

of them are calculated to cause pain. Often they suggest a little lack of imagination, as when he writes (p. 191): 'One good air raid would have been a great help, for it was beginning to be difficult to make people face the realities of war.' But it is quite obviously the book of a good man who not only believed in British Christianity but practised it. As late as August 1952 he could write that the Mau Mau gave slight evidence that they were an anti-European rising (p. 266) and see it as a conflict between 'hooligans' and 'God-fearing Kikuyu', and note the forbearance, pity, kindness, and charity shown by his fellow countrymen in Kenya Colony (p. 272). In his speech to the Nairobi Rotarians in 1947 he could assert that British East Africa was already a 'society which places no insurmountable obstacle in front of any body of any race'. Only French historians of the future will judge all this to have been hypocrisy. English historians will know it to have been innocence.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.

THE INTERIOR CARMEL. By John C. Wu. (Sheed and Ward; 12s. 6d.)

Dr Wu is well known for his story of his conversion to the Catholic Faith in *Beyond East and West*. The present book grew out of a series of lectures on Christian Mysticism, which were given at the University of Hawaii in 1950. They reveal the most astonishing versatility and range of reading. He quotes alike from the Chinese classics, Confucian, Taoist and Buddhist, and from an immense variety of western writers, so that the book is almost an anthology of religious texts. But it must be admitted that the book is disappointing. One feels that Dr Wu has adopted the western, one might say the American, outlook with far too much facility. There is no sense of a deep and patient assimilation of western modes of thought to an eastern habit of mind, such as one felt in Abbot Lou's *Ways of Confucius and of Christ*. Dr Wu treats of such subjects as the purgative, illuminative and unitive way, basing himself on the Carmelite mystics especially, quoting the Psalms and the New Testament extensively, and illustrating his thesis with quotations from Chinese poetry and philosophy, but the general effect is one of superficiality. Perhaps the reason for this is that he seems never to have encountered any real difficulty in his faith; his path is not one of hard-won victory over trials, but a kind of joyous culling of flowers, very beautiful in themselves, no doubt, but seeming to lack any roots.

BEDE GRIFFITHS, O.S.B.

JOAN OF ARC. By Lucien Fabre. Translated from the French by Gerard Hopkins. (Odhams Press; 18s.)

Under five feet in height and only seventeen! A mere slip of a girl,

one would say, yet, guided and inspired by her 'heavenly voices'—St Michael, St Catherine and St Margaret—she raised the siege of Orleans and—more difficult task—led the rightful King of France to Rheims to be crowned, thus saving the realm from the English peril.

All this is part of a story that has been told almost too often, usually with some partisan bias, rarely well. But M. Lucien Fabre's book is outstanding and may be considered a work of genius. For he has succeeded not only in telling a thrilling and moving story supremely well, but in bringing to life the personality of the Maid so vividly that the reader feels she has become a close friend. We are moved to read that when wounded before Les Tourelles, the pain made Joan think that she was going to die, whereat 'she confessed she was terrified and shed tears' (p. 156).

M. Fabre has also succeeded in showing clearly wherein the Maid's sanctity lay—not only, that is, in the martyrdom itself, the endurance for Christ's sake of that slow and painful burning ('the stake was set very high. . . . In this way there was no danger that she might be suffocated by the smoke and so given a more merciful death'—p. 320), but in the progress of her self-giving in response to the call of grace, from the first setting out from Domrémy, through the siege of Orleans, the unexpected delay in the crowning which meant for her a sense of futility, deep disappointment and the frustration of her plans, right up to the final drama of the mock trial and its culmination in Rouen market-place, which set its seal upon her life and work.

Historically, M. Fabre's work brings to light important new facts in the matter of Guillaume de Flavy's treachery, pointing out that the fatal sortie at Compiègne was carried out under his orders (p. 241). The mock trial is dealt with in considerable detail and an account is given of the appearance of the false Maid, who failed to take in Isabelle Romée, Joan's mother, but did take in a good many others. In 1440 she confessed her fraud. It was no doubt the appearance of this false Maid that led to the unfounded and fantastic theory that Joan was not really burned.

The description of the Constable on page 183 is surely unsurpassed: ' . . . He was a stocky little man, entirely lacking in dignity, with a bad figure, dark skin, for ever snuffing and scratching. . . . His mouth was bitter, spiteful, twisted, with thin lips that betokened cruelty and disdain. His powerful, stubborn jaw terminated in a massive, mud-coloured chin, and a jowl that was like the strap-hinge of a cupboard. . . .'

Mr Gerard Hopkins' translation is, as usual, beyond praise. The book is provided with an annotated bibliography of French works on Joan of Arc and with an adequate index.

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