

THE VOICE OF LOURDES, A Pilgrimage in Vision and Recorded Sound; Text by Illtud Evans, O.P., Hutchinson, 22s. 6d.

All pilgrims to Lourdes retain indelible memories; some may be personal, some will be common to all. It may be that one has an impression, vague or clear, of Lourdes as a hidden spring that keeps the world going round; certainly he recalls seeing something of all the world there. Another may retain as it were a visionary impact of the Grotto, and for him the mystery of man appears greater than the mystery of God. But all pilgrims inevitably have a vivid memory of the sick, of their passage along the streets, in the domain and in the underground Basilica. And memory recalls them as obviously consoled by the Mother of God. What would Lourdes be without the sick, the disabled and the deformed? Indeed, what would the world be without them?

*The Voice of Lourdes* attempts to make your pilgrimage re-live, and in fancy sets you at the Grotto again to await what happens. The illustrations and thoughtful text refresh your recollection of all that you saw and heard. The photographs are mostly good; the eight of the sick are excellent. I think I should have liked also some picture of the inescapable shops, where no doubt this book will, in due course, be on sale. They also are a clear memory, and few pilgrims ignore the purveyors of piety. And I looked in vain for a picture of the brancardiers with their leather bretelles. Their humility doubtless avoids publicity but they are of the essence of Lourdes.

Accompanying the book are two small double-sided records intended to be played as background. You hear again the hymns, the voices and the sounds familiar to every pilgrim. But I suspect the commentary was composed and produced in a hurry, otherwise *Laudate* (sic) *Sion* would not have escaped correction, nor perhaps would the word 'myriad' have occurred three times within a few sentences.

Lourdes makes an excellent topic for this modern type of publication. No doubt time will produce a decided improvement on this first effort. Not but what I am still pleased that I gave as Christmas presents three copies of *The Voice of Lourdes* before I had seen or heard it.

R. J. CORBOY

A LIGHT TO THE NATIONS, by Robert Martin-Achard; Oliver and Boyd, 12s. 6d.

It is unfortunate that this book begins with a rather simple account of the New Testament usage of the Old. Complex matters are too easily dealt with in this section. Is it, for example, enough to remark that the Church 'is in duty bound to fulfil Old Testament prophecy?' Even popular accounts like those of Charlier and Vawter realize more of the problems involved here.

When, however, Dr Martin-Achard arrives at the main subject of his book—

the Old Testament witness concerning the theology of mission and the Hebrew missionary activity—he is very interesting. He makes, it is true, too sweeping a set of remarks about the origin of the book of *Lamentations* (Gottwald's work is a corrective here), but after this initial slip he makes a magnificently convincing case for a new exegesis of the Suffering Servant songs. He stresses that Deutero-Isaiah is not primarily concerned with the proving of either monotheism or universalism but with the demonstration of Yahweh's intention to comfort his people; the songs, therefore, are not missionary in outlook. From this he argues that the reference to Israel as 'the light of the nations' is not a call to the Hebrews to evangelize the gentiles but a declaration that when Yahweh grants life to his people they will be a shining testimony to the greatness of their Lord. He also is convinced that Is. 45. 20ff intends the 'survivors of the nations', invited to approach Yahweh, to be understood not, as the *Bible de Jerusalem* assumes, as the gentiles but the Jews of the diaspora. Israel by its very existence attracts the homage and service of the other nations; 'in living by Yahweh the Chosen People lives for mankind'.

This interpretation is evidently open to question, but Martin-Achard has worked out his ideas in a scholarly and lively manner. For him the Old Testament view of Israel is of a mediator between Yahweh and the nations, and in the last days God will assume all men under his manifest rule. Until that time Israel must exist and by existing praise. All missionary activity is reserved to God; 'mission is a theocentric concept in the sense that it is brought into being and put into effect by God Himself and at the same time furthers His glory'.

The function of Israel is to prepare for the last age, the age of the Church. We now have a duty to proclaim God to all men. Here and now we are in the midst of 'realized eschatology'. The Church's ministry is seen as a missionary presence in the midst of mankind and our part in the apostolic activity as dependent on the presence of God in the midst of his people.

It is delightful to find a pastor of the Reformed Church of France arguing against individualistic views of the Christian life. We draw together.

HAMISH SWANSTON

BAPTISM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, by G. R. Beasley-Murray; Macmillan, 50s.

The work under review 'is intended to offer a Baptist contribution to the discussions on Baptism that are taking place throughout the Christian world' (pp. v-vi). The author has, however, 'striven to interpret the evidence as a Christian scholar and not as a member of a particular confession'. For this reason he leaves-over consideration of infant baptism to the end of the book.

The earlier works of Beasley-Murray, *Jesus and the Future* (1954) and *A Commentary on Mark Thirteen* (1957) were very well received. The present work will, doubtless, be accorded a like welcome. As intended by the writer