

excuse himself on that score; but that the vitality of Christ is here in his members is not to be denied.

'If my parents had not been so devotedly true to the light they had . . . , I would never have come to hold the faith I hold now. If I looked back with any regret I would be untrue to my convictions; but it would be worse treachery to look back without love.'

'I am an artist', begins Miss Vandon. The interplay of *her* family life had involved no kind of security, moral, emotional or intellectual. She only reluctantly admits to herself that she is searching and only after many hard knocks grows able to see. What Miss Vandon discovers in the west of Ireland is, as she tells it, very like what Mrs Hawker remembers of the Somerset of forty years ago, 'the natural unaffected performance' of the acts of religion, above all, the presence of a 'real thing' often glimpsed, avoided, unconsciously longed for, itself pursuing. The account of her search for reality, in spite of a rather too exclamatory style, makes fascinating reading, for it tells graphically of a post-Christian's bewilderment and irritation in the face of the linguistic stocks and stones put up for her veneration by educators and parents whose Christianity was nominal or non-existent. Miss Vandon's struggle with the 'real thing' (for the child, 'the puzzling character called Jesus Christ . . . I could not make out who, or what, he was supposed to be . . . Moses and all his bunch bored me stiff, this Jesus Christ . . . aroused unaccountable feelings of affection in me') involved her in mental breakdown, morphia addiction, the 'good time'. And then she who felt herself 'cut off from reality' and could not bear what passed for reality in her life, through the transparent sincerity and *joy* of an Irish priest and his people 'saw' the truth of what he had been saying to her 'about God, Christ, heaven, hell and eternity—in one tremendous flash'. The love of the Christians had triumphed again.

GUY BRAITHWAITE, O.P.

NINE SERMONS OF ST AUGUSTINE ON THE PSALMS: translated and introduced by Edmund Hill, O.P. (Longmans, 18s.; pocket edition, 9s. 6d.)

Now that the revival in patristic studies is filtering down from the scholars to the general reader, supporting and enlivening the return to the scriptures and the liturgy, it was a good idea to translate some of the sermons in which St Augustine expounded the scriptures in a liturgical setting for the general listener of his day. Fr Hill in his excellent Introduction makes plain the circumstances of the time—there are in fact after this few allusions which are not easily seen as having a parallel today—and explains well the main difficulty of these sermons,

which is the way in which scripture itself is regarded and used. Even after explanation it remains perhaps easier to disregard the scriptural starting point, and enjoy St Augustine's shrewd, pithy, and humane comments on human behaviour and Christian doctrine for themselves alone. Of this there is enough to make the book useful and enjoyable. Whether St Augustine's Latin is quite so gay and colloquial as the English which Fr Hill uses to capture the modern reader is another question. He is for the most part successful, but on occasion should be more discreet; 'huckster' is surely not quite correct for the Latin *negotiator*, and the suggestions of 'heavenly huckster' are more suitable to Hermes than to Christ; the Word condescended to humanity, not to vulgarity.

BENET WEATHERHEAD, O.P.

THE PRESENCE OF GOD. By Jean Daniélou. A translation of *Le Signe du Temple*, by Walter Roberts. (Mowbray; 5s.)

This very moving little book does not merely contain exegesis, nor just patristic or sacramental theology, but makes use of all three to meditate with insight on the more and more marvellous modes of God's dwelling with men. The sign of the temple, then, is afforded by the cosmos, the temple of Jerusalem, the manhood of Jesus in both his physical and his mystical body, the soul of the believer: all is for man and his salvation, for him to be taken up in the train of the ascending Christ to the heavenly temple. As the author promised, 'the scriptures have yielded up some of their deepest mysteries'.

The translation is not very well done.

JORDAN VINK, O.P.

YOUR OTHER SELF. By Canon Jean Vieuxjean. (Newman Press; \$3.)

Canon Jean Vieuxjean is a professor at Louvain who is well known for a number of works on education and the direction of young people. These are published under the pen-name, and the pun must have been irresistible, of 'Jean le Presbytre'. The present work deals with the second great commandment. It is written with great insight and should prove most useful to those who make retreats and to those who give them. It is an excellent antidote to complacency. It will serve very well as an examination of conscience, both collective and individual. On page 41 the distinction between indifference, attachment and detachment is particularly noteworthy. In the same chapter over-possessive parents receive well-merited criticism. Chapter 20, 'Called to heroism', and Chapter 22, 'Be courteous', deserve special attention. The long quotations from Marcus Aurelius on page 96 will be of interest to many. The translation is done by Mr Richard E. Cross and