

Fr Vincent McNabb, O.P. A dedication is made to the Dominican Nuns of St Dominic's Priory, Carisbrooke.

This little book may be read with profit, and would serve as an examination of conscience both for superiors and subjects at time of retreat, and indeed at other times. AMBROSE FARRELL, O.P.

EXILE ENDS IN GLORY. By Thomas Merton. (Clonmore and Reynolds; 16s.)

Almost certainly this recent work of Thomas Merton will be acclaimed as another important addition to the spiritual writings of these days. It would be agreeable to join in these anticipated acclamations. Unfortunately, there are some disquieting features in this biography of a Trappistine whose spiritual odyssey begins in France and ends in Japan. The most disquieting feature is not so much the sentimental style, which, after all, appeals to many people; it is, rather, his implied assumption amounting almost to a spiritual arrogance that the Cistercian way is the only way. He insists on presenting the Cistercian life in a highly dramatic, one could even venture to say melodramatic, way. It may seem over-bold to assert that he is naïve about his own particular type of monasticism. But can he really expect his readers, some of whom perhaps have visited Cistercian abbeys, to believe that they are so completely cut off from what he calls in one place 'the hostile world'?

These three words are significant in any study of Thomas Merton, and in this biography, certainly, he shows no sympathy for the people whom God has called to achieve their sanctification in 'the hostile world'. Indeed, his own words could be taken to mean that the motive of a Cistercian vocation is a flight from responsibility, 'from all the cares and burdens that make people unhappy'. We are further told that the Cistercian is joyful 'because he is free from the crushing anxieties that are bred of selfishness and passion'.

One of the last paragraphs of this very detailed and eulogistic biography is a panegyric of deceased Cistercians 'who preferred to die to the world before they lived to its futility and wickedness'. What message of encouragement in the spiritual struggle can those whose vocation it is to live in the world of crushing anxieties derive from such a work as this? Is it not time that the good news penetrated the silence of Thomas Merton's ivory tower that there are millions of good people, and presumably many saints, in this world of 'futility and wickedness'?

K.M.

F. D. MAURICE AND THE CONFLICTS OF MODERN THEOLOGY. By A. M. Ramsey. The Maurice Lectures 1948. (Cambridge University Press; 10s. 6d.)

Frederick Denison Maurice markedly influenced the development of