

or for the most part strictly theological ones', in fact this simple straightforward unfolding of the meaning and message of St John will be found one of the best ways of acquiring a deeper understanding of the Faith, and so laying a solid basis for true devotion.

PETER WORRALL, O.P.

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN, AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WRITINGS. Edited and Introduced by Henry Tristram of the Oratory. (Sheed and Ward; 18s.)

There can be few people of whom it is as true as of Newman that the prophet is without honour in his own country. During his life he was attacked right and left, by the Anglicans because he became a Catholic, by Catholics because his ideas were so far in advance of his time that he seemed almost an heretic to them. Even now, while books and theses on him are pouring out on the continent, there is comparatively very little work done on him in this country, there is not even a modern edition of his works. Hence the present collection of hitherto unpublished very intimate autobiographical writings and notes is all the more to be welcomed. If one thing stands out from them, it is Newman's unremitting struggle for perfection which began when he was almost a boy and went on till the day of his death. There is at the beginning of the present book an 'autobiography in miniature', the size of half a printed page, which was written on the back cover of a school exercise book. It begins on June 19th, 1812, when, at the age of eleven, 'he was going up to Greek on Tuesday', and ends with the entry: 'And now a Cardinal. March 2, 1884'. Perhaps the most moving passage in this curious document, written in 1829, is the revealing sentence: 'And now in my rooms at Oriel College, a Tutor, a Parish Priest and Fellow, having suffered much, slowly advancing to what is good and holy, and led on by God's hand blindly, not knowing whither He is taking me. Even so, O Lord.' Slowly advancing to what is good and holy, blindly trusting in the guidance of God, this is surely the leitmotif of Newman's life. He was not a picturesque Latin, whose way to sanctity led through frightening penances and sublime ecstasies; he was a sober Englishman, an Oxford scholar, and his wrestling was not with the flesh and the devil, at least not in the most literal sense, but with the incomprehension of his surroundings and with his own temperament. This struggle is mercilessly analysed in the journals now published, from which we would cite one more revealing passage, written during a retreat at Littlemore in April 1843: 'I have only to observe that I seem unwilling to say "Give me utter obscurity", partly from a hankering after posthumous fame, partly from a dislike that others should do the work of God in the world, and not I.'

His were the temptations of the intellectual and the sufferings of a genius at the hands of his intellectual inferiors. For all those who would better understand Newman's character and his own highly individual way to God this is an indispensable book.

HILDA C. GRAEF

TENDERS OF THE FLOCK. By Leo Trese. (Sheed and Ward; 10s. 6d.)

'I feel that I am pretty much an average priest', says Father Trese on the first page. We cannot help wishing that he were. He is, if he will not think it fulsome, pretty well what the average priest ought to be. And the book is very like Father Corry's book, *As We Ought*, only for secular priests whereas Father Corry wrote for religious. It is a conversational and slightly breezy analysis of what the priestly vocation should mean, i.e. of a practical priest's practical way of holiness in the busy life of a parish.

Seventeen angles upon the mind and heart of an ordinary priest in a parish: seventeen chapters of self-examination, honest reflection, practical advice. He is exhortatory, in a bluff, man-to-man sort of way, all through, but what holds the attention is the string of sincere and shrewd remarks about the detailed realities of priestly life, as distinct from general ideals. He speaks from experience: he has practised before preaching.

Father Trese's previous book *Vessel of Clay* has been described by Father Martindale as 'remorseless'. There is perhaps a trace of that quality in the first chapter of this book, but hardly anywhere else. In some ways he seems to fall short of the standard usually placed before a priest. He seems content with very little preparation for Mass and thanksgiving after Mass, and he seems to be resigned to a lower standard of Latin than actually obtains among priests. His remark that it is legitimate to pray for an English breviary will produce varied reactions. But his remarks on prayer, on prudence, on money, on immoderate activity, on parochialism, on wasted effort, on preaching, will reach the heart of every priest, secular or religious. This is a book that every priest should read at least once.

G. M. CORR, O.S.M.

MEDITATING THE GOSPELS. By Emeric Lawrence, O.S.B. (The Liturgical Press, Minnesota; \$3.90.)

'For years I have been reading about the Bible as the source and sustenance of mental prayer. But I have not been able to find completely satisfactory selections of the Bible so prayed.'

It is not easy to understand what the author means exactly by these opening words of his Preface; not easy, that is, if we refuse to admit