

Book Reviews

elementary not to say jejune type: we are told, for instance, on xii. 11: The earth opened its mouth . . . that 'This is a reference to the rulers of the earth, Constantine and Licinius, who united their forces to put an end to the persecutions.' Q.E.D.

H.P.

VITA CHRISTI. Meditations on Our Lord's Public Life for the time after Pentecost. By Mother St. Paul, Religious of the Retreat of the Sacred Heart. (Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd.; 5/-.)

In these meditations on the third year of Our Lord's public life, Mother St. Paul gives us another of her helpful books based on the Holy Scriptures. In her preface she makes two remarks which might profitably be placed on the first page of many meditation books made fearsome by their seemingly complicated machinery. 'Ignatian contemplation (*i.e.* mental prayer; what's in a name?) is very simple—the whole contemplation should be a colloquy.' And, 'May it often happen that in using this book the person contemplating may be arrested by one person or word or one action in the Gospel story and may remain there under the Holy Spirit's influence.' Mother St. Paul does her work well of feeding the imagination with the setting suggested by the Gospel story.

M.F.

OF FAMILIAR INTERCOURSE WITH GOD IN PRAYER. By the Ven. Louis de Ponte, S.J. (From the 'Spiritual Guide' Translated by a Religious of the Order of St. Benedict. With an Introduction by the Most Rev. Alban Goodier, S.J. (Archbishop of Hierapolis). (London: Burns, Oates Washbourne, Ltd.; 6/-.)

An exhaustive treatise on the more active forms of prayer—though as leading to contemplation—by a master of the spiritual life. It offers a better equipment for mental prayer than would a library of meditation books—all of which should be headed by de Ponte's warning that meditation is 'not the substance of prayer, but only the means' to it, and should be 'a colloquy directed to God.' It is pleasant to find a sixteenth century Jesuit praising St. Thomas as 'no less skilled in mystical than in scholastic theology.' The English is excellent.

M.B.