

world: through them it becomes aware of itself and grasps its destiny. The world is designed to be a sanctuary, and the sensible is the material element of the sacrifice of praise offered to the Maker. All things made by his hand and contemplated by his eye are good in themselves; sensible objects no less than others. In fact, we are reminded (p. 154) that often the healthy way of looking at the world of sense is a sign indicative even of the soundness of the Christian's faith. For that reason one of the most helpful contributions to the discussion is probably the concluding essay 'Anéantissement ou Restauration?' written by the Carmelite theologian P. Lucien-Marie de St-Joseph. Its theme is well summed up in the quotation he chose for himself: 'The fight against the senses is doomed to failure unless it is transfigured at once by a certain triumph of love over love. It is a sad victory when a soul denies itself but does not go forward to new ardour.' Many will agree with the suggestion that there is nothing more urgent in spiritual theology than to re-establish the right idea of asceticism. Naturally enough, a Carmelite tries to do so through a study of the writings of St John of the Cross. This study 'from within' clarifies the problems of 'the dialectic of the sensible' by reminding us that even for the author of the Dark Night the ultimate goal was Light: not to destroy the senses but to purify them in such a way that all might be able to feel more frequently what a recovered patient experienced, in the words of his diary, as 'Présence de Dieu dans la beauté des choses' (p. 145).

C.V.

SANCTITY THROUGH THE ROSARY. By Edouard Hugon, O.P. (Michael Glazier & Co.; 5s.)

Theologians writing devotional books are sometimes tempted to give their pens a holiday and to use theological terms and phrases in an apparently carefree, incidental way which shocks us into thinking: 'What *can* he mean?' There is something of this in the devotional reflections put together in the seventy-four pages of this book. 'Devotion to the Blessed Virgin is one of the fundamental principles of Christianity' (p. 31); 'The Rosary is the most sublime, the surest and the easiest form of contemplation' (p. 25); 'Mary is the model of our predestination' (p. 32); 'The world was redeemed by a Virgin Trinity, Jesus, Mary and Joseph' (p. 46): there is, of course, a legitimate sense in which each of these things may be said, and Père Hugon does qualify his assertions, especially the one about predestination, but such phrases out of their context are ammunition for the incredibly ill-informed critics of Catholic devotion to Mary.

This being said, one can agree wholeheartedly with the statement on the cover that this small book is one of the greatest we have on the subject. Standing at the centre of each mystery of the Rosary, the

author shows us how the highest and deepest truths of our Faith can be seen from this vantage-point of contemplation. It is his purpose to show how the Rosary is a royal way to all the wonders of the Faith both speculatively and in the actual living of the spiritual life. A richly-stored mind and a great earnestness of interior life seem necessary to a real assent to these reflections, but even a glimmering of these qualities in the reader will be sufficient to afford great encouragement, through these pages, in the task of seeking sanctity through the Rosary.

The Sacred Heart, Knowledge, Grace, Divinity of Jesus, are approached through the Rosary in the first part, Mary, especially as Mother of Grace and Patroness of a Happy Death, in the second, with a fine chapter on St Joseph; and in the third we have an enthusiastic appreciation of the power of the Rosary as a source of holiness in all its degrees.

Of several misprints only one needs to be pointed out—'comfortable' for (I presume) 'conformable' on page 70.

G. M. CORR, O.S.M.



## NOTICES

A RETREAT FOR PRIESTS was first preached by Mgr Ronald Knox, if we are not mistaken, about the period of the outbreak of the Hitler war. It was then that the author was engaged in his translation of the Old Testament and this retreat is redolent of that work—one of the most fruitful by-products of the translation—and unaffected by the threat or outbreak of war. It was first published as a book at the conclusion of the war and now makes a very welcome re-appearance in its second edition (Sheed and Ward; 10s. 6d.).

THOMAS MERTON confesses in the introduction to the translation of his 'Exile Ends in Glory' (*L'Exil s'achève dans la Gloire: Desclée de Brouwer*) that it was the second work he ever attempted in prose. He was a novice at the time and wrote this life of Mother Mary Berchmans in the old-style hagiographical manner which he took to be possible for refectory reading though unsuitable for publication. However, he has found a good assistant in his translator who helped to recast it in a less pietistic frame. Mother Mary Berchmans joined the Cistercian Order at Laval in 1899 and soon after her profession was sent to the Trappistine house in Japan where she died the death of a saint in 1915. Her holiness undoubtedly contributed to the flourishing state of the Cistercian Order in Japan and is one of the best examples of the apostolate of contemplation and silence.