

Teresa's convent life had been glossed over by her sisters on grounds of 'charity'; of such indignation are born the 'anti-deception' people who 'outbid one another in presenting tragic, and in some ways shocking, scandalous details' (p. xxiii). The author in his turn, finds this 'psychological approach so much overdone that it needs complementing and correcting by the principles of theology', yet even the theologian gets a page (xxv) of warning against turning his subject into 'a perfect illustrated guide to the theology of the virtues'.

Certainly, Father von Balthasar has avoided those rocks, and his chart is worth study by all who would set a course through Teresa's or any other saint's life. As specially useful in this connection we would instance the chapter on 'The Word of God' which gives us details of Teresa's use of the inspired Scriptures—the Book that became almost her only reading just because she so much feared and hated the spiritually complicated. Into the same pattern is fitted her virile independence of 'schools' of spirituality: the chapter on 'Indifference' (this title is perhaps the only lapse in Mr Donald Nicholl's admirable translation: why not 'detachment'?) proves how truly 'her way bears an amazing resemblance to that of Ignatius'; yet probably no more than to Benedict's, Francis's or Dominic's, for hers is the mission to show all Christians (and non-Christians too, all in her charge) the way to the Father through his chosen images, the human father and mother.

That this book brings out well what we all owe to Louis and Zelig Martin is its best recommendation and, we trust, the pledge of their daughter's blessing on author and reader.

✠ THOMAS ROBERTS, S.J.

THE MEDITATIONS OF WILLIAM OF ST THIERRY. Translated by a Religious of C.S.M.V. (Mowbrays; 7s. 6d.)

One could almost envy any reader for whom this unpretentious and pleasant translation of the *Meditativae Orationes* will be a first acquaintance with William of St Thierry. For although William was a writer who knew how to load his every word with the maximum amount of allusion, and to that extent not to read him in the Latin is to miss a good deal, this particular rendering does a very fair justice to the quality of his mind, and no one will fail to recognize from it what a very rare mind it was. It is scarcely possible to find his much better known *Golden Epistle* one half so characteristic as these shorter occasional pieces in which he argues and struggles and pleads with God, as a theologian engaged not in speculative explorations, but in a dearly-fought encounter with Him Who Is. William's burden is one of ardour and longing compounded with a profound apprehension of the ever-present judgment of the living Truth, so that his sense of spiritual

poverty is always deep and unaffected. 'I have learned to sleep with the sunshine full on my face, and have grown used to it; I have become accustomed to not seeing what takes place before my eyes and, dead at heart as I am, though I am set in the midst of the sea, I have ceased to hear the roaring of its waves and the thunder of the sky.' Or again, in the great eleventh meditation, with the use of a different image: 'Driven around in the circle of error we become so dizzy and bewildered that we cannot reach the centre of Truth, the unmoving point of unity which, though itself unmoving, gives movement to the whole'.

An intellectual if ever there was one, his spirituality is nevertheless that of 'a short road', a *brevis compendium*, abandonment to the forming spirit of God who is to find in him 'simple material on which to work' (perhaps the English word 'simple' is too weak for the Latin *simplex* with its suggestion of 'integrity'). Fortunately the inclusion here of the thirteenth meditation, discovered by Dom Déchanet, and probably the most personal of all, enables one to realize what that little way could amount to. 'Lord, Thou hast led me astray, and I have followed Thy leading; Thou wast the stronger, and thou hast prevailed', it begins, taking up the terrible complaint of Jeremias. But it reaches its term only in a more complete renunciation.

In a note on the eighth meditation the translator expresses some puzzlement about the curious phrase in Psalm 67, v. 14, *inter medios cleros*, which is normally, without any apparent justification, translated as 'in the midst of lots', a meaning which the Latin will scarcely bear. The translator probably rightly decides that William would follow St Bernard's interpretation, which would, one imagines, be explained by treating the Latin simply as a transliteration of the Septuagint *kleron*, whose first meaning is undoubtedly 'lots'. The point is of interest as being not the only instance of St Bernard's apparent acquaintance with the Septuagint.

AELRED SQUIRE, O.P.

SELECTED LETTERS OF POPE INNOCENT III CONCERNING ENGLAND (1198-1216). Edited by C. R. Cheney and W. H. Semple. (Nelson's Medieval Classics; 30s.)

This is an admirable addition to a series which is already well-established. If the price is twice that of the earlier volumes the student, nevertheless, should not be deterred from providing himself with this highly-polished mirror in which to see the Papacy in the control of one of the greatest of the medieval Popes. Eighty-seven letters of Innocent III concerning England are critically edited and feelingly translated with a minimum of fuss and elaboration. The careful introduction could hardly be bettered: the character of Innocent is sketched,