

REVIEWS

nity. In an important chapter the characteristic of specifically Christian moral conduct is defined: "Moral conduct is Christian when it is in accord with, and advances the kingdom of God, His redeeming and reconciling purpose in Christ . . ." (p. 47.)

Wisdom, moderation, and balance mark Dr. Garvie's thought. He shows at the same time a deep appreciation of divine grace and of human striving; of tradition and present-day exigencies; of the "right" and the "good"; he recognises the value of self-denial and of happiness; of love and forgiveness but also of fortitude; of attention to one's neighbour and of solicitude for personal interests; a deep regard for the perfection of the individual but also for the needs of society. It is calmly written but with wakeful allusions to certain events of contemporary importance. Roman Catholics, save for a passage or two in the penultimate chapter, will realise their fundamental agreement with the inspiration of the book and its more particular evaluations.

THOMAS DEMAN, O.P.

IN OUR VALLEY. By Vincent McNabb, O.P. (Burns Oates; 2s. 6d.)

The publishers are probably right when they say that "this little volume is likely to be one of the most popular of all" Father Vincent's books; and the popularity will be well accorded, though it certainly does not do justice to some of his earlier and magisterial writings to suppose with them that "some of the chapters will surely be regarded as among the best he has ever written." Indeed this present book can hardly be regarded as "writing" at all, for, apart from the Preface and the Epilogue, it represents the verbatim report of a series of meditations delivered by him in preparation for the New Year. Father Vincent needs no recommendation from us as to his exceptional powers as a *conférencier*, and this book shows Father Vincent the *conférencier* at his best. He is dealing with material that is very close to his mind and heart, the beginnings of God's life as man "in our valley," and it has inspired a more than ordinary depth of thought and beauty of word even in one whose thought is wont to be deep and his word beautiful. Nor does this mean, as it might with some moderns, but either thought or word is unintelligible or impractical. "Our own perfection is dependent upon matters of fact—matters of fact about ourselves and our surroundings," as he himself observes. It is true that he invites his hearers, and readers, to meditate not so much "on the mere details of the birth of Our Blessed Lord," but rather on "the mystical application of what, of course, is the great reality." But, like the true Thomist he is, Father Vincent shows that

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mystical applications involve very matter-of-fact circumstances; though, it should perhaps be added, he has a wonderful way of making the matter-of-fact appear anything but prosaic, as, for example, in the paragraph about the night watchman (p. 33), which ends characteristically: "He has probably more wisdom than the Stock Exchange. I hardly ever presume to be so impertinent as to talk to a night watchman." Yet we would not give the impression that this book is just "clever" or even merely paradoxical in flavour; it is the spontaneous word of a great Preacher speaking to earnest souls upon a theme that is dearest of all to him and to them. HILARY J. CARPENTER, O.P.

ANGLICANISM IN TRANSITION. By Humphrey Johnson. (Longmans; 6s.)

Fr. Humphrey Johnson of the Birmingham Oratory attempts in this ably written book to answer an important and difficult question: Whither is the Church of England moving? He writes of the spirit of Anglicanism in all its phases with a sympathetic understanding born of considerable acquaintance. His tracing of the evolution of events and processes by which the Church of England has come to be what it is to-day, is grounded upon accurate knowledge of the intricacies of Anglican history and will be invaluable to Catholics who are anxious to understand its complex nature. It seems less certain that his forecast of the future tendency of the Church of England is equally well grounded. He believes that the lessons of the past all seem to indicate the probability that a slow process of peaceful adjustment will take place between the moral standards of Church and nation; that the victory of those who attach more importance to the national character of the Church than to its fidelity to fixed standards of belief is assured and that it is entering upon an age of relative tranquillity in which there will be no controversies because the liberal principle of comprehension, which will admit the legitimacy of any interpretation, however "symbolic," of the Christian revelation has won the day.

It is true, as Fr. Johnson points out, that the Church of Church, as a whole has always reflected with singular fidelity those English modes of thought and feeling which are the essential constituents of the broad stream of national life, though it is also true that it has always contained elements which have done very much more than this. These elements have often been and still are logically incompatible and this is nowhere more clearly illustrated than in the Report of the Archbishop's Commission on Doctrine which was published last January. A careful reader of this report can be in no doubt that Anglo-Catholicism has