

is, on the whole, excellent. One suspects, however, that in one place 'injurie' has become 'injured', while in one or two passages one feels that the translator has been rather baffled by a particularly thorny mixture of metaphysics and introspection such as only the French tongue can adequately carry.

RICHARD BLUNDELL, S.J.

THE FACE OF LOVE. By Gilbert Shaw. (Mowbrays; 21s.)

This is a beautiful book. It is a series of prayers in verse-form based on the stations of the cross. As it comprises nearly two hundred and fifty pages, it will be seen that the treatment of each station is lengthy. It is a pleasant change from the rather crude formulae in which this devotion is usually presented to us. Although it is written by a non-Catholic, there is hardly anything in it to which a Catholic could object. All that we have noticed in the course of a careful reading is a couple of occasions on which the word 'Church' is used in a sense which we could not accept, e.g. on page 48, 'his Church divided . . .'; and one or two other minor phrases which could be misunderstood, but which are also patient of an orthodox interpretation. Many of the thoughts and phrases are taken from the scriptures, and in the introduction and notes Catholic spiritual writers are often referred to.

There is far too much on each station for it to be used in its entirety at any one time. One short section from each would make a very beautiful way of the cross. The author has some other suggestions for using the book, thus: 'The prayers are broken up into short sections, each one more or less complete in itself. . . . That should enable the user to choose freely and to rest on those portions which at the time may seem applicable to his devotion. . . . Each line as far as possible, or section, is intended to convey a complete thought so that it can be held, pondered, or prayed over before proceeding further. Those that begin at the margin carry the basic thought; those set in are for the most part enrichment and elaboration of the former; indeed in many cases the longer lines could be read down first and then the subsidiary thoughts of the secondary lines gathered up into the main prayer' (pp. 11, 12).

Those of us who are called upon to preach the stations from time to time will find some useful ideas in this book; used for private prayer and meditation it should help many to enter more fully and profitably into the sufferings and death of our Saviour.

FR SEBASTIAN, O.F.M.CAP.

THE MEANING OF LOVE. An Essay towards a Metaphysics of Inter-subjectivity. By Robert O. Johann, S.J. (Geoffrey Chapman; 16s.)

A great deal of the history of philosophy could be written around theories on goodness and love. Plato's entire dialectic hinges on the

idea of the good. Aristotle identifies the good with finality, the first of the four genera of causes, and much of his politico-ethical doctrine derives from his vision of the common good as something to be shared and striven for. These are capital tenets that passed through the neo-Platonic and Judaeo-Arabic traditions into the strongly christianized currents of scholastic thought. The scholastics unhesitatingly identified the good with God, and the problem of love became the mystery of supernatural charity with its many repercussions within the natural order. The problem as they saw it included the following questions. How are we to differentiate between love of concupiscence or desire, on the one hand, whereby something is loved in view of what can be derived from it; and love of benevolence or friendship, on the other hand, whereby a friend is loved in himself and for his own worth? Since friendship involves a mutual give and take, a certain communion and communication of goods among friends, and since the virtue of divine charity is a form of friendship, what sort of give and take can be found between God and his creatures? How is divine love reflected in human friendship? According as the accent fell on one term or another, the schoolmen's replies varied on minor details.

The book under review deals with essentially the same problem, but the approach is new. Anyone familiar with the latest developments in the history of scholastic thought will understand why. Faced with the phenomenal growth of existentialism, many authors deemed that traditional Thomism was too much of an impersonal analysis of abstractions and needed to be existentialized. The discovery that authentic Thomism was no undiluted Aristotelianism as had been thought, but possessed a great deal of Platonic and Augustinian doctrine, gave the clue as to how to re-existentialize Thomism. In its new form, metaphysics ceases to be a science of essences and abstract categories. It becomes instead a science of the existent by an existent, precisely in so far as the latter participates in the value of metaphysical being intuited not abstracted. Metaphysics thus acquires a personalist character, in the Augustinian tradition. In such a context the problem of love is formulated in terms of *eros* and *agape*, of physical love and ecstatic love. The emphasis falls on life not on knowledge. The new approach seeks to avoid treating the lover and the beloved as an 'I-It' duality: as two objects to be looked at from afar and analysed accordingly. Instead, one seeks a philosophy of intersubjectivity: a description of an 'I-Thou' relationship, wherein each person is treated as an irreducible value in himself, and each is loved for his own intrinsic worth. The main difficulty then is in finding a common metaphysical basis for reciprocal love of that kind. Fr Johann finds a basis in the doctrine of participation. These are his main conclusions.

Love of others is the prolongation of love of self. To love another as a friend is not to neglect oneself, but to recognize one's own and the other's value. An entirely disinterested love therefore is impossible. Indeed, it is precisely that that makes for the dignity of friendship. Friends love one another because of what they possess in common. The element of communion is not just an abstract human nature but God as the unique and supreme Good in which all creatures actively participate by their very existence. The love of God then is not the effacement of self. Indeed, only by loving God can man love himself and his friend with a true love of *agape*. To love God the more is to love one's friend the better.

Some reviewers have dealt severely with this book. Admittedly, one could find fault with the excessive bibliography and quotations. There are only seventy-one pages out of one hundred and thirty-three given to the main text. Also the author uses an unorthodox method of giving references to St Thomas. But as a key to an understanding of the Thomistic doctrine on love, we deem it an excellent book. It is closely and clearly reasoned. But it is of use to the specialist only, not to the simple soul striving to love God above all things and his neighbour as himself. The present reviewer's criticism is not so much against the book itself as against the tradition for which it stands in its failure to face up to modern problems. The philosophic question today is not what the meaning of love is, but whether love exists at all. The reader of J.-P. Sartre's celebrated exposition on intersubjectivity will acknowledge that such is the case. The basic relationship among men, he concludes, is hate, and all other attitudes are but variations of that; thus the modern philosopher must see his friend, not in the light of *a priori* theories on love, but as a sexuated 'other' manifesting himself through the mediation of signs and gesture, situated in the same complex world of utensils as himself. Any metaphysic of love which fails to take such a description into account is unequipped to answer the challenge it implies, and is therefore simply building castles in the air.

NICHOLAS FOLAN, O.P.

THE LIFE OF CHRIST. By Andrés Fernández, S.J., translated by Paul Barrett, O.F.M.CAP. (The Newman Press, Westminster, Maryland; \$12.50.)

A life-long student of the gospels may often seek a life of Christ which effectively embodies the findings of years of profound study and reflection, or, if better endowed, he may himself aim at writing such a life. He would then need to have read and weighed every word of the gospels, he would need to be very conversant with their very