

This encourages me to think that Fr Vann is very right in using simple words, yet in not hesitating to dwell on the profoundest thoughts provided by our Faith and its theology. He does so, it seems to me, especially as from his Chapter V. Quite a lot of people ask how our Lord, enjoying the Vision of his Father and knowing his own divinity, *could* have said: 'Why hast thou forsaken me?' It is something, but not enough, to recall that the Psalm of which he was speaking the first words, deals in one third of itself with the Triumph of the Sufferer—and a public and enduring recognition of his 'rightness' at that.

Nothing that follows can reach beyond the chapter called 'The Valley of Death'. Perhaps in Chapter VI, 'Between Two Thieves', Fr Vann could actually have strengthened his own argument had he used what many think is the better 'reading'—'when thou comest in (not *into*) thy Kingdom'. ('Don't forget me', Joseph said to the royal servant, 'when you get back into Pharaoh's palace!') The brigand, by an astounding gift of faith, foresaw this crucified co-criminal as ultimately coming in Messianic glory. Hence the point of our Lord's answer. 'Ah, it isn't an affair of waiting whole generations! This very day you will be, with me, in my Paradise!' We need not, then, torment our minds by asking how any '*culpa*' *could* be '*felix*'. Enough to be realist; to see that the world *is* 'wrong', *is* in 'pain', and to know that our Lord's redemptive pain was not only something proper to long ago, but continues itself in his mystical Body, and that 'in ipso' we are able to co-operate in his saving work.

C. C. MARTINDALE, S.J.

THE EVERYDAY CATHOLIC. By Martin Harrison, O.P. (Blackfriars Publications; 10s. 6d.)

In these days of mental and moral unrest Catholics have great need to strengthen their faith. 'Soldiers of Christ' is not a metaphor, it is the expression of a grim reality. War is being waged against Evil, not in the abstract, but against groups and societies, movements and ideals, encroachments and infiltrations. If we are to acquit ourselves manfully in this fight for God (and for our own souls) it is essential that we should be, as St. Paul says, 'rooted in Charity'. Spiritual reading will greatly aid us to strike our roots more firmly and tenaciously in the love of God. Many, too many, books of devotion have no, or insufficient, nourishment to strengthen our spiritual growth.

It is with the greatest pleasure, then, that we welcome *The Everyday Catholic*. Here is no attempt to play on the emotions; these meditations are not intended for delicate hothouse blooms but for sturdy outdoor plants. They do not belie their title, they are, above all, practical—they are for every day. There is no straining for style, yet they read easily. Where there is imagery, it is analysed into

its everyday components which etch in the background of the picture in such a manner that one thought flows naturally from another. The result is a richness, a fulness in development which frequently set going a new train of thought.

It must not be thought that the subjects chosen are merely strictly utilitarian. In addition to such titles as *Little Things*, *Cheerfulness*, there are *The Holy Trinity*, *The Mystical Body of Christ* which are clearly expounded, and of which the devotional aspect is brought out. These meditations—there are seventy-six—can, and should, be read more than once, with fresh profit each time. They make a worthy companion volume to Bede Jarrett's *Meditations for Layfolk*. The priest who has the cure of souls and who has not much time for reading will find ample material for sermons in these pages.

The book is clearly printed and well got up and is excellent value for the price. The production is a credit to the publishers.

Augustine Hogg, O.P.

MERRY IN GOD (FR WILLIAM DOYLE, S.J.). New Edition. (Longmans; 8s. 6d.)

This book begins: "'Fetch this!" shouted a sturdy youngster of twelve, sprawling in an easy-chair on the lawn with his legs dangling over the arm-rests. Whiz! A ball flew across the tennis-court, hotly pursued by a small boy, who pounced on it almost before it had touched the ground, and tossed it back to its owner.' The story illustrates the lack of imagination of the author of this anonymous study. Youngsters sprawling in this attitude cannot throw balls with a 'whiz': in any case, smaller boys could not pounce on it 'almost before it had touched the ground': still less could it be tossed back 'again and again' (as the account continues) with sufficient accuracy to be caught in such a position 'again and again'.

This life is written 'mainly for young people': for such a purpose it is a failure. On this same page occur the words 'presage' and 'transfused'. The book extends to 330 pages. Included are many of Fr Doyle's written resolutions and reflections on the spiritual life, some of which are unsuitable for young people.

Professor O'Rahilly's well-known biography is made rather bulky by being clothed in a theological and ascetical treatise. The foreword to this book acknowledges the author's debt to the previous *Life*. This abridgment will be read with pleasure by many (a life of Willy Doyle could hardly be dull) but not by the young people for whom it was mainly intended.

C. P. SCARBOROUGH

MAN'S TRIUMPH: WITH GOD IN CHRIST. By The Rev. Frederick A. Houck. (Herder; n.p.)

It is to be feared that the many readers who have made it necessary for this book to appear in a fourth edition will be in the position