

absence of a preface in which the problems could be set forth, and of a conclusion to summarize what has been achieved. The Index contains no mention of the works of Huysmans or of the other authors referred to, so that they are hard to find. There is however an excellent bibliography of works dealing with him.

The biography makes very pleasant reading and throws much light on a period of French literature which has always been popular with English readers. The portrait is built up with literary skill, and it is hoped that it will bring people to the novels of Huysmans themselves.

ENID STARKIE

## NOTICES

THE *Everyman* edition of Gibbon's DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE (Dent; six volumes, 7s. each) has a new introduction specially written by Mr Christopher Dawson. Sympathy with Gibbon as an ecclesiastical historian was scarcely to be expected from Mr Dawson, but his judgment of the work as a whole is curiously severe. For him it is a real problem to know why Gibbon retains a pre-eminent position, and the answer he suggests is that it is because of the author's complete identification of himself and his great theme, the City and Empire of Rome.

THE CATHOLIC WAY, by Theodore Maynard (Staples Press; 15s.) is not simply another digest of doctrine, but describes the way Catholic lay people live. It is written both for them and for those still outside the Church by a distinguished convert who has already published many books on Catholic subjects. His present work covers the sacramental life, popular devotions, social and political activities.

TRINITY WHOM I ADORE, by Dom Eugene Vandeur, O.S.B., (Herder; 22s.), a series of meditations on the prayer of Sister Elizabeth of the Trinity, has been translated from the French by Dominican nuns. It is an excellent introduction to the spiritual message of Sister Elizabeth, for as the dust-cover says, 'the strongly Benedictine sense of liturgy and scripture guarantees the solidity of the thoughts contained in these chapters'.

LIFE IS WORTH LIVING, by Bishop Fulton Sheen (Peter Davies; 12s. 6d.), contains twenty-six of the famous T.V. talks which have made their author one of the best-known figures in America today. He has always something helpful to say, whether he is discussing the difficulties of individuals or world-wide political problems, and his pithy style ensures that his message will be heard.