

## REVIEWS

ONE NUN TO ANOTHER. By Sister Mary Laurence, O.P. (Blackfriars; 12s. 6d.)

This is the religious life in a nutshell, applicable to active and contemplative nuns without causing hackles to rise in either. Though the author does not set out to do so specially, she convinces the reader not so much of the comparative value of active and contemplative lives to the mystical body, but of their fusion. As in the eternal argument concerning the superiority of male over female we finally reach the conclusion that men and women are complementary to each other, so it is with the active life and the contemplative.

It is easier to say or to write than to 'do' every time, but Sister Mary Laurence writes with a conviction and a luminous sincerity which is clearly the fruit of much 'doing'. She knows nuns inside out, but she has the gift of revealing foibles and failings and their proper remedies so felicitously that one is impelled to go on reading for sheer pleasure.

If proof is needed that a consecrated virgin is not a sanctimonious Lady of Shalott gazing into the mirror of her own perfection, this book has it all. Yet the danger exists, and in almost every chapter Sister Mary Laurence is quick to point out antidotes which will infallibly crack the mirror from side to side. This is a little book with a big message, a book that can be picked up for a few minutes during a busy day and give new impetus to the life of any nun, from the brash young novice to the aged veteran. It could easily be called *Any Nun to Any Other Nun*, so happily does it weld us all together, active and contemplative, as brides of Christ and mothers of souls.

P.C.C.

CHRISTIAN HUMANISM. By Louis Bouyer. Tr. by A. V. Littledale. (Geoffrey Chapman; 12s. 6d.)

In a world which believes itself to be 'in full career to the final conquest of matter' (p. 98), man may seem to be driven to choose between being fully human or fully Christian. Fr Bouyer is uneasy, alarmed even, lest in the face of this dilemma Christians should adopt an attitude of compromise on the one hand or intransigence on the other, either of which could precipitate a resurgence of the modernist crisis. 'Orthodoxy does not consist in refusing to accept facts or to think. To be modern does not imply a blind following of fashion. Nor does truth lie in holding mutually incompatible positions, but in seeing deeper than the verbalism of ready-made solutions of whatever kind' (p. 8). The paradox of the transcendent being who is yet God