

of how Martha learnt from Mary to become more contemplative, and thus, while still remaining active, became a saint.

There are eleven papers, of which six are on principles and five on present problems. The first essay, by G. Liévin, C.S.S.R., forms an admirable introduction with extensive quotations from the words of Pius XII whose concern so often was with religious. There is too an excellent article on the theology of the religious life by Fr Congar, O.P.

Joseph Lecler, S.J., draws lessons from history in the next paper. In such a comprehensive survey it seems odd to find no mention of the rule of St Augustine, or of the work of St Catharine of Siena, that supreme contemplative who was called to such super-human activity.

An interesting chapter on the religious sister and the liturgy by Dom O. Rousseau, O.S.B., follows. And then an interesting article by René Carpentier, S.J., in which he draws attention to two major difficulties when considering the religious life from the point of view of canon law. How can charity or the state of perfection exist in the framework of external, juridical institutions? And how can one have an external apostolic activity in institutes which canonically entail retreat from the world?

There follows a short summary of the contemplative life by L. M. de S. Joseph, O.C.D. It does not seem altogether just to dismiss St Thomas as a kind of christianized Greek philosopher, inclining to intellectualism because of his use of Aristotle—and indeed to eclecticism. Surely St Thomas' writings are bathed in scripture and in the Christian *ethos* as a fish is in water?

Under *Problèmes*, there are some factual articles on the actual work and difficulties of religious sisters in the diocese, in the missions, and in dechristianized society. The importance of co-operation between different Christian bodies is stressed by Fr Hervé Pennec, O.M.I., in *Une pastorale d'ensemble*.

Finally, there is a very important article on the role of the priest in the formation of a religious sister for the apostolate. This could be read humbly by all priests, even though they may disagree with the conclusions. How can we teach unless we listen first, and are ready to learn even while teaching?

Thus it can be seen that the book contains much informative matter concerned with religious sisters, and that it faces fairly and squarely the problems, questions, and difficulties of those trying to become saints like St Martha.

J-D. CHEALES, O.P.

LITURGIE ET CONTEMPLATION. Par Jacques et Raïssa Maritain. (Collection *Présence Chrétienne*. Desclée de Brouwer; 48FB.)

The theme of this book, so the authors tell us, is that there exists

an intimate connection between liturgy and contemplation, and that it would be as absurd to wish to sacrifice contemplation to liturgy as to wish to sacrifice liturgy to contemplation. Yet to sacrifice contemplation to liturgy is precisely what certain liturgical enthusiasts seem to want. According to these 'pseudo-liturgists', the simple participation in liturgical worship, since it is the worship of the mystical body itself, carries the spiritual life to a higher degree than infused contemplation. They accordingly discourage private mental prayer and all effort at progress in the spiritual life by the long approved and tested means of asceticism, as leading to self-centred individualism, which turns the soul to introspection under the pretext of finding mystical union. Such methods, they say, were all very well for the age of St Teresa and St John of the Cross, but they will not do for our age which has suffered too much from introspection; our need is a new emphasis on the social aspect of religion. These notions lead them so to regiment the congregations in their churches, that what with the noise of their commentaries and their singing, and the continual activity of gesture, all attempt at prayer and recollection is effectively foiled.

Such ideas earned the rebuke of Pope Pius XII in *Mediator Dei*, but they are not dead yet. Jacques and Raïssa Maritain refute them with sure and sound arguments, while at the same time providing a little treatise on the true nature of contemplation that is of value in itself. Against these absurd notions they show that the love of God is always one of person to person, and even when the liturgy gathers us together in Christ's name, it is the faith, hope, and charity of each individual member, not that of the congregation as a whole, that makes our liturgy truly a worship in Spirit and Truth. They in no way oppose the liturgical movement; on the contrary they show keen understanding of its ideals as set forth in the papal documents. Yet because they have limited themselves to the refutation of extreme views, the positive content of their book is not as *nuancé* as it might be. While accepting all that they say, many would want to add that a true participation in the corporate worship of the liturgy is, especially in this age, of great value to souls on their road to contemplation. We are suffering from a lamentable split between an arid intellectualism on the one hand, and a flabby introspective sentimentality on the other, which has done much to turn men from religion. The liturgical movement, with its emphasis on corporate worship expressed by external gesture, can do much to reintegrate our religion. Nevertheless it must be admitted that liturgical enthusiasts are apt to stress the externals to the detriment of true prayer, and also to overload the minds of their congregations while neglecting to educate their wills. A true synthesis between the needs of contemplation and those of liturgy has, perhaps,

still to be achieved. It is to be hoped that this book will do as much to foster discussion on the topic in this country as it has done in France.

P.M.

UN EDUCATEUR MONASTIQUE: AELRED DE RIEVAULX. By Amédée Hallier, O.C.S.O. (Gabalda; n.p.)

This doctorate thesis presented in Rome at San Anselmo is the first large-scale study of the doctrine of St Aelred to appear since 1936, when Dom Boniface Pedrick published his study of the doctrine of charity in Aelred. The usual approach to the authors of the twelfth-century Cistercian school is to see their doctrine as describing the soul's withdrawal from God by sin and its return to God by conversion. But Fr Hallier's method is to see Aelred's teaching in the light of its specifically monastic tone and to examine it as something springing from the personality of a teacher who formulated his ideas with an abbey of monks in mind. The plan of the book is therefore to show Aelred in his historical setting, and then to show his teaching on man and God, using the formula so beloved of the early Cistercians—*noverim me, noverim te*; then the monastic life is examined under its essential aspect as the straightest and surest road of the return of the soul to God, which is the basic end of such a life.

Aelred was admirably suited by his personality to be the abbot and spiritual guide of monks, and all his writings are directly connected with his work as father and head of the monks at Rievaulx, the source of the rapid spread of the order throughout the north of England and Scotland. His brilliance is not to be sought in the influence he brought to bear on the ecclesiastical and political life of his time, but in the more hidden and difficult art of directing and educating souls in the monastic life, a task to which almost the whole of his religious life was devoted. We must therefore always try to picture Aelred at Rievaulx and see him in the context of the life he led there, not only among his chosen friends, but also as active and attentive in all the matters that concerned the material and spiritual welfare of the whole of the huge establishment which the abbey became under his rule. Replaced thus in his context at Rievaulx, he appears as a spiritual master who assimilated with great skill the monastic tradition, grasped and expressed the spirit of primitive Cîteaux, and added to it that charm and dignity which belonged to him alone.

Fr Hallier in this welcome book has shown how the teaching of Aelred is always practical and concrete, being often based on personal experience and often found in passages which are obviously autobiographical. For those who are looking for an introduction to the life and thought of Aelred this thorough and excellent book may be