

unalterable. Few among us can be so content with the present condition of the *cura animarum* as to suppose it is past the possibility of criticism or improvement, and that it has nothing to learn from other times and climes.

VICTOR WHITE, O.P.

THE PASCHAL MYSTERY. By Louis Bouyer, translated by Sister Mary Benoit, R.S.M. (Allen and Unwin; 18s.)

It is true, unfortunately, that liturgy and especially 'liturgical movement' have acquired a bad name in this country among the majority of clergy and laity. That is due very largely to a misunderstanding of the nature of the first mentioned and, to a still greater extent, to the erroneous notions of some propagators of the second who seem to have mistaken ritualism and all that it connotes for the worship of the Body of Christ. Viewed from the twofold aspect of what it is and what it does, this worship is the whole expression of Christianity, for the whole mystery is contained within it. It is for this reason that Père Bouyer's book is important. 'Meditations on the last three days of Holy Week' runs the sub-title, but it is very much more than that. 'The Christian religion', he tells us, 'is not simply a doctrine: it is a fact . . . and an action, not of the past but of the present, where the past is recovered and the future draws near. Thus it embodies a mystery of faith, for it declares to us that each day makes our own the action that Another accomplished long ago, the fruits of which we shall see only later in ourselves.' Consequently, during these last days of Holy Week, 'together with its changeless Head, the Mystical Body, ever renewed, partakes of the Last Supper, is stretched upon the cross and descends into the tomb to rise again on the third day. This is the paschal mystery.'

The book, then, is a synthesis of the whole of Christianity, and through the *paschale sacramentum* which it expounds by means of Christ's celebration of it we are brought into touch with those sources which are the basis of a Christian culture; in other words the book draws largely on the Bible and the Fathers, though it is by no means confined to them: the medieval commentators, Newman, de Bérulle, and even John Keble are laid under contribution. We are shown how the paschal mystery is the central mystery of our religion, a synthesis of all Christian life and indeed of the Church herself, for both are a *pasch.* Christian life and the Church—which is made up of God's chosen people—are the 'passage' from the first creation to the second, from this world to the kingdom of God, from Egypt to the promised land through the great mystery of death and resurrection, pre-figured in the first place by the Jewish *pasch* and passage of the Red Sea, founded on and derived from Christ's passage from this world to his Father, represented in the sacraments

which are its continual celebration and a reality of Christian life.

This view of the Church's celebration of the paschal mystery shows clearly how central it is not only in our religion (that hardly needs saying) but also in worship. One of the merits of the book is that it demonstrates conclusively this unity of faith and worship. Everything, almost, from the Matins of Maundy Thursday to the first Mass of Easter is explained: each office, each scriptural pericope, all the great biblical themes and symbols are commented on with a depth of learning and sensitive perception that are quite uncommon and refreshing indeed to read. It is not, of course, a book for popular reading but it is to be hoped that it will be studied and digested by those whose duty it is to teach religion, to preach or write articles about Christian religion.

The translator has rendered a great service to her English-speaking co-religionists. Not all the renderings will meet with general agreement but on the whole the book reads well, though occasional glimpses of the French peep through. She does well to substitute the titles of English translations (where such exist) of books quoted in the text, though for a future edition it may be worthwhile to point out that de Lubac's *Catholicism* has been translated into English and that some of the books which are given French titles were originally written in another language (works, for example, by Dom Casel, Nicholas Cabasilas), and this fact should be indicated. It is a pity, too, that the publisher has seen fit to advertise two works of Loisy's at the end of the book.

LANCELOT C. SHEPPARD

ISAIAH 40-55: Introduction and Commentary. By Christopher R. North. (In the series *Torch Bible Commentaries*: S.C.M. Press; 8s. 6d.)

This series of slender volumes is intended 'to provide the general reader with the soundest possible assistance in understanding the message of each book considered as a whole and as a part of the Bible. The findings and views of modern critical scholarship . . . have been taken fully into account' (from the Foreword to the series). The scholarship of the present volume is fully guaranteed by the name of the author, who, a Baptist, is Professor of Hebrew at Bangor and one of the leaders of Old Testament studies in the country.

The commentary deals with the middle section of the Book of Isaiah, frequently called 'Deutero-Isaiah' as distinct from the original Isaiah (Is. 1-39) of the eighth century in Jerusalem, and from 'Trito-Isaiah' (Is. 56-66). The notion that the chapters after 39 are not by the same author as the preceding dates from Doederlein in 1775 and Eichhorn in 1780, when II Isaiah was placed in the Babylonian Exile in the sixth century. The idea of distinguishing III Isaiah dates from Duhm in 1892, who dated