

Book Reviews

Catholic mind, 'to indicate the Catholic treasure that is buried in him,' and this has been very well done.

The biographical sketch is colourful; the treatment of the Divine Comedy itself very clear. The question of English translations is dealt with thoroughly, and the failure of verse renderings proven by copious examples, including—rather, perhaps, reaching a climax—the ultimate infelicity of Anderson's version of

*'Scalzasi Egidio, scalzasi Silvestro,
retro allo sposo'*

as :

*'Giles bares his feet, Silvester his behind
The Bridegroom'*

Perhaps this book will induce Catholics to use the Divine Comedy instead of a manual of meditation. And this will be no mean achievement.

L.S.G.V.

THE QUEST OF SOLITUDE. By Peter F. Anson. (London : Dent; 7/6.)

A book on the history of hermits and hermitages is outside the interest of most men, but Mr. Anson deals with the subject so charmingly and so capably that the book should be appreciated by all. It is perhaps more of a delightful travel-book than a history-book, but a travel-book in no ordinary sense, for we are taken from solitude to solitude, from wilderness to wilderness, from Assisi to Judaea. Mr. Anson's attractive drawings will appeal to everyone and give the reader an excellent idea of the places to which he is taken. To the student this book will be invaluable, if only for the numerous bibliographies, which are both lengthy and methodical.

P.A.H.

DE EXTREMA UNCTIONE. TRACTATUS CANONICO-MORALIS DE SACRAMENTIS. Vol. II, Pars II. By Felix M. Cappello, S.J. (Turin; Marietti. Pp. xv, 311; Lire 15.)

Yet another volume has recently appeared of Father Capello's combined work on Moral Theology and Canon Law. It should be a great advantage to both students and parish priests to possess this treatise on the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, as there are few if any other works which give so complete and satisfactory a consideration to this subject in all its aspects. The method, which is so prevalent nowadays, of enclosing within the same pages Moral Theology and Canon Law, is per-

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haps open to criticism, on the ground that it tends to lead the untrained mind to identify one science with the other, and the unwary to think that the ecclesiastical lawyer is preoccupied with cases of conscience. Those whose labours prevent them from embarking on the study of speculative theology may profitably read the chapters on the administration of this Sacrament, and the requisite conditions in the recipient, together with the rites and ceremonies to be observed. In an appendix there is an account of the laws and usages affecting the various branches of the Oriental Church. The whole work, with the previous volumes already published, is very well documented and is to be recommended as an extremely useful text-book.

A.F.

SAINT AUGUSTINE. *The Odyssey of his Soul.* By Karl Adam. (London: Sheed & Ward. Pp. 65; 2/6.)

It is not easy to say much about a map, beyond pronouncing it a good map, or maybe a bad one. This little work is not the *Odyssey* itself, the lengthy epic of Augustine's great voyage of discovery through the turbulent waters of contradiction. But it is a good map of workable scale and projection. It is not a biographical sketch in the accepted sense. There are few space-time details, geographical, environmental, and the like. It is the story in brief of the wanderings of a soul, the heroic struggles of a fighter in the realm of spirit. *Non enim pedibus aut spatiis locorum itur abs te, aut reditur ad te.* It is the study of a mind, though it is not at all a sort of scientific dissection. Rather is it the study of a man, a personality, a living, growing thing, a great thinker painfully working out his salvation in the concrete. 'Herein is manifested the very heart of Augustine, the passionate searcher for truth, struggling after the ultimate meaning of life, wrestling with God,' a man who could not rest content with axioms and doctrines, but must needs press onward to the foundations of all knowledge, to the invisible source and origin of all reality; a mind that identified the *cupiditas sciendi* with the *cupiditas vivendi*; a soul for whom truth and happiness were one and the self-same thing. Augustine is sure of his place among the great figures of history for the single reason that he was, as few have been, a seeker of the truth. It is a classic tale, with the Faust-like figure of Augustine wandering through a darkness filled with demons of error; there are heroic combats—the fight with the body, the struggle with sex; the grappling with materialistic Manichaeism; the clever, dangerous duelling with