

balanced without lack of force. The author, recalling Pius X's demand for *active participation*, shows how this can be carried out by the unlettered peasant telling his beads, how the Church has never insisted on a fixed and unvariable form of assistance at Mass, but finally how this active participation must follow the movement of the Mass and cannot be fulfilled by purely individualistic devotions during Mass.

The book is also an interesting example of the impossibility of ignoring modern discussions, and of the way in which dogma never develops apart from the spiritual life of the Church. For although Fr Clarke has successfully avoided any direct adherence to Père de la Taille or to his opponents, he has necessarily become involved in the ideas that have come into Catholic consciousness through these discussions. Thus, in reference to the sacrifice of Calvary, he speaks of the "Oblation" which includes the Agony in the Garden, and the "Immolation" which begins after the Agony, and this distinction is seen in the Mass, the division being made before the Consecration. The source of these ideas must be Père de la Taille's *Mysterium Fidei*; and yet Father Clarke insists on the actual offering which our Lord makes in every Mass, in a manner which is certainly not to be found in the work of the learned Jesuit. Fr Clarke therefore lacks precision on the manner of the Mass's participation in Calvary. He does not intend to write precise theology for the schools. But this lack of precision shows, firstly, that the modern discussions cannot be written off as irrelevant (they have played an essential part in the development of this doctrine), and secondly, that we have not yet reached the point when the problems first raised by the Reformers have become fully assimilated by Catholic piety. But this book shows that that point is considerably nearer than it was thirty years ago. The book is to be recommended to all Catholics.

CONRAD PEPLER, O.P.

THE SCHOOL OF PRAYER. By Olive Wyon. (Student Christian Movement Press, 6s.)

There is a warm persuasiveness about this book that one rarely meets in treatises on prayer, and one feels that the writer will easily succeed in encouraging the puzzled and the disheartened to give prayer another trial, and may well stimulate the more proficient to intensify their efforts. Miss Wyon thinks that the weakness and conventionality of contemporary Christianity is due to ignorance, to carelessness and haphazard methods in spiritual matters. To counteract this she has written this refreshing and practical book, basing it almost exclusively on standard Catholic authorities, but allowing her own personal experience to breathe

spirit and life into the dry bones of scientific exposition. She treats successively of prayer and the Will of God, prayer and life, distractions, the employment of Scripture as a basis of meditation, prayer and the spirit of adoration, with a chapter on affective and contemplative prayer. The last few pages are devoted to an explanation of God's purpose in prayer, in which she dwells on the idea that prayer is not individualistic but concerns the whole Mystical Body of the Church. It is a plea for unity that deserves our sympathy and endorsement. The book ends with a plan of meditations sufficient to cover a month, and a select bibliography.

HUGH TALBOT, O.Cist.

THE NATIONAL LITURGICAL WEEK. Reports for 1941 and 1942.
(The Benedictine Liturgical Conference, Ferdinand, Indiana,
U.S.A. \$1.50 each.)

The organisers of these American Liturgical Weeks are to be congratulated, not only for producing their reports so well—reports that have become an established feature of current liturgical literature—but for choosing the great central liturgical themes for consideration and for emphasizing the practical needs of the parish. We have, I think, viewed the liturgy from the point of view of the parish priest and parish priests have always taken a notable part in these conferences. This is important and consoling, for if the liturgy does not flourish in the parish, it can hardly be said to flourish at all. Palestrina in the Cathedral is no compensation for dumb congregations in the parish church.

The main theme of the 1941 Conference was "The Living Parish" beginning with the Mass as the centre of all things and working out to the "Liturgy and Catholic Action," the argument related step by step to the needs of the parish. In 1942, the subject was "The Praise of God," and while due place was given to the Mass, it was possible for the first time to give adequate attention to the Divine Office. I gather the impression that the prospects of restoring Vespers and Compline to their place in parish worship are even more remote in America than in England.

Excellent as these reports may be, I cannot help thinking that they are more important as records of the *way* Americans are thinking and of what they are doing about the liturgy. I do not recollect anyone saying this—perhaps they are too polite—but it needs saying that the individual papers rarely, if ever, provide new thoughts or cast new light on the ancient truths. They are nearly always highly competent, heavily documented, and, it must be confessed, a little dull. One would hardly read them for fun—not that one is supposed to—and even the almost verbatim reports of the discussions only rarely throw up such gems as "the jitterbug