

Though he is writing as early as 110 A.D., Ignatius insists constantly upon loyalty to tradition, and a loving obedience to the bishops who are vicars of Christ. (e.g. *Smyrn.* 8.) The Church is one body, and the food of that body is the Eucharist, 'for one is the Flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ, and one the cup to unite us with his Blood. . . ' (*Philad.* 4).

'Faith and love are paramount—the greatest blessings in the world', and Ignatius, also called God-bearer, writes to Rome, beseeching the Christians there to show him no unseasonable kindness, by depriving him of the martyrdom he so dearly desires, the martyrdom which will prove him to be a true believer, when he is no longer seen by the world—for it is through death, and being hidden from the world, that the clear vision of goodness comes. 'God's wheat I am', he writes, 'and by the teeth of wild beasts I am to be ground, that I may prove Christ's pure bread'.

The message of Ignatius is one of love and fearless courage; it is as alive and inspiring today as it was to the Christians to whom Ignatius wrote. The volume under review gives explanations in the introductions and notes sufficient for an appreciation of the texts: and then it lets Clement and Ignatius each bear witness in his own way to the teaching, the unity, and the inspiration of the Church of Christ.

VALENTINE WOOD, O.P.

THIS TREMENDOUS LOVER, By M. Eugene Boylan, O.C.R. (Mercier Press; 12s. 6d.)

This is an excellent book, most valuable to all readers, both lay and religious. The style is easy and the theological applications carefully weighed and sober, particularly when treating of our Lady's place in the Mystical Body, and completely free from the excesses of some modern writers. Holy Scripture is aptly used, and the selections from papal utterances are well chosen.

The author's main concern is the spiritual life of the individual Catholic and his partnership with Christ. He has written for everybody, for the layman as well as for the priest and religious. He applies the traditional thesis upheld for so many years by Fr Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., by maintaining that all are called to perfection, (p. 181) and that the summit of sanctity is open to every Christian. (p. 311.) In support of this he happily quotes the words of Pope Pius XI in the Encyclical on Marriage, 'All men of every condition, in whatever honourable walk of life they may be, can and ought to imitate that most perfect example of holiness placed before men by God, namely Christ our Lord, and by God's grace arrive at the summit of perfection, as is proved by the example of many saints'.

He stresses the importance of the interior life for the individual Christian and for the Catholic body as a whole. 'The only hope for civilization in its present crisis is that Catholics succeed in leavening society. Their success in doing so depends primarily not on

their organization but on their interior life and personal love of God. Once Catholic Action puts the emphasis on the 'Action', and forgets the real meaning of 'Catholic' which in essence is the result of union with Christ, then failure of Catholic Action has begun'. (p. xi).

Perhaps Fr Boylan is at his best in his three chapters on prayer, and when he writes about daily spiritual reading. His golden rule for prayer is 'to pray the way one finds best'. (p. 85). The dispositions for prayer are 'the dispositions for healthy membership of Christ: faith, hope, charity, humility, and submission to God's will'. (p. 87). In spiritual and religious formation he inculcates complete liberty of spirit in all matters that are not of obligation. He does not agree 'with those who would have lay people live like religious, out of touch with their surroundings. They are members of society, they have their place in it and their relations to it, and they have quite a legitimate interest in it'. (p. 101).

'Regular reading of a suitable sort plays a more and more important part in the life of Catholics today, and that for the educated at least it is well-nigh essential for their progress if not for their salvation'. (p. 101). The grown and mature mind of a grown person cannot be expected to re-adopt the mental habits and immature outlook of a child, or to renew juvenile tastes. The Catholic cannot afford to be satisfied with what has been learnt at school. The proper foundation for true devotion and prayer is dogma. And there is much dogma put clearly and applied in the most practical way in these pages. 'Christianity is not a set of rules; it is a Person—the Person we call Christ'. (p. 217). Doctrine presupposes some idea of Catholic philosophy. Often theology is read by the laity exclusively from the point of view of apologetic argument, whereas it should also furnish a dogmatic foundation of devotion. (p. 106). But 'common sense can never be left aside at any part of the spiritual life'. (p. 108).

It is suggested that there should be three practices instead of one, of reading, reflection, and prayer. Many books written as 'meditations' are 'more fit to be included in the list of spiritual reading'. (p. 120). In an appendix there is a well-selected list of books. There are also timely instructions on the Sacraments.

We venture to offer some hints for another edition. Some pruning would make the reading less heavy. A long introduction and a preface are a little top-heavy. It is doubtful whether so much indulgence need be given to recapitulations. And certainly an index at the end would help the diligent reader to recapture some of the ideas which have particularly impressed him.

AMBROSE FARRELL, O.P.

THE PRIEST OF TODAY: His Ideals and his Duties. By Thomas O'Donnell, C.M. (Browne and Nolan; 10s. 6d.)

This work was first published forty years ago, and is now pre-