

them to take an active part and to wean them away from the habit of 'looking on'. The matter is as topical as it was over ten years ago when it was first produced in German. One could select numerous points for discussion; a few headings will suffice: silence as an activity—active listening—the altar table. This sort of instruction brings the Mass to life, everyday life. The three chapters on liturgical—and for that matter general prayer—difficulties deserve note. They afflict us all from time to time, and we can often help one another with them without being high-grade theologians; they are staleness, the desire for emotional satisfaction and the oppressive sense of our own sins. Dr Guardini's study of all these matters is most practical and helpful, and many of the chapters can be read in isolation for their own sakes, as can the methodical study, historical and theological, of the nature of the Mass, which occupies almost all the latter half of the book.

GERARD MEATH, O.P.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE PATRISTIC AGE CONCERNING MARY'S DEATH.

By Walter J. Burghardt, S.J. (Newman Press, Westminster, Maryland; 95 cents.)

This reprint from *Marian Studies* (Vol. VIII) is a collation of the evidence for and against the belief that our Lady died. It covers the first eight centuries. It is thorough, as was to be expected of the author, and comes down definitely on the positive side, i.e. that she did actually die. But only as a strongly felt opinion. It does not dispose of the question and those theologians (few, but not negligible) who for other reasons like to think that our Lady passed from earth to heaven without death will be grateful to Father Burghardt for having set out so clearly the weakness as well as the strength of the Patristic evidence.

His conclusion is that 'there emerges a widespread conviction of the early Church that our Lady died a natural death. . . . However, the nature of much of the evidence . . . is too fragile to sustain an apodictic conclusion on the theological significance of this conviction. But the conviction is there. More than that, the consistency of its liturgical expression and the uniformity of its homiletic articulation warrant the conclusion that it was conscious, abiding, and informed.' But whether, in nearly all the evidence provided, it is a conviction or an assumption is just the point at issue. Only when we have answered that can we consider whether it was conscious or informed.

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

LE TRÔNE DE LA SAGESSE. By Louis Bouyer. (Editions du Cerf.)

Masterly is an accurate word for this book. It is a richly reflective long essay (296 pages) on the implications of all the data of revelation which can help us to understand the doctrine of the motherhood of

Mary. There is a breadth and depth of learning, biblical and theological, rarely met with in books about our Lady, and a facility and perspicacity in interpretation which speaks of a great and wide understanding of the import of the great biblical themes.

Perhaps the author's most impressive theme, the one most useful for an understanding of the author's mind throughout the book, is that humanity is recapitulated in Mary in a way analogical to the recapitulation in Christ. It is certainly a help in following his profound consideration of the great themes—Immaculate Conception, Virginity, Motherhood, The Second Eve, Relation to Father, Son and Holy Ghost, Co-Redemption, Assumption. This book is in effect a Mariology, though not in text-book form, of a profound and substantial character comparable with anything that has yet appeared.

Breadth of view and critical appreciation of sources give the reader confidence, even where the author flatly contradicts a common theological opinion or interpretation (as on the nature of the sin of our first parents).

It is the first volume of a trilogy in which the author is to consider the whole economy of salvation, and this trilogy is to be followed by another, purely theological, with the theology of the Holy Ghost, of Christ, of the Father, considered in turn. To start such a vast theological work with a book on our Lady was an inspiration.

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

THE RECOVERY OF UNITY: A Theological Approach. By E. L. Mascall. (Longmans; 25s.)

It is a matter for satisfaction that Dr Mascall has chosen to write a book on Reunion. The Ecumenical Movement is in the air; Reunion All Round is almost the Order of the Day. Cryptic hints of the 'great Church which is to be' fly off episcopal lips. Dr Mascall is uniquely qualified to discuss the subject. He is eminently well read in Catholic theology and most of his work is certainly within the pale of Catholic orthodoxy. At the same time he has shown that he is also deeply read in current Evangelical theology. To this he brings a deep sympathy and wish to be fair, shown in the large quotations, making the book something of a *Catena*, and a spiritual approach which lifts it out of mere polemics.

Dr Mascall is a theologian, and his book is written from that angle. It must be conceded that it is stiff reading, and his wide erudition makes demands on his readers. He insists that Christian Reunion must be considered primarily as a theological concern. Sociological or political factors have come to play their part in erecting barriers between Christians, but it is fallacious to believe that our divisions are basically