.

The essays directed against materialism wisely never try to minimise well-founded scientific positions, but show that the apparent conflict with religion disappears when each side is properly understood. Evolution receives an especially good treatment.

The scope of the apologetic is in some places too narrow: many people who do not accept materialism are for all that not convinced that the supernatural is possible. The body-soul relationship is conceived too dualistically to stand up to logical positivist attacks. But the only serious criticism is against the inclusion of an essay on mysticism which treats too superficially a subject difficult enough for theologians themselves.

L.B.

FATHER LUIGI GENTILI AND HIS MISSION (1801-48). By Denis Gwynn. (Clonmore and Reynolds; 16s.)

If Wiseman was the most outstanding character of the Catholic revival in England, and Father Dominic the most saintly, Father Gentili may be described as the most exciting. His life indeed resembled a flame setting fire to others whilst it rapidly consumed itself. Dr Gwynn here tells the story of this brilliant young Italian lawyer who, heart-broken and almost despairing at the breakdown of his romance, turned to God and flung himself with the uttermost abandon into the mission of converting an unresponsive England. His impulsive nature although restrained, even with harshness, by his superior Rosmini, who yet loved him so well, was never fully tamed, and showed itself in every event of his apostolate from the moment he landed in England to the day of his death in Dublin, when he had yet not completed his forty-seventh year.

The greatest figures of the Second Spring all came into contact with

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