

with the flame that has been enkindled in their own hearts through their surrender to and union with the heart of God.

The message is not new. It is found echoing through the Scriptures, and has been heard and heeded by saints and mystics and generous souls of every age. And although the extraordinary circumstances of this latest appeal may not commend themselves to our sceptical (and yet at times how credulous!) generation, yet the simplicity and sincerity of the humble messenger, who was herself to be the sign of its authenticity, will surely evoke a response in many hearts. For God is Love and he thirsts to be loved in return, and he will stop at nothing in his attempt to win for himself the cold or tepid hearts of his creatures. And although we may not care for the manner of his wooing, yet not one of us, from the greatest saint to the most unregenerate sinner, will find any rest until we have accepted and surrendered to this Lover—and on his own terms. He does not ask the same from all but what he demands he will not be denied. For though he is our Lover he is also our God and those who refuse him, be they individuals or nations, do so at their peril. 'I am mercy and love, and I will be sovereign King.'

S.M.A.

THE GOLDEN WELL. An Anatomy of Symbols. By Dorothy Donnelly. (Sheed & Ward; 10s.6d.)

This is not an easy book rightly to estimate as a whole unless one has given as much thought and research to the subject of symbolism as its author obviously has. She is convinced that the essential unity of human experience should be mirrored in universal symbols. These symbols must signify not only the unity of man, but the unity of man in God. Their very diversity only go to prove with how many teeth, as Dante said, the desire of God is biting men. To show such a unity and to decode human symbols in terms of it is the purpose of this book. Hardly a page is there, open it where you will, without some thought-provoking phrase supported by precise reference to original sources. The very wealth of material which the author had at her disposal has been at times her chief embarrassment. She wants to omit nothing. And so, the rapid transitions from Chinese literature to Anglo-Saxon, from folk-lore to the liturgy, from Scripture to modern poetry, are all somewhat bewildering. It is in this way that the wood may be lost for the trees. Mrs Donnelly has however written a beautiful book: a book to have and meditate.

D. S.

RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND. By Peter F. Anson. (Stanbrook Abbey; 12s.6d.)

Reference works of this nature are often too costly in production to allow of publication. We may therefore be specially grateful to the Stanbrook Abbey Press for having given 430 pages for the

modest sum of twelve shillings and sixpence, and to Peter Anson for taking us so indefatigably through every type of religious order for men and for women who live in the British Isles. If we exclude the Catholic country of Ireland we are still presented with an immense variety of communities which have sprung up in the last 100 years or so. Should representatives of all these religious in the British Isles be gathered together in the intricate variety of their habits the non-Catholic would imagine it to be some vast historic pageant almost fantastic in its display. But in fact they continue in their thousands to prosecute their work for the kingdom of God almost unsuspected by the world at large and with no ostentation.

The author has been at great pains to make his information up-to-date and correct. It must have been an immense task; that he has succeeded so brilliantly discloses a rare gift in a man who writes with an easy flow of the pen about many subjects. Every library will have to possess a copy and most priests engaged on the mission should invest in it. But perhaps those who are seeking to discover for themselves a type of religious vocation should use it only as a last resort for they will be embarrassed by the infinitude of possibilities.

C.P.

TOWARDS A BENEDICTINE THEORY OF MANUAL LABOR. By Dom Rembert Sorg, O.S.B. Benedictine Orient. (St Procopius Abbey, Lisle, Illinois; 50 cents.)

A great deal of time and work went to the compiling of this essay which aims at providing annotated material for a 'Theology' of manual labour. But is there such a thing? Can one really go as far as Dom Sorg in his apotheosis of manual labour? The over-statement in these pages rather defeats its own end, and to say that 'the manual labor of monks is a sacred spiritual thing and a Holy Communion' savours more of enthusiasm than theology. Moreover sentences like the following lead one to suspect that the author has allowed his political ideas to colour his reading of monastic history: 'Especially in America, the dynamic vitality of the Holy Rule ought not to be hampered by the aristocratic mentality and the caste system of the European civilisation which encumbered even St Benedict; and, even though a fine and loyal sense of tradition stamps the Benedictine character, it has been a mistake to import and transplant inept traditions which owe their origin and growth more to that culture than to the fine earnest development of monastic spirit.'

D.S.

THE CHRISTIAN FACES THE RUINS. By M. Riquet, S.J. Translated by Pamela Carswell. (Sheed & Ward, 1950; 7s.6d.)

When Cardinal Suhard chose Père Riquet to deliver the Lenten sermons for 1946 in Notre Dame, he was aware that the preacher