

*Divino Afflante*, and it is only on occasional points of theology and exegesis that Catholics will have to part company with the author. It will be a happy day when a similar blend of 'true learning and solid piety' becomes evident in the general run of popular Catholic writing.

S. M. ALBERT, O.P.

COMMUNION THROUGH PAIN. By Mary Jackson. (Blackfriars Publications; 6s. 6d.)

Our Lady's reiterated command for repentance and penance has inspired this series of meditations, intended primarily for those for whom 'the introduction to reality by pain has begun'.

Suffering is a predicament and a challenge. It involves us 'most poignantly and most personally in the "vast aboriginal calamity" which is original sin' (p. 1), challenging us to face up to and to accept all the implications of this situation, in both its personal and its cosmic aspects. And the generous acceptance of the challenge of pain may involve us in the even more painful challenge of holiness through the way of contemplative prayer.

Mary Jackson wrestles with the problem with the help of poets and theologians, and her conclusions have value not only for those whose day is measured 'from one dose of medicine to another' (p. 55), but for anyone who realizes that 'there is nothing so potent and precious in God's hands here below as man's free and loving suffering gathered into the heart of God' (p. 84). Particularly striking is the explanation of our Lord's words: 'take my yoke upon you'—that he had in mind the double ox-yoke still used in primitive countries, with the animals yoked side by side. Although he has gone on ahead, he is our companion in the way pulling along with us, and communion with him through the long nights of pain of soul or body is meant to issue in the consummation of union in a mystical death from which springs a new and unending life. All this flows from God's work in us at mass, which must be so 'stamped on us like a seal' that our whole life is one ceaseless communion and sacrifice, a permanent rendezvous with the Beloved Hero.

Chronic sickness can so easily mean chronic depression and frustration. It is heartening to find it presented as the stuff of holiness and a call to close union with God.

S. M. ALBERT, O.P.

JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM. By Dorothy Dohen. (Geoffrey Chapman; 8s. 6d.)

Dorothy Dohen, a well-known American journalist, was for four years editor of the magazine *Integrity*. Her earlier book, *Vocation to*