

of those inclined to think that they were caused by auto-suggestion.

In conclusion, the present reviewer would urge a strong plea that no one should write a book about Padre Pio without having first visited him, assisted at his Mass, listened to him, talked to him, not once but many times.

C. NEWLYN SMITH



## NOTICES

THE PRACTICE OF THE VOWS. By Rev. L. Colin, c.ss.r. (The Mercier Press; 15s.)

This book is a little more than its title suggests, starting with the religious state, going through each vow separately and ending with a kind of epilogue on perseverance. It is full and complete but is a little lacking in freshness. Must we call chastity 'angelic'? D.J.S.

POUR UNE ACTION PAROISSIALE EFFICACE. Par G. Michonneau et R. Meurice. (Les Editions du Cerf: Blackfriars; n.p.)

You may disagree with the theme of this book but it would be hard to disregard its direct appeal in the name of Christ. If you are conservative you will probably reject it as reactionary. There is some hard hitting, some outspoken criticism, but this is never in a spirit of bitterness. It breathes a zealous and sincere apostolic spirit which demands action and attention. The enemies of the Church are very hard at work and this is a call to action, hard and demanding great self-sacrifice which commands our attention, and especially that of those faced with the problems of parochial life. It is to be hoped that many will read it and give it the serious thought it deserves. May we hope it will not be given the same treatment as the Maid of Orleans by an apathetic clergy or a stiff-necked generation. DOMINIC J. SIRE, O.P.

LA PRIÈRE. No. XLIII. Cahiers de La Pierre-qui-Vire. (Desclée de Brouwer; 78 fr. belg.)

This is not a book of prayers or instructions on how to pray (separate volumes are to be published for these purposes), but a series of expositions of the nature of Christian prayer and its relation to that of other religions. Designed to meet the reproach that 'prayer' has deserted the Church, it consists of many-angled 'shots' (the imaginative photographic illustrations suggest the image) of doctrine, tradition, variety, actors, and practice, particularly contemporary practice (although Origen and St Augustine are not excluded). Inevitably the question arises of opposition between 'Prière Liturgique et Prière Privée', and

it is interesting to note that Dom Emmanuel Lanne in 'La Prière en Orient' says that this opposition does not exist in the Eastern Church: 'There is absolute continuity between the prayers of Christians assembled in the Church and the interior life by which each one unites himself to the divine mysteries.' Perhaps the word 'continuity' contains the solution: neither opposition nor simultaneity. But this should be true for the layman as well as the monk. Dom Emmanuel goes on: 'The Church expects from each of the faithful a close participation in her prayer . . .'. The problem is how are the laity to come into closer contact with the 'divine psalmody' of the Liturgy?—almost the only question with which this varied and valuable book does not deal.

J. GUMMER

CHRIST-CONSCIOUSNESS by A. Gardeil, O.P., translated by a Preacheress of Carisbrooke, has now attained its third edition (Blackfriars; 2s.). In its forty pages it sums up the whole of the Christian life in its participation in the life of the Word made Flesh. A first-class booklet for study circles, as well as for prayer.



## EXTRACTS

RELIGIOUS SISTERS have for long been the most devoted and yet the most neglected members of the Body of Christ. That is to say, their great and wholehearted work in so many fields, both active and contemplative, has been taken for granted; everyone else calls on them as soon as there is a need for the works of mercy or for education and expects them to be there. Yet the same people will sometimes be heard criticizing the Sisters as scrupulous, narrow-minded or out of touch with reality. Père Creusen, S.J., of the Sacred Congregation for Religious, during a Study Week for Sisters at Spode House last August, recounted that he had met a priest who had boasted of the large number of girls he had dissuaded from entering religious orders. Attention for some years has been focused on the lay women who work for the Church outside the context of religious life; and they have drawn all the interest and encouragement though they remain such a small number in comparison with the nuns. Encouragement of the lay apostle has tended to push very undeservedly into the background that noble host of dedicated women who have given their lives utterly to our Lord and are attempting to spread his Kingdom and enhance his glory by their unceasing prayers and labours.

But the times are changing. France led the way; Rome adopted and blessed the movement, which has since spread to America. An example