

readers, may they be many, will at the start wonder where is the church of their weekly experience, the church of rubrics, of pre-nuptial enquiries, of so many and sometimes so complicated disciplinary laws, but they will find it in the end, and after seeing the foundations properly laid, will understand its purpose and necessity better.

For ourselves it is many years since we have read anything at all so invigorating on this subject, and never anything that goes deeper and preserves so thoroughly a Thomist course of statement.

IVO THOMAS, O.P.

LE CANTIQUE DES CANTIQUES. Nouvelle traduction par André Chouraqui; introduction et notes du R.P. Lucie-Marie de St Joseph, o.c.d. (Desclée de Brouwer; n.p.)

It was a good idea of the publishers' to produce in such an attractive format André Chouraqui's French translation of the Song of Songs. There is no better version than this, for it effects the rare achievement of uniting fidelity and poetry, and here even poetry is reached through fidelity. Evidently such a union presupposes a knowledge of Hebrew and of French capable of fusing the genius proper to each language at the source. It demands also an understanding of the mystery of Israel and of her divine election. Some of the obscurities of the French translation are in fact the obscurities of the Hebrew. The reader cannot regret these difficult passages, particularly as the editors have happily added some judicious notes from the pen of Père Robert de la Vierge, o.c.d., as a discreet appendix to the volume, to elucidate some of the more difficult expressions in the text. In this way the text itself loses nothing of its poetic rhythm and its music. As to the Introduction by Père Lucien-Marie de St Joseph, it must be admitted that these learned pages written by so erudite an exegete bring great refreshment. For they help the reader to discover the meaning of the inspired book according to the intention of the Spirit who has thus enriched the treasures of Israel, an intention which is revealed in the hearts of those who return to and still live deeply in spirit the mysterious life of Israel, the Church, the Spouse of Christ.

JEAN DE LA CROIX KAELIN, O.P.

THE WORD. A Meditation on the Prologue to St John's Gospel. By Adrienne von Speyr. (Collins; 10s. 6d.)

Here is a book which must have been very difficult to translate. I say this not so much because the book often makes turgid reading, but rather to point to the fundamental obstacle to understanding which the reader will have to contend with right from the start, the obstacle that this is a private work. We are given a meditation on the prologue to St John's Gospel, as the title-page claims, but it is an unedited meditation recollected with what