

reflection occasionally gives an impression of padding, but it is good padding and makes one hope that Sister Mary Jean will find time and opportunity in future books to talk at random on these and all kindred subjects.

Her description of a nun's life begins with the first glimmering of a vocation and takes us from school days to postulancy, to novitiate, to profession and beyond. Hers is a teaching Order, but she bears in mind the needs and temperament of those who are not called to teach, but to be nuns, just nuns. She has something to say even of contemplative nuns, and this is a section where her dexterous pencil has, perhaps, failed to put in a few lines which might have improved the picture.

On the whole this is just the book to put into the hands of anyone whose ideas of convent life and vocation need clarifying, developing, completing—that is, everybody.

GERARD M. CORR, O.S.M.

SCIENCE AND THE HUMAN IMAGINATION. Aspects of the History and Logic of Physical Science. By Mary B. Hesse (S.C.M. Press; 12s. 6d.)

In some ways the sub-title of this book gives a rather better indication of its contents than the title itself; for the book is a study in the history of scientific method, and it is only in the later pages that the more general issues implied in the title are confronted. This, I am sure, is the right way to go about the question, but it does mean that Miss Hesse will have to write another book to complete the message she has to give to us. And I, for one, will look forward to reading it, because Miss Hesse writes with that sort of clarity and elegance one associates with mathematicians—she is Lecturer in Mathematics at the University of Leeds. Furthermore she has a grasp of history, an ability to see things from a historical standpoint, such as few mathematicians and physical scientists possess. In this respect her book is far superior, for instance, to Canon Raven's Gifford Lectures—though it will, no doubt, receive less attention.

Pleasant as it would be to quote certain observations in this book and to repeat the acute criticisms it contains of Philosophers of Science, the readers of *THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT* are more likely to be interested in the conclusions arrived at. Here is one conclusion, which I quote because I have only slowly become convinced of it and because it contradicts a deep-set prejudice:

'However necessary logical and mathematical formulations may be in the progress of physics and in certain parts of the other sciences, we need not fall victims to the sort of mentality which dismisses any statement not couched in exact symbolism on the grounds that

it is vague and probably misleading. For the exactness, the univocity of logic is not found in the real world either in physical or in human phenomena; therefore the most accurate descriptions of the world are more akin to poetry than to mathematical logic.'

DONALD NICHOLL

THE PRIEST IN THE WORLD. By Josef Sellmair. (Burns, Oates and Washbourne; 18s.)

This is a book by a German priest on the life and ideals of the secular clergy. The author, obviously widely read and experienced, is dealing with the attitudes that should characterize the priest's outlook, rather than with apostolic techniques. In spite of a tendency to be long-winded, the book is stimulating. In its main theme it shows the influence of J. M. Sailer, a German Catholic Bishop, whose spiritual writings had much influence on early nineteenth-century Catholic thought.

It is the task of the priest to be a second Christ and all his works and actions must be conformed to those of the great High Priest, whose priesthood he shares. It is this that makes him a man apart, resented by the world; it is this that makes him a 'father' married to his parish or diocese, one who is a father in the Spirit. To sustain his ideal and the demand God lays on him, the priest must cultivate humility and charity—too many hate the world in a sterile way or fall victims to the typical clerical vices of uncharitable gossip or trivial tyranny.

The treatment of the topics of friendship and study is traditional and sound and may prove helpful to many.

IAN HISLOP, O.P.

SANCTA SANCTORUM. By Dr W. E. Orchard. (Dent; 12s. 6d.)

Nearly forty years ago Dr Orchard wrote a book of prayers called *The Temple* when he was a Congregationalist minister. *Sancta Sanctorum* is a sequel to this earlier work, a collection of fifteen priestly prayers which are deeply reverent and sincere and could only have been written by one of long experience in the interior life. They could be used profitably by religious and layfolk as well as by priests, and they will appeal especially to those who find more individualistic prayers unhelpful; saturated with the words of Holy Scripture, they will help people to pray in the biblical formulas that were formerly the favourite prayers of the Christian people. The author's aim is to help the reader towards 'those rare moments when silence intervenes . . . stillness holds every faculty, communion is occupied in receiving rather than asking, and adoration passes beyond words, images and thoughts'. One may confidently expect that this book will achieve its purpose.

HUGH FARMER, O.S.B.