

view and man may see them from his. In these talks, three broadcast by the B.B.C. and the fourth delivered at the Oxford University Chaplaincy, Fr Vann examines the problem of suffering as it is seen through the mind of Christ in the light of the Cross.

Gently but inexorably he makes us face the truth that all sin springs from pride and selfishness and that the explanation of the suffering which crushes the world today is to be sought in the self-centredness which in some form or other lies at the heart of the life of each one of us. 'If we put ourselves in the centre of the picture, then we make friendship impossible: other people are rivals and therefore enemies; and so we become lonely, and we fall into envy and greed and strife and all the other things that produce suffering' (p. 8). But sin recognised and suffering accepted can be turned into sorrow and sorrow into sacrifice which is the expression of that love which is so well described in the third talk. And then we are sharing in Christ's dying and therefore sharing in his healing and redeeming work since it is through his sorrow and pain that he heals and redeems. We are choosing all that is symbolised by that tree of the Cross on which Christ reversed the original act of pride and rebellion of those who ate of the seductive fruit of another tree, and which brings back life to the world because it brings back divine love.

As these talks were intended for a mixed audience the sacramental aspect is not stressed but the full richness of the theme can only be seen in terms of the Mass in which Christ's sacrifice is renewed and made present to us, and the Sacrament of penance wherein we enter into the depths of our own sinfulness and bring not only our own sins and bruises but, in a sense, those of the whole world also, to be cleansed and healed in his Precious Blood.

The prayers, liturgical in tone, which conclude each chapter are admirably adapted to express the heart's deepest feelings in the face of the sufferings and sorrows of the world today. May this little book come into the hands of the many who would find it a source of comfort and hope.

S. M. ALBERT, O.P.

LA SOLUTION DU PROBLEME DE LA VIE. By F. Lelotte, S.J. (Casterman, Paris & Tournai; 110 frs.)

EGLISE ET UNITE. Various authors. (Editions Catholicité, Lille; 215 frs.)

L'EGLISE, PEUT-ELLE S'ADAPTE? Various authors. (Editions Catholicité, Lille; n.p.)

In one way or another all these books are concerned with the problem of adaptation. The first is a neat five-volume summary of Catholic doctrine, making full use of recent work in theology and adapted to the outlook of contemporary youth; the second presents a series of essays on such fundamental questions as the unity and holiness of the Church, firmly maintaining the Catholic claims but

eliminating irrelevances and expressions which are ill-justified in tradition and irritating to our contemporaries; the third demands a radically new attitude to the missions, but one which is in fact a restoration of the Pauline outlook.

This is the third edition of Fr Lelotte's book, and it is likely to run to many more. It is as near to the perfect *Summa* as we can expect in these days of hasty reading and ill-informed minds. A careful study of the text alone would leave the reader at a more advanced stage in Catholic doctrine than the vast majority of English graduates. Yet the progress is made easy through the author's constant recognition of the state of the sciences with which students are more familiar and by his readiness to make use of any source which can provide enlightenment—from St Thomas Aquinas to Baden-Powell. And if the reader should feel encouraged to go on to more serious study, there are ample bibliographies at the end of each chapter. As the books mentioned are almost all in French, the lists might not be very helpful in this country; nevertheless it is to be hoped that these comparatively slight volumes (about 60 pages each) will soon be translated: for not only are we unlikely to produce a sufficiency of English works for the bibliographies, but there also seems no reason to hope that any English author will give us so masterly and yet so simple a synthesis for many years to come.

The other two books are really complementary. *Eglise et Unité* shows how Catholic dogma allows for the widest diffusion of divine grace—notably in the essay on the *Floraison de Sainteté à travers le Monde*, 'L'Eglise qui nous propose ces modèles ne prétend pas inventer toutes les demeures du ciel'—while *L'Eglise peut-elles s'adapter?* concentrates mainly on the practical problems of preaching Christianity without imposing those European adjuncts which are at best meaningless and at worst profoundly irritating to non-European minds. We cannot even take it for granted that the Fatherhood of God will be appreciated in tribes where the father is generally a tyrant or in matriarchal societies. Yet such peoples or the civilisations in which Aristotle is a *parvenu* should not be more strange to us than the Greeks were to St Paul.

EDWARD QUINN.

L'HOMME SERA-T-IL PULVERISE? By Robert Kothen. (Warny, Louvain; n.p.)

The author begins these 'Notes Spirituelles' with a reminder of Hiroshima and the atom bomb. But he uses the incident to draw attention to the source of such a terrible disruption not in the disintegration of the atom, but in the disintegration of the individual man. This is the great problem of the day, which some are trying to tackle on the natural plane in terms of psychiatry and its like. Abbé Kothen shows that it is the supernaturalised spirit of man that alone can bring reconstruction through human integration. He traces the