

true God, and their synthesis is not always so easy a matter. It is therefore Father Brown's purpose to attempt this synthesis in such a way that we can say he has *brought God home* to us, or made us realize God. That much he makes clear in the introductory chapter. But true realisation must be based on dogma, so the greater part of the book is taken up with expositions of fundamental dogmas, the Divinity of Christ, the Trinity, Grace; and in these sections there are many occasions on which the truth is *brought home*, whether by a telling phrase, or a familiar simile which has not, until we read it in this context, ever been illuminated for us. It is hard to say how Fr Brown achieves his purpose, for, in this book at any rate, one would not describe his style as penetrating, but it has that kind of sterling ordinariness which appeals to the ordinary man. True there are occasional lapses into cliché and pedestrianism, but there are equally occasional flashes of lively reality. We don't want a world full of brilliant books, because we are not all brilliant people, but we do want a few books of this ordinary average levelness, and shall we also say level-headedness, because, given the dogmatic basis which Fr. Brown expounds in a good workmanlike fashion there is an atmosphere of steadiness and security, and at the same time of sparkling adventure when, through some occasional flash we do realise that God is a personal God and has an interest in us as a person. Definitely a book for the ordinary man who wants the word of God without any fireworks.

Two observations might be made in no carping spirit: Father Brown's readers will not always get as quickly bored with him as he sometimes, with sincerity enough, suggests. In seeking theology in English poetry I think Francis Thompson and William Blake would have also proved fruitful sources.

GERARD MEATH, O.P.

DANS 300 ANS. By Marcel-M. Desmarais, O.P. (Les Editions du Lévrier, Ottawa).

Here are nine broadcast sermons, portraying the earthly reminiscences of nine beatified souls. Their avocations on earth were different, but they were alike in their fidelity to a common ground of Christian life which blossomed into the one eternal happiness which they share. Père Desmarais conveys with great vividness their growing certainty of the truth of the values which they maintain and which the world about them rejects. Their temptations and sufferings are a shading without substance, which brings into relief their spiritual solidity. The cumulative effect of the nine sermons, when read in a book, may make this point more definitely than their separate delivery on the air. The souls who speak are well aware of the contribution to their happiness made by the presence of other souls whom they have helped to save. Indeed, the biographies are deeply personal, but there is a great sense of the Church as the Communion of Saints, in

each. The book is closed by nearly forty pages of passages from the Gospels recommended for frequent meditation. I.T.

“ST. THOMAS D’AQUIN.” Par G. K. Chesterton, traduite par Maximilien Vox. (Editions de l’Arbre).

This version carries over the genius of an English pen with genuine ease and freedom into excellent French, which is at the same time very readable. In fact, the supple and expressive words in that tongue seem to enliven even more—if possible—the flashing style of Chesterton. If the author has preferred to omit small passages, which would encumber a French version, the whole still preserves a unity of tone worthy of the master about whom the biography is written. But this is more than the life of a great saint, it is an introduction which, as the French author would say, gives both to the scholar and the untutored reader a real “goût” for St. Thomas in a language better suited than the hard English tongue for the subtleties of metaphysics.

A.R.

SOME LOVES OF THE SERAPHIC SAINT. By Father Augustine, O.F.M.Cap. (M. H. Gill; 7s. 6d.).

THE MUSIC OF LIFE. By Father James, O.F.M.Cap. (Mercier Press; 6s. 6d.).

The Franciscan note of joy in created things, expressed so unforgettably in St. Francis’ own *Canticle of the Sun*, is generously present in these two books by Irish Capuchin friars. Father Augustine is not, however, content with a sentimental picture of the *poverello* gently playing with the birds and beasts of the Umbrian hills. Francis’s love is as wide as that of his Master; it ranges from the earth at his feet to the altar, from the pain of the world about him to the pain of the stigmata. In a series of attractive chapters Francis emerges, in St. Bonaventure’s phrase, as “a live coal ablaze with flame of the love of Christ”.

Father James’s essays are more directly the heir of the *Canticle*. Again to quote St. Bonaventure, they are a meditation on the idea that “omnis creatura clamat Deum esse”, and under an attractive ease of writing they emphasise the truth of the Franciscan message—which is none other than that of the Gospel vividly understood and deeply lived. I.E.

LIFE OF MOTHER MARY ANTONIA, O.S.M. AND CONTINUATION OF THE ANNALS OF THE SERVITE MANTELLATE. By a Servite Nun. (Sands; 7/6).

Mother Mary Antonia (née Loughnan) was the second Superior General of the Servite Mantellate Nuns in England. Grouping the events around her life (with sometimes a rather tenuous connection) the author continues the story begun in the “Life of Mother Philomena Morel”. It is an interesting story, though obviously its main interest will be for the growing number of