

ing the traditional view, he shows that this is far from being a rationalist or utilitarian conception: marriage is assimilated to the union of Christ and his Church and is therefore at once a mystical and a fruitful union. The ends must not be torn apart and, although mutual love may be regarded as the *immediate* end, directly attained, it must be subordinated to the more fundamental, more universal end of life itself—natural and supernatural—and the education proportioned to it.

In the remaining essays, apparently distinct but following very conveniently on one another, he writes calmly, sympathetically, and with suave judgment on all the main topics of the Church's doctrine of marriage. Of particular interest to many questioners at the present time is the final essay on sanctity in the married state. Of the possibility and the fact of married saints there can of course be no doubt, that marriage as a way to holiness is a part of Catholic teaching and springs from the nature of the sacrament; but married saints are notably fewer than the unmarried and the virtues which have justified their canonisation do not owe anything to the married state as such; on the other hand virginity—not mere celibacy—does involve such total detachment that it is of itself a most apt means of reaching heroic sanctity. The grace of marriage is unique; it makes husband and wife love Christ in one another. But the fruitful love of virginity is more direct.

EDWARD QUINN

THE WAY OF THE MYSTIC. By H. C. Graef. (Mercier Press; 10s. 6d.)

The spirit of this well-written and balanced work is contained in the author's belief expressed with obvious sincerity that if we knew how to use our supernatural powers we, of seemingly lesser ambitions and opportunities, would live a mystic union with God to his greater glory and to a deepening of the vitality of Holy Church. In the Introduction which adequately deals with the theological foundations of mysticism she writes: 'The mystics have known both the gift and the boundless munificence of the Giver, who desires to bestow it even now as lovingly as He desired it by the well in Samaria. If we but knew the gift of God, and had the confidence of St Paul in Him "who is powerful to do superabundantly above all we ask or think, according to the power that operates in us", that is according to the life of grace energising our whole being if we will but let it do so'.

Written in a clear style and with practical emphasis, the book shows the way to union with God taught by fifteen contemplative souls. These studies, though brief, are not at all superficial and much thought has gone into their making. The majority of the important schools find adequate representation. Thus, the reader is offered understanding studies of those great personalities such as Bernard of Clairvaux and St Catherine of Siena whose practical influence upon Popes and kings still excites our bewildered imagination, as well as

ample analyses of the Dominican and Franciscan inspirations. She has not forgotten those lovers of the Sacred Heart, St Gertrude and St Margaret Mary, nor that gently persuasive soul, St Francis of Sales, and needless to say, St Teresa and St John of the Cross appear in all their mystic splendour.

The conclusion is happily and lucidly retrospective. From the study of *The Way of the Mystics* two great realities become apparent. They are the need of prayer and penance, especially in our own troubled days. Miss Graef has succeeded in making her book of value to the ordinary reader for she does not neglect to emphasise the methods common to all the mystics in their attempts to intensify their life of prayer, nor does she forget to mention the simple penances blessed by the greatest saints in their seeking after self-purification.

Attached is a Bibliography which, however brief, would form an excellent choice to be made by one who proposes to explore the inexhaustible field of Mystical Theology.

FR CASSIAN, O.F.M.Cap.

LEADERSHIP AND LIFE. By Dr. J. G. Vance. (The Grail; 5s.)

This book arose from a series of talks given by Dr Vance at Grail Headquarters in London to a group training to be leaders. It is not surprising that under the title *Leadership for Women* the published talks ran into many impressions. This is a re-model, with about half as much material again added.

Priest and psychologist, Dr Vance has given to English Catholics a book which may well become a classic. Its closely packed wisdom provides an examination of conscience, an inspiration and a fund of humour. It was intended for women, but if only all who wield authority—priests, nuns and men layleaders included—were to read it and, under grace, apply it, leadership in the Catholic body would gain much sweet reasonableness and be saved from many mistakes, aberrations and rifts. A few headings may be suggestive. 'Meaning what you say'—Do we know our insincerities, and how can we eliminate them? 'Jealousy.' 'How to delegate authority.' 'Weighing your words'—'Never say anything harsh; and here, as always, when I say "never" I mean, literally, never.' 'How to ruin a cause'—Dr Vance, turned Screwtape, rejects obvious devices to suggest that he 'would simply infuse into all the members of the movement a spirit of utter complacency, and into the leader a wondrous self-complacency.' 'Correspondence'—'It is one aspect of courtesy . . . leaders are more roundly cursed for failure in correspondence than most things.' What if a letter requires time for thought?—'I plead earnestly for the habit of interim correspondence . . . such a note takes but a few minutes and keeps your correspondent from living on tenterhooks.'

The best section is perhaps 'The Pivot of Leadership: Honour'. It contains an analysis of our meaning of the word which Dr Vance