

was a touching sincerity in the regret for having to decline for reasons quite uncontroversial, and one felt that here there could have been a friend. His own students knew how passionately he loved the period others thought he was blackguarding. Perhaps there was something else besides fear behind his nagging of the Catholic Church. The biography by his daughter shows a character full of contradictions, devoted to his home often, yet often wrecking its peace for some pompous or puritanical whim; humble before the truth yet intolerant; obsessional yet suddenly generous; harsh yet warm hearted; a man whose justice was more conspicuous than his equity. This is a remarkable book for its mingling of candour and affection.

N.W.T.G.

THE FOUR ROUTES. By le Corbusier. Translated from the French by Dorothy Todd. (Dennis Dobson; 15s.)

M. le Corbusier's theme is 'The Radiant City'. The 'Radiant City' does not consist of streets, squares etc., but of large multi-cellular blocks disposed here and there so as to catch the maximum amount of sunlight. The illustrations give an idea of some of these blocks, which are provided with outer walls of glass, 'behind which are the homes themselves, entirely fluid as to the disposition of rooms' and 'from each of which opens out a view on to trees and swards, on to the sky and vast open spaces' (p. 187). The blocks are raised on supports, sixteen to thirty feet above the ground, the space thus set free below the blocks being used for various purposes, covered play grounds and the like. On the roofs are installed artificially-created gardens.

M. le Corbusier calculates that in a city constructed on these principles, 88 per cent of the ground surface would consist of open spaces and, if the space below the blocks is taken into account (i.e. 12 per cent), almost the whole surface is put to the use of the pedestrian, automobile traffic being confined to highways, contrived at differing levels, according to its character. Another 12 per cent of space would be gained by the roof-gardens.

The principles of the radiant city are applicable to small towns and *mutatis mutandis* even to villages.

Part II deals with the 'Four Routes', road, rail, waterways and air, each of which is treated with special reference to the kind of transport for which it is best adapted, and in its relation to the radiant city.

Part III deals with the principles of planning, with the art of building, with administration, housing schemes and the future.

'And what have we done with our dwelling-houses? They have been allowed to sink very low, in their wretchedness they have become the very antipode of what they ought to be. And they have been filled to overflowing—yes, stuffed, filled to suffocation, rendered unfit for habitation, hostile and inefficient—through an insane accumulation of the worthless products of industry. This had to happen. This dirt had to come out into the open, a menace to the very cell of society: the family. It has now become obvious. People in due course had to become aware of this problem, and suggest a solution. Throughout the world this is now the great, the only question: what is the inevitable and satisfactory formula for a home in the machine age?' (p. 192)

M. le Corbusier's principles may at first sight appear Utopian: but the more one goes about the towns of England today, and finds in each of them the same congestion, discomfort and danger in the streets, the more one realizes that only radical, ruthless and far-reaching planning on the lines of M. le Corbusier's *Four Routes* can save the situation.

There seems small chance of conversion to these principles on a large scale. Conscientious, careful but unimaginative planning is bound to appeal more to 'our aediles'. If, however, a large-scale model of the radiant city be displayed, its merits might be made obvious to the most conservative minds. Until some real authority has had the courage to try out a 'radiant city', aluminium 'units of accommodation', like the depressing example recently on view in Piccadilly, will continue to take up precious ground space. The housing estates now being adopted in various bombed areas, show, it is true, some understanding, but fall far short of the principles of the 'radiant city.'

M. le Corbusier's book is a moving and eloquent plea for boldness and imagination. He writes with both wit and humour; and that he has a lively idiomatic style can be inferred from the translation, which seems admirably to have caught the spirit of the original.

On p. 21 for 'Parthenon' read 'Pantheon'.

W. H.

COMMON OR GARDEN. By Julian. Illustrated by Sir Francis Rose. (John Miles; 8s. 6d.)

The title of this cheerful little book does scant justice to the uncommon knowledge which flavours Julian's second book of selections from her weekly column in the *Catholic Herald*. Here is an ideal Christmas present for garden and nature lovers. The legends and lore concerning familiar birds, beasts and flowers will cause readers to see these with fresh and loving eyes. Notes on the cultivation and uses of herbs, will, let us hope, stimulate housewives to exciting adventures in seasoning 'austerity' menus. Advice from Culpepper and Gerard as to herbal remedies and comforts should shorten the chemist's bill. While the book is attractively produced, one could wish that the illustrations were more in keeping with the straightforward simplicity of the author's style.

JANET CLEEVES

SEVENTEENTH SUMMER. By Maureen Daly. (Hollis and Carter; 9s. 6d.)

This young Irish-American journalist has made in her first novel a new contribution to Catholic fiction. It is a closely observed and revealing picture of ordinary folk: the scene being set in a provincial town, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. Angie, the second youngest of four girls, tells the tale of all that happened during the holidays from college—her *Seventeenth Summer*. In that Miss Daly does not sound the depths of human life in order to point to the solution of its problems in Christianity, her story avoids that sordid unpleasantness which seems so often to be, in modern literature at any rate, a necessary preliminary to this conclusion. To say this is not to imply an overpoweringly pious atmosphere, but rather, an overdose of sentimentality. The author has the feeling of a poet for nature, and many passages on the beauties of woodland and lake are real achievements in word-painting. The natural, unselfconscious religion of young American Catholics, exemplified in the two chief characters of the book, is moreover always refreshing.

G.D.S.