

of the Mass as the official worship of Christ and his members, the life-giving sacramental system, and the sanctifying power of the Church's Year.

But the author contents herself with quotations from the great encyclicals on these subjects, encyclicals which give us the principles from which we are expected to draw out the applications. And in this matter of the spiritual and mystical life there are indeed very profound applications. Before we can appreciate the teaching of St John of the Cross we must study it in relation to the unity of the Mystical Body where the 'unitive way' finds its proper setting. When we have discovered this true setting we can go on to compare the teaching with that of other 'mystics' and spiritual writers.



REVIEWS

LA VIE DE LA LITURGIE. Par Louis Bouyer. (Editions du Cerf.)

I divide my review copies of books into two kinds: those I promptly dispose of, at a profit if possible, and those I place on my bookshelves. Father Bouyer's book will be in the latter group, and it will not stay long on the shelves either. It is a book one can't leave alone because it has all the adornments a fine book should have. It is at once scholarship and poetry and it has many human graces that make direct contact with that creature described as the common reader. At the beginning of the book he tells us how Saint Francis de Sales, when he was consecrated bishop, made a good resolution always to say his rosary if duty obliged him to attend a High Mass. Well, there's something to think about, and think about it we do, because Father Bouyer is not just another angry young man denouncing the bad old days. He is a scholar showing us right and wrong notions of liturgy. There is, of course no need to talk of Father Bouyer's scholarship; it is now well known. But it is scholarship with a difference: not only is there the subtle art of beguiling the reader into turning over the page, there is also the art of bringing the reader down to earth. If we are ever tempted to drift away into hazy speculations we shall have a nasty shock. For instance, 'Peut-être le plus grand, et certainement le plus difficile problème pour la piété liturgique est-il celui que nous attend quand nous sortons de l'église après la célébration'. It is a very good thing to be reminded that living the liturgy means practising outside church the charity we have pledged in the Eucharist.

This book is also scholarship with poetry. Poetry is the utterance of wisdom, i.e. the gift of wisdom, and the poet sees, in a measure, from the viewpoint of God. He connects past and present, time and eternity,

and because he not only sees with his eyes and mind but also perceives with his heart and affections, he presents the things he sees in a manner incarnate, alive. The measure of a true poet is found in those two things, the power to link things up, and the power to bring them to life in words. Naturally, even those of us with an irritating appetite for poetry look with suspicion on broad generalizations and wide sweeps of history. It is so easy to do these things with little or no justification. However, we have no such fears when Father Bouyer is at work: here we have a scholar at work, and there is a sureness of touch, not to mention learned footnotes verifying the statements, which only comes from sureness of knowledge. One remembers for instance the reference to the Suffering Servant of Jahweh with the comment that here we find the difference between Judaism and all primitive paganism: in Judaism alone is suffering seen to be fruitful.

The heart of the book, the thing that makes it live, is the clear intuition of the mystery that is at the heart of the liturgy. What do we mean by a mystery? It is a moment or an experience when a man reaches both dimensions of human life at once, time and eternity. Truly there is only one mystery, and that is Calvary. But Calvary was not just an historical event; it was, or rather is, 'mysterious' in this special sense in so far as it links time and eternity, Man and God. The important thing is that this is going on now—it is not just an event of the past. Father Bouyer is caught up with the notion that Calvary is here and now among us, that grace cannot be separated from the person of Christ and when therefore we are baptized we are brought into a relationship with him which is as real as our relationship with mother or father. This is the mystery which penetrates every 'branch' of the liturgy, and is what makes a man fully a man. It is common enough to have these truths presented in a cerebral fashion that stimulates notional assent, but here we have them warm and alive; they cannot fail to move us. That is what is meant by poetry, and it is the only effective way to present a mystery. It is effective enough to recall one of the finest statements of the mystery:

sacrifice

Can only perfectly be made by God
And sacrifice has so been made, by God
To God in the body of God with man,
On a tree set up at the four crossing roads
Of earth, heaven, time, and eternity
Which meet upon that cross.

GERARD MEATH, O.P.

L'AU DELA. Par François Grégoire. (Presses Universitaires de France.
Like many of its kind, this little book compresses a great deal into