

one is led to admire the sober, dispassionate tone adopted by the author when he treats of the events. Mention might also be made here of the kindly and truly charitable manner in which M. Lou deals with the conflicting ideas that divide the Christian body into sects. His own calm, detached and generous attitude does much surely to further the cause of unity.

He speaks of his becoming a Catholic as 'My conversion is not a conversion; it is a vocation'. Now, over 70, at the invitation of Cardinal Tien, he is to return to China, an apostle. As a Benedictine he judges, and rightly so, that the monastic tradition of *pietas* has kinship with the Chinese tradition of family life, and therefore can play no small part in catholicising his native country. (As a Dominican the reviewer can scarcely forbear noting that his Order, whence came the proto-martyr of China, received through one of its members the author's submission to the Church, whilst it was Père de Munnynck, O.P., who advised his becoming a Benedictine Oblate.)

No little success of the book is due to the effective way it has been translated. One is not conscious of its French background, although, and this is its high merit, one is conscious of its Chinese background. The translator has skilfully retained the finesse and politeness one associates with China.

TERENCE NETHERWAY, O.P.

A CASE HISTORY OF JAPAN. By Francis J. Horner. (Sheed and Ward; 10s. 6d.)

This book is divided into two parts. In the first the author gives an historical survey of the elements which moulded the Japanese people; in the second he aims to show the effects of the various historical phenomena on the habits, customs, language, morals and general behaviour of the Japanese. The observations in the second part of the book 'are the outcome of fourteen years' intimate contact with the Japanese'.

It is the reviewer's opinion that in the first part the history of Japan has not been digested—a considerable drawback if one tries to tackle the rather complicated subject which Japanese history presents. The main reason, however, for the unsatisfactory character of the first part is the author's failure to use the proper material. To write a chapter on Shinto, for instance, one has to know at least the works of Hepner, Holtom, Martin and Kato Genchi, who have produced the best works on the subject. Yet none of these are taken into consideration. The same holds true of other subjects. The bibliography is rather poor and books like those of Byas, Ekstein, Sladen and suchlike are not worth mentioning. Who can write history without the proper sources? Historical inaccuracies are bound to occur. They are in fact scattered throughout the pages with annoying frequency. A few examples with regard to dates

may suffice: the year of Mitsukuni's birth is given as 1622 (p. 91) when in fact it was 1628; Hirata Atsutane reached quite a patriarchal age: the generous author gives him 117 years (p. 92); he did not, however, die in 1893 but in 1843. The Japanese climate is not as healthy as all that! The battle of Sekigahara took place not in 1610 (p. 70) but ten years earlier.

Furthermore, the author does not give the impression of being well acquainted with the Japanese language. The spelling of Japanese words is more or less chaotic. On p. 6 we read Nihongi, which is correct; on p. 37, however, he writes Nihonji. On p. 191 he writes 'damashii' but in his introduction 'damashi'. The great purification is not O Hakai (p. 189), which means something quite different, but O Harai. The Japanese words are often printed in italics, but the author seems anxious to avoid uniformity in this respect as well!

The second part of the book makes a much better impression. The author has been a good observer of Japanese everyday life and when he comes to speak of the reconstruction of Japan he makes some very sound remarks: 'The intense loyalty to the throne and the love of country which are an integral part of the Japanese character are emphatically an asset of which any nation might be proud. The fact that these concepts were deliberately manipulated to evil ends by a militaristic clique to serve its own purpose in no way detracts from the value of the feelings themselves'. Very true—and if the occupying power would listen to other valuable suggestions and remarks contained in this second part, the occupation might well become a blessing. The closing chapter, 'Japan and the Ideal', provides further enlightening reading. The author concludes that the restless craving for something new among the Japanese can only be satisfied when they discover the real ideal which is to be found in the Christian faith. Missionaries in Japan are nowadays generally optimistic and for this there is reason enough. Stripped of its official sanction it is unlikely that Shintoism will have the same influence as before. Buddhism can offer at best only a kind of escapism at a time when circumstances demand courage and determination in facing the great difficulties of life. Whether the Japanese will turn to Christianity in considerable numbers will depend to a great extent on the personal behaviour of the Americans. If they show themselves to be bearers of the Christian values then the occupation can be of great benefit. If, on the other hand, the white troops behave in a manner unworthy of Christians it may happen that after the occupation the Japanese will turn to their own poor gods with renewed enthusiasm. Never has there been need for more prayer than at the present moment—a conviction which is deepened after reading Mr Horner's book. May all Catholics do their duty realising what is at stake.

H. v. STRAELLEN.