

It is only just to Dr Duncan to conclude that he has clearly a deep and unswerving faith in his conception of the Person of Christ, even though it is very far from the Christ of the Catholic Church, and that, by comparison with recent writers of a more sceptical tendency (notably the late Dr C. J. Cadoux in his 'Pelican' *Life of Jesus* and Professor Maurice Goguel in *L'Eglise Primitive*), he is distinctly more orthodox.

JOHN M. T. BARTON.

LA FACE VOILEE. Essai sur le douleur. By Paule Regnier (Cerf; Blackfriars; 3s. 6d.)

Madame Paule Regnier's book must have been met with a very mixed reception. Some will have seen in it no more than a facile disquisition on a hackneyed subject, others will be complaining that, however remarkable this treatise may be, it is incomplete. At first sight it is surprising that an essay on suffering should hardly mention sin, which indeed provides the key to that overwhelming mystery. Probably, however, there is no need to reproach the authoress for not having given a theology of suffering, nor even for having ignored the phenomenon, for having only sketched in—though with great delicacy—the general lines of the Christian answer. The beauty of this work lies in the rigorous and lucid analysis of the fact of suffering. No one who has come face to face with suffering could deny the accuracy and the penetration of her observation, which is enhanced by her eloquent style. Indeed she may elicit sympathy in the reader who will be forced to recognise that she must have suffered deeply herself in order to be able to touch fellow-sufferers so intimately. The director of souls will be grateful for the light shed on the different states of suffering, and for the indication of how to disentangle, in the framework of ordinary life, the tragedies which are so often unknown, or unnoticed.

A chapter on *Le douleur animale* seems to us to be, if not the most informative, at least to be the most polished, section of the work. Mme Regnier by a happy intuition gives a very exact commentary on the mysterious word of St Paul concerning the groaning of all creation in this present world. In conclusion, I would say that we have here a masterpiece. The authoress has not always resisted the temptation of 'fine writing'; she is silent about original sin, from which question St Paul, St Augustine and Pascal have drawn definite solutions to the problem of suffering. She has, however, placed the latter in a striking light; and, starting from the fact of suffering, she has known how to reach the summit of this mystery in Christ and his Mother. All this with a poignant sincerity, which gives the work the seal of authenticity.

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