

vigorous mind and they display his characteristic method of masterly analysis and synthesis. One is tempted to ask: Were the undergraduates of those days different from their bright young grandsons of today? Were they such philosophers and theologians as to be able to assimilate such strong meat? The answer is provided by Father Vincent in the Prefaces he wrote to the first editions where he explains that by choice and circumstance the Conferences were spoken extempore and written up afterwards. So what we have here is not exactly a series of published sermons, but two very profound and lucid theological treatises on two most important subjects.

As Father Hilary Carpenter in his Preface writes, 'It is probably true to say that these Conferences were the most studied and formal of his whole life'. Later on, force of circumstances and the immediate apostolic need constrained him to change his technique or rather left him no time for studied formality, especially when his pulpit was in the open air. This did not mean falling into a slap-dash habit, lowering the standard or cheapening the message, but only making it more real and spreading it more widely. In *Faith and Prayer* we have two careful, finished expositions by a theologian steeped in the teaching of St Thomas. Father Vincent appears (rather unfamiliarly) in academic robes speaking from the doctor's chair, and we are given a glimpse of what might have been and how his apostolate might have developed if he had not become convinced that the essential work of the preaching friar was to obey the injunction which did not say, 'Lecture from the professor's chair', but 'Feed my sheep'. He claims to give us nothing more than an introduction to the study of these subjects so vital for our spiritual life; but those readers who are not yet able to take their Aquinas neat will find it just the introduction they need.

BERNARD DELANY, O.P.

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. By Père Gardeil, O.P.
(Blackfriars Publications; 9s. 6d.)

There is a similarity between Father McNabb's book and Père Gardeil's. Père Gardeil gives sixteen retreat Conferences, preached *ex abundantia cordis*, taken down as spoken and afterwards carefully revised. His subject is one he has already treated in his *Structure de l'âme* and a lengthy treatise on the Gifts of the Holy Ghost. The book is complementary to what he has already published on the three theological virtues and the four cardinal virtues and here he shows how the Christian needs the seven gifts in order to live the spiritual life in its completeness. Nowadays we are becoming familiar with radio talks on the Third Programme by experts who very wonderfully bring down to our level the mysteries of such subjects, for instance, as astro-physics, atomic energy and nuclear

fission. Father McNabb and Père Gardeil are experts in another sphere showing us that these profound mysteries of God's action in the soul are within our intellectual range and are more relevant to our spiritual needs than some of the interesting instructions we receive from the scientists. Here and there a touch of unfamiliar idiom and foreign accent remind us that the book is a translation from the French.

B.D.

THE FULNESS OF SACRIFICE. By A. M. CROFTS, O.P. (Sands; 12s. 6d.)

The present abundance of literature on the Mass is a sign of a real religious revival—in the strict sense of a reorientation of men's minds towards the one perfect act of worship in which all are called to participate as perfectly as they can. Recent theological and historical writings have contributed much to this revival, but have of necessity remained largely of a speculative nature; on the other hand, many of the 'devotional' books on the Mass lack doctrinal backbone. Fr Crofts's book is to be welcomed as an attempt to provide a doctrinal and devotional synthesis on the Holy Sacrifice. Based on a series of conferences in St Patrick's Cathedral, Auckland, it is intended primarily for the laity, hence theological subtleties and long historical disquisitions are avoided. At the same time there is a solid doctrinal and scriptural foundation underlying the whole work which makes it 'strong meat' indeed, and no merely 'devotional' dish. Some of the discourses retain a rhetorical style more effective perhaps in the pulpit than in cold print, but on the whole the language is simple and direct, calculated to hammer home the 'essential truth that the Mass is in the truest sense a real sacrifice—the daily sacrifice of the faithful in Christ, in which they individually enjoy a perfect participation?.

Fr Crofts seeks to present the Mass as it were in its cosmic context, 'not merely as a truth isolated within itself, but as the culmination of God's vast and eternal sign of Redemption, gradually unfolded down the ages of preparation, and, once fulfilled, for ever perpetuating the fullness of sacrifice in the redeeming mystery of the Messiah'.

The advantage of this method is to emphasize the fact that the Christian religion was not a break with the past, but its continuation and perfect fulfilment through the coming of the Messiah. The Jewish religion, its sacrifices, ritual, the Temple itself are seen as 'the patterns of heavenly things', foreshadowing the perfect sacrifice of the Cross and the establishment of the one true religion, its Temple the crucified body of Christ. The sacrifice of Christ is unique, all-sufficient. 'What is so utterly perfect in one act cannot be repeated—only shown forth.' The Mass is the 'showing forth' of Calvary throughout all time, enabling men here and now, at all times, to share in the one perfect act of worship. This doctrine,