

interpretation of the Vision, we shall set it side by side with the allegorical commentaries which re-create much of St Paul's vision of the Church.

GERARD MEATH, O.P.

QUESTIONS OF PRECEDENCE. By François Mauriac. (Eyre and Spottiswoode; 12s. 6d.)

Though only now put into English, this is an early Mauriac originally written in 1921; it may please those who find Mauriac's concern with sin oppressive. Nevertheless this is authentic Mauriac; the sense of sin is there, though less mature (some would say obtrusive) than in his later works. It is an attack on the snobberies and cruelties of Bordeaux society at the beginning of this century, told in the first person by a young man (unnamed) who, half in and half out of the ruling caste, takes his share in their failings. Although Mauriac outlines the characters with ruthless clarity there is no bitterness. As he indicates himself, the characters are more like caricatures. But the delicacy with which he indicates the hero's share of responsibility for much of what others do is unsurpassed; the same is true of the manner in which Mauriac works out his belief in the spiritual irrevocability of our smallest acts. This is not the greatest Mauriac but there is the unmistakable touch of the master. For Gerard Hopkins's translation one can only repeat all the earlier words of praise.

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VICTORS AND VANQUISHED. By Francis Stuart. (Gollancz; 16s.)

This is described as a quiet novel, and indeed it is, for Mr Stuart believes that the world is shaped as much by the secret workings of a man's heart and mind as by the public doings of politicians and soldiers. His hero is a young Irishman who, without any attempt to withdraw himself, finds himself uncommitted to the international events which threw Europe into a turmoil in 1939. His decision to return to his teaching job in Germany was brought about by neither pacifism nor neutrality. He had no theories to air, no axe to grind; his problem is entirely personal, to choose between his wife and the German Jewess with whom he has fallen in love. On the moral level we may query the unselfishness of his behaviour, but there is no question of Mr Stuart's success in telling a private story with no distracting excursions into self-analysis. It is the story of a young man who sets himself to do what he believes, rightly or wrongly, should be done. There is no isolationism; the horrors of war and Jew-baiting are there neither muted nor strident, and as the author carries us along with his beautiful