

book with the title '*A chaque jour suffit sa joie*'; and still more refreshing is to read this book, for it contains the meditations of one who has seen something of the joy that is to be found in God, and who has succeeded, in no small measure, in conveying with remarkable freshness to her readers a sense of God's all-embracing love. But this book is not, as might appear from the table of contents, a random collection of thoughts on a select number of liturgical feasts. Basing herself on the Church's liturgy, and making full use of Scripture, the author does in fact give us a very beautiful treatise on Almighty God, and especially God considered as Love—'*la flamme du dévorant amour qu'est Dieu*'. It is the story of God's great act of love for man, begun in the Creation, and culminating in the Redemption. This again is both courageous and necessary at a time when the word 'love' is as often misused and misunderstood as was its synonym 'charity' before it. And because God's love for man finds its highest expression in the Incarnation, the author is more than justified in beginning these meditations with the feast of the Nativity of Our Lady, 'the mother of fair love'.

The present volume is concerned with the first half of the liturgical year, and doubtless some things which are barely touched will be dealt with more fully in the second volume. But reading these meditations we certainly come to a fuller realisation of the Love that is God, of the vital connection between God's love for man, and man's love for God, and of what that means for us here and now in the twentieth century. Written in vigorous language, with a simplicity yet profundity of thought, and in a style which is a joy to read, this book should prove to be of lasting value. We are grateful to Madame Rivère for this fresh contribution to both literature and the spiritual life.

VINCENT PIZZALA, O.P.

THE MYSTERY OF BEING. Gifford Lectures, 1949. By Gabriel Marcel. (Harvill Press; 15s.)

This study of instinct in men and animals has thrown more light on the contemplative life than any book we have seen for some time, and proves that Gifford Lectures on Natural Theology do not necessarily fall outside the interests of a review which aims at kneading all life into food for the spirit. And when the lecturer himself is a Catholic of tremendous insight such as M. Marcel, the relevance of his work will be obvious enough.

There are two sets of people for whom *The Mystery of Being* will prove particularly stimulating: those who teach religion, and those who protect its purity through precise reflection. The first set may seem to be touched only obliquely when we say that M. Marcel, for

large tracts of his lectures, is concerned to strip philosophy of its inadequate and misleading terms and images. Yet his skilful stripping of philoosophical imagery suggests that teachers of religion need to do the same for their own subject with the same thoroughness.

Those whose taste it is to introduce precision into our thoughts on religion will derive more direct benefit from the book. Marcel's pages on 'transcendence' and 'experience' should help them to end a tradition which has made spirituality so 'transcendent' as to be irrelevant and has so restricted 'experience' as to make the spirit insubstantial. Contemplatives will be interested to discover Marcel describe contemplation as 'ingatheredness', which is not a state of abstraction from anything, and in fact the attitudes behind ingathering oneself, and abstracting oneself, are diverse and perhaps at opposite poles from each other. One abstracts one's attention from something, which is as much as to say, one leaves it, leaves it aside, perhaps even leaves it in the lurch; 'ingatheredness', on the other hand, is essentially a state in which one is drawing nearer something, without abandoning anything. 'Contemplation', he says, 'is not a matter merely of turning inwards, of *introversion*, but of *conversion*—seeing oneself from the other man's point of view'; therefore 'to enter into the depths of one's self means here fundamentally to get out of oneself'—observations which make one look forward to Marcel's further remarks on contemplation. These he has promised for his second volume, in which he will doubtless be as well served by his publishers and translator as in the present one.

DONALD NICHOLL.

THE REVOLT AGAINST REASON. By Arnold Lunn. (Eyre & Spottiswoode; 15s.)

If the existence of God can be demonstrated by reason, atheism must be irrational, and in *The Revolt Against Reason* Mr Lunn is concerned with clarifying 'the contrast between Catholic rationalism and that distrust of the rational which characterises not only Lutheranism and neo-Lutheranism, but also the Victorian sect which usurped the name "rationalist".' He is not defending a thesis so much as demonstrating that the by-products of the revolt against God are 'a revolt against reason, a revolt against holiness and a revolt against beauty'—and what a masterly demonstration it is! The beghards (which should have an accent even in English), the antinomians, the behaviourists, the Freudians, the existentialists, the logical positivists, and of course (for Mr Lunn does not change), the evolutionists are all shown to be without logical foundation, and the rejection of belief in the supernatural is shown to be necessarily connected with the collapse of morality and of beauty, in art and