

As our lover in chastity Christ teaches us the presence of God incarnate in our own nature. Finally as our lord and leader Christ teaches us, through obedience, that God is our *end*, leading us to the perfect acknowledgment, only complete in heaven, of God's will as our total cause and therefore (to echo Dante at this point) as our final peace.

Besides the touch of dryness and monotony, which not even the translator's skill altogether offsets, a fault may be found occasionally with the terms used in this book, particularly in a mutually exclusive use of 'natural' and 'personal' which leads to some puzzling statements. But these are slight blemishes in an honest and useful little treatise.

KENELM FOSTER, O.P.

I WANT TO SEE GOD. By P. Marie-Eugène, O.C.D. (Mercier Press; 21s.)

I AM A DAUGHTER OF THE CHURCH. By P. Marie-Eugène, O.C.D. (Mercier Press; 21s.)

In these two large volumes, together about 1,200 pages, Père Marie-Eugène offers a comprehensive synthesis of Carmelite spirituality, taking St Teresa's *Interior Castle* as his guide. He places her teaching on the solid, twofold theological foundation of the soul's creation in the image of God and the divine transcendence, and traces the spiritual life from its beginnings in the baptized person struggling with sin, to its ultimate consummation in the transforming union. Following the scheme of the *Interior Castle*, he discusses all the major questions of the spiritual life, such as spiritual reading, distractions, direction, spiritual friendship, silence, and also the controversial problem whether there is a general call to contemplation or not. He finds the solution in the distinction between a general and a proximate call: while unhesitatingly affirming that there is nothing, in principle, to prevent all men from reaching contemplative prayer, he considers that the proximate call is not for everyone, while yet extending it to the majority of Christians. Nevertheless, the fact remains that only few reach even the lower stages of contemplation, and very few, indeed, the higher ones. Following the teachers of Carmel, he ascribes this not to the lack of divine, but of human, generosity: only few Christians are ready to renounce themselves sufficiently to fulfil the conditions for contemplative prayer. For Père M.-Eugène follows the tradition not only of his Order but of the Church in stressing the absolute necessity of rigorous self-denial if the spiritual life is to flourish. He is also a faithful disciple of St John of the Cross in deprecating physical phenomena. The second volume contains, for example, a thorough examination of stigmatization in general and of the case of Therese Neumann in particular. He ends this section with the following admirably balanced statement: 'Whatever be the case, we must note that while everything is clear, limpid, marvellously human while highly divine in Saint Teresa and Saint Catherine, around

the stigmatics known to us (he excludes, of course, St Francis) we find shadow, a troubling contradiction of signs, uncertainty, lack of limpidity, a mingling of the human with the preternatural, of the marvellous and the unhealthy. Even though the trial may not harm these persons, still they do not come out of it humanly enlarged.' (Vol. II, p. 353.)

It is a great asset of this synthesis that it is not restricted to St Teresa alone, but makes ample use not only of St John of the Cross, but also of St Teresa of Lisieux, while not overlooking such a fine exponent of Carmelite spirituality as Elizabeth of the Trinity. The chief drawback of the work, however, which will deter prospective readers, seems to us its size. This is not so much due to the vast field covered as to the many repetitions and unnecessary pious reflections. The blurb claims that the book 'goes far towards breaking down the artificial barriers between the laity and those dedicated by profession to religious life'. Unfortunately only a very small section of the laity will be able to understand it, because the language is throughout the technical language of 'professional' spiritual books, taking for granted a thorough familiarity on the part of the reader with the Carmelite terminology of active and passive nights, spiritual betrothals, analogical acts and so forth. This, we may add, is not the fault of the translation (by Sister M. Verda Clare, c.s.c.) which, though not brilliant, is adequate. The two volumes, then, though not suitable for the general reader, form an admirable textbook of Carmelite spirituality that will prove a reliable guide for those who would penetrate more deeply into the world of St Teresa and St John of the Cross.

HILDA C. GRAEF

THE ARCHBISHOP AND THE LADY. By Michael de la Bedoyere. (Collins; 16s.)

In this very readable and well documented study, the author gives us a valuable and intimate exposition of the remarkable spiritual friendship between a strange lady, Mde Guyon, and the gifted Archbishop Fenelon. The exchange of letters between these two earnest souls would not have been of interest to others had not her teaching provoked the ire of Bossuet, and led to a mighty controversy between the two Archbishops, and to the condemnation by Rome of some of Fenelon's writings. The author makes it clear that he is on the side of Fenelon and the lady, but he gives enough evidence for an independent judgment. Many readers will share Bossuet's instinctive distrust for this woman who exercised such an extraordinary influence over so many intelligent people, and who caused so much trouble wherever she went. Of her own orthodoxy and sincerity there can be no doubt, though she often expresses herself in exaggerated language that at times seems almost blasphemous (p. 119), and is never far removed from Quietism. On the other hand