

NOTICES

JACOB BOEHME is one of the outstanding Protestant mystics and many years ago W. Scott Palmer extracted from his profuse, disorderly and mysterious works sufficient autobiographical material to justify the title *Confessions* (Methuen; 2nd edition 1954; 6s.). Miss Underhill in her introduction has shown that Boehme derived his inspiration not only from Lutheran and theosophic sources but also from the German Catholic mystical tradition begun by Eckhart. The mixture of traditions in this early seventeenth-century cobbler is somewhat bewildering, but it is intriguing for the student of mysticism to observe how powerfully the Neoplatonic idealism can work on almost anyone with a 'mystical temperament'.

THE GREAT PRAYER (Collins; 12s. 6d.) for Hugh Ross Williamson is the Roman Canon of the Mass, which he regards as a powerful instrument in the ecumenical movement as it has been accepted unchanged in this country by so many Christians since the end of the sixth century. Here he comments on the Canon historically (though not always accurately) and devotionally. It is perhaps unfortunate that he should regard it as so essentially changeless, since it is only one form of the essential Eucharistic prayer which springs from the reality of the sacramental presence upon which so many non-Catholics disagree. And also to begin with the *Te igitur*, omitting the Preface, and to conclude with the *Pater noster* present that particular Eucharistic prayer in a somewhat truncated form.

THE MEANING OF HOLINESS (Burns Oates; 10s. 6d.), was written by a French philosopher, Louis Lavelle, who died in 1951. This work, called originally *Quatre Saints*, has been translated by Dorothea O'Sullivan and introduced by Dom Illtyd Trethowan, who shows how the philosopher when true to his science is led into the heart of religious thought. The book shows too how great saints and mystics like St Francis, St John of the Cross, St Teresa and St Francis de Sales—all considered here in separate chapters—prove irresistibly attractive to certain types of philosophical mind. But the juxtaposition and comparison of these four very different saints make a valuable contribution to the understanding of Christian holiness.

OUR LADY SAINT MARY (Icon Press, The Croft, Hastings; 5s.), is a charming little hand-printed book heralding incidents in the story of the Queen of Heaven having special relevance to England. The text, written by William Griffiths, is printed against a background of simple line-cuts and with delightful gargoyle-like initial letters by Philip Brown.