

taken—as indeed it has been—to inculcate the suppression of all intellectual activity and so to induce a kind of Quietist *nirvana*. 'To think of Nothing' may be an aspect of the Prayer of Quiet when the soul quietens the discursive reasoning of the mind, but according to St Teresa the soul may never *suppress* an intellectual activity. Fr Gabriel shows how St John of the Cross insisted that to practise contemplation the soul must go out to meet God, until the time comes when she seems to be doing nothing, thinking nothing except for some uncontrollable meanderings of the imagination, but remaining simply and quietly in the presence of God. Finally he returns to his point in justifying St John of the Cross as the 'Doctor of Active Contemplation'.

This is indeed a book of practical guidance in the life of prayer and in the reading of the mystics, invaluable to director and penitent alike.

CONRAD PEPLER, O.P.

THE PRIEST'S GUIDE IN HOLY WEEK. By Arthur Proudman. (Burns Oates; 1s. 6d.)

Terse, brief and complete, this synopsis of the ceremonies and sacristy work for Holy Week is the sort of thing many a parish priest has longed for, perhaps even attempted himself but left unfinished. Each day dealt with, Palm Sunday and the last three days of Holy Week, begins with a brief conspectus of the ceremony (indispensable in instructing servers), continues with an account of the preparations necessary, and concludes with a synopsis of the ceremonies from the celebrant's point of view. So far as we are able to judge, Fr Proudman has attained a high degree of accuracy and any omissions are not essential. For example, he says the celebrant should face east in the baptistry; Fortescue adds, wisely, 'if possible'. Alas, it often is not. The book, which includes all the Latin texts said by the priest when away from the Missal, is gratifyingly free from misprints ('prophesies' on p. 38 should be 'prophecies'), is clearly printed, and apart from the curling paper cover, pleasant to handle. In a second edition, which is bound to follow, one or two phrases might be re-worded, e.g., 'spread with white cloth' (p. 39) and '(incense) is imposed' (p. 13)—shades of Dale-Baldeschi!

The clergy owe a debt of gratitude to Fr Proudman for giving us the fruits of his experience in so useful a form, and it is to be hoped it will be a powerful aid in conveying to the laity something of the *mysterium tremendum* that is enshrined in our Holy Week ceremonies.

J. D. CRICHTON

EVE AND THE GRYPHON. By Gerald Vann, O.P. (Blackfriars Publications; 6s.)

I have read this small book twice. In between readings, I came across this description of one of the New Testament Epistles: 'a pattern is worked which for richness of meaning, harmony of design, and depth and variety of colour, has few parallels. The effect is like

that of some masterpiece of tapestry. It arrests the attention as a whole, and absorbs it with every detail'. Without seeming to exaggerate, I think this description does apply to the four conferences which Fr Vann gave to the members of St Joan's Alliance on the Vocation of Women.

He takes three great catholic women, St Catherine of Siena, our Lady, and St Monica and one symbol of catholic womanhood, Beatrice of Dante, and with the Gospel texts and the Pope's Encyclical on the Mystical Body he weaves a small but perfect piece of theological tapestry.

The first practical principles of the spiritual life are well illustrated from the marvellous achievement of the Saint of Siena. Our Lady naturally occupies the centre of the stage in such a theme as the vocation of motherhood and round the Pauline text of the length and the breadth and the height and the depth of God's love, Fr Vann has woven a truly satisfying meditation of practical insight. St Monica illustrates the vocation of tears in the third part, which clearly shows that the golden thread of christian hope and gladness is of the very texture of the pattern. The fourth part on the leadership of love is a fitting conclusion and it is left to Dante's Beatrice to explain to us the secret of the whole picture.

Though addressed in the first instance to an audience of women, this is an inspiring book for all and especially for priests. If a true mother, said Mgr Bougaud of St Monica, must possess a priestly heart, the heart of a true priest must be a maternal one.

P. J. FLOOD

SECOND-CENTURY CHRISTIANITY: A COLLECTION OF FRAGMENTS. By Robert M. Grant. (S.P.C.K.; 6s.)

As 'a little *corpus* of those odds and ends which link the New Testament period with the developed Catholicism of the end of the second century' this book is hardly satisfactory, being incomplete. As a textbook which brings together, in convenient shape, translations of the greater part of second century fragments, it is useful. The translation of Pseudo-Tertullian *Against All Heresies* is welcome; and the heretical fragments of the period are given at length. It is a pity that no room was found for the letter of the churches of Lyons and Vienne; and the commendation of St Irenaeus sent by the former church to the Bishop of Rome surely deserves to be included. It is hard, too, to see why, in the section on Pantaenus, the passages from the *Stromata*, Bk I, and from Eusebius, have been left out. Were there space other points might be raised. In general, it seems that the editor's selection has been prejudiced to some extent by his strong conviction as to the 'fluidity' of second century Christianity.

A. R.