

as does the bursar—implies that something has been given into the charge of a particular person for *his* use. And on the day of judgment might we not find that the religious who needed several trunks to move his goods was in fact poorer in spirit than the one who boasted that he never needed anything more than a large handkerchief?

In all these cases the important truths that are being brought to our notice—ultimately, a matter of right attitude of mind—are almost falsified by a wrong emphasis on details.

It is good to remind ourselves that we must die one day. But is *death* the last end God had in mind when he inspired the sacred author to write: 'In all thy works remember thy last end, and thou shalt never sin'? It seems a trivial point, but in fact it marks a fundamental difference in outlook. And now and again it would be enlightening if authors would explain in what sense they understand God to be a Prisoner in the Tabernacle. Serious objection could be taken to his referring to the moment of Communion as 'the climax of that hour (i.e. the Mass), the holiest moment of that holiest hour . . .'. In his teaching on prayer Fr Venantius does not see eye to eye with St Thomas. Again, this goes deeper than the mere fact of differing. The author is more than a little suspicious of the prayer of many people: 'it has become a pious exercise in selfish petitions for help in their needs'. Through the fault of the priests the people have been misled about the true notions of prayer—their attention has been fixed on the business of asking for things from God. We must right the wrong, and get them rather to give praise and thanks to God in their prayers. Anyone who has understood the teaching of St Thomas will see that this is not a sound position to adopt. In fact St Thomas uses the substance of this argument in two of his objections in the article: 'Whether prayer is an act of religion'.

On page 45 there is a misprint: 'Meditator' should read 'Mediator'.
M.J.S.

MARY AND MODERN MAN. Edited by Thomas J. M. Burke, S.J. (The America Press, New York; \$3.50.)

'Cultural relevance of Mary' is a slightly intimidating phrase and this book, consisting of ten essays on that theme, looks at first glance to be like just another of those learned Marian books—dry, not sweet. But the editor has chosen his team of contributors with care. They are writers who feel as well as think. Two of the ten are English, one Hungarian, seven American.

Fr Frederick A. Harkins, S.J., opens with 'Mary's Meaning for the Individual', a happy note to strike in a book about modern man. At first eloquent, Fr Harkins seems to tire before the end, as if he had shot his bolt before he had completed the required number of pages.

Fr Conrad Pepler's essay, 'The Great Mother', which comes next, is the most satisfying for the theological reader. This essay alone takes a really universal theme and keeps to it. The one idea, motherhood, as a human, perennial, powerful factor in the whole life of man, is finely developed as a real principle of Marian theology. This section combines speculation and devotion in true Dominican style.

'Our Lady and Civilization' is the subject aptly assigned to Daniel Sargent. From a vast store of reading he draws a thesis that our Lady has given value to civilization in the past and can do so in the future. 'Mary and the Flesh', by Paul Palmer, S.J., turns out to be an excellent exposé of the great truth that our Lady has always been a bulwark against any kind of Manicheism. This essay is a masterly review of the impact of the Marian dogmas upon the persistent heresy of matter-spirit dualism. Father John Lafarge, S.J., is concerned to refute a suggestion made in *The Christian Century*, December 23rd, 1953, to the effect that the popularity of 'the Marian cult' is a danger to the ethical content of Christianity. He boldly puts the offending words 'ethical content' in his title, refutes the implied sentimentalism and draws, incidentally, a picture of Mary which clings to the memory. Of the remaining essays Father John S. Kennedy's is outstanding: Mary's message to modern man at La Salette. It is a story excellently told, a moral excellently drawn.

The other contributors are Father William A. Donaghy, S.J. ('Mary's Place in Reality'), Fr Martindale ('At Lourdes and Fatima'), William Juhasz ('Mother of the Church of Silence') and the Editor, Father Thomas J. M. Burke, S.J., who writes on Mary's 'Sense of the Apostolate'.

G. M. CORR, O.S.M.

COURTES PRIÈRES POUR LE CHRÉTIEN DANS LE SIÈCLE. (Desclée de Brouwer; 105 fr. b.)

This is an excellent manual of prayers, dating from earliest Christian times to the present. Grouped under the petitions of the Our Father and subdivided into different acts of a soul at prayer, are extracts from Holy Scripture and the Liturgy, words of saints recognized as masters of prayer, beside touching strophes of Negro spirituals and lines from many other uncanonized persons, living and dead. We find Verlaine next to St Bernard, Pascal preceding Tagore, Péguy following St John of the Cross, the prayers of St Thérèse and Sister Elisabeth of the Trinity. Varying in length from a developed meditation of Lancelot Andrewes to the ejaculation of St Augustine, 'Mon Dieu, ma vie', these prayers meet every human need. One appreciates particularly the moving 'Prière d'une Jociste' and 'Prière quotidienne des catholiques chinots persécutés.'