

tude towards Abailard is well known. Though he never condemned learning as such, and even praised most eagerly the *sanam doctrinam*, he had no use for the *Aristotelis versutias* or for Abailard's dialectics, which he always held more as dangerous than profitable speculation. His main interest in science was of *scire Christum* and *scire vivere*. During his visit to Paris he was not impressed by the great learning of the *magni clerici*, but rather, and unfavourably, by the loose behaviour and worldly spirit existing in the Schools. It is not, then, surprising that this sermon 'deals primarily not with belief but with conduct; it is a treatise rather of moral than of dogmatic theology.' His audience was very numerous, *clerus admodum copiosus*, and among his hearers such great men as Peter Lombard, the famous Master of the Sentences and the future Bishop of Paris; the result: twenty-four vocations to Clairvaux.

The excellent translation and the erudite notes are such as we should expect from the distinguished scholar and author of the *Life of Saint Bernard*.

DANIEL A. CALLUS, O.P.

## NOTICES

LETTERS FROM THEIR AUNTS. By C. C. Martindale, S.J. (Rich & Cowan; 3s. 6d.)

Father Martindale has contrived an excellent conceit. Like others of us, he has speculated on the unwritten history of those who appear for a brief moment, sometimes merely as names, in the later part of the New Testament, and in this series of 'letters' he has materialised some of his speculations in a most vivid and attractive way. The modern, homely composition of the letters combined with an authentic historical background makes them lively and often amusing reading. To take only one example, the letter of Evodia to her nephew Epaphroditus on the subject of 'Syntykhé' gives a very human and probable account of the differences between these two ladies to which St. Paul makes reference in his Epistle to the Philippians. But there is sweetness and sorrow too in some of the letters, and above all there is abundant evidence of the author's own familiarity with and meditation on the Scriptures. As the publishers well say, 'the book can be read as a kind of companion to the study of parts of the New Testament, as well as purely for entertainment.'

H.J.C.

**THE HEART EVER FAITHFUL.** By L. G. Bachmann. Translated by K. T. Stephenson. (Coldwell; 8s. 6d.)

This is a romantic novel dealing with the life of John Sebastian Bach during the period of his Cantorship at Leipsic. It was a life which found expression in unceasing labour in the interests of his family and his art. Family joys and sorrows must have been overwhelming to such a deeply sensitive nature, but the necessary relief was provided by his art. Not that he regarded it as a relief—music was for him rather a divine vocation. His whole-hearted endeavour was to keep music worthy of its dedication to God in its work of bringing ineffable ideas to our minds: this is shown particularly in his devoted conduct of the Thomasschule, which he rescued from degeneracy, pointing out that its true purpose was the praise of God. The opposition of unsympathetic ecclesiastical superiors and municipal authorities would have dismayed a lesser man, but only provoked Bach to further efforts, and it is in his dealings with these men that the strength and nobility of his character are shown.

The book is a novel, but historical fact is treated with respect: no imaginative or romantic detail is allowed to alter the true setting of Bach's life at Leipsic, so that those who are disinclined to study the more famous biographies may obtain in a pleasant way material useful as a background to the appreciation of his music. Many chapters are full of rich pageantry—great figures of the times pass before our eyes, a brilliant parade of royalty, nobility and dignitaries at musical festivities and banquets, against which the simplicity of Bach's life gives an impression of positive austerity. A lovely story, that does something like justice to the moving episodes of the last days of the great Cantor.

D.L.P.

**NAMES AND NAME-DAYS.** By Donald Attwater. (Burns Oates; 5s.)

A liberal use of the Bollandists and Holweck have not enabled me to trip Mr. Attwater up in any of his statements in this very detailed work, and I am confident that it will be an absolutely safe guide to a parish priest. If parents can be persuaded to buy it they will have great joy in hunting up delightful names for both sons and daughters.

W.G.

**LE PARADIS BLANC.** By Pierre van der Meer de Walcheren. Introduction by Jacques Maritain. (Desclée, de Brouwer; 15 frs.)

About the Carthusians and the Abbaye de la Valsainte (le

Paradis blanc) another could have written even were it less lovingly and with less penetration than Pierre van der Meer; the special interest lies in the author and his approach. He is a Dutch convert, a godson of Léon Bloy, a friend of Maritain, and a pioneer re-enlightener of Dutch Catholicism. It is he as well as St. Bruno, but he especially, that holds our interest, being so definitely of our time on the one hand, so clearly reflecting the eternal spirit of God's loved ones on the other. A book which may therefore escape the fate so indifferently allotted now-a-days to works on similar subjects.

P.P.F.

AT THE SCHOOL OF SAINT THERESE OF THE CHILD JESUS. (Burns, Oates; 2s. 6d.)

This work of the Carmelites at Lisieux now appearing in English for the first time will not, we think, help much her cause; it may please many of her devotees, but surely will do little to mollify the many who for substantial or superficial reasons remain aloof from what in their eyes is a flowery ramp of the spiritual order. The book was readable in French, the footnotes—comprising quite a third of the book—a spiritual joy. In English the reaction to it is: why cannot her teaching be left in its spontaneous setting—her writings, notes and remarks? But that the footnotes come to English readers in a book likely enough to be bought by very many Christians we must be heartily grateful. It says a great deal for the reading and religious taste of the Carmelites of Lisieux that they can cull such fine matter from so many different spiritual writers.

Those who know and love Saint Theresa know how difficult it is to speak in her tones in English. The translation of her own biography was a marvel, and many cannot bear that even. At least it might be wise to leave her to her own words, and for the rest speak in the more conventional phraseology. But those quotations!—the rest will pass.

P.P.F.

THE WAY OF THE CROSS. By Henry Ghéon. Translated by Frank de Jonge. (London: The Pax House; 3s. 6d.)

*The Way of the Cross*, a moving Passion Play in fourteen scenes corresponding to the Stations of the Cross, is a meditation in dramatic form.

Its language is simple:

' God is led to the slaughter,  
The just redeems my loss.'

The characters in the play, four in number, are spectators on the road to Calvary. They say most when their words are few :

1st Woman : She sees him.

2nd Woman : And he sees her.

1st Woman : And he speaks not.

1st Man : Just an exchange of glances—piercing the world.  
(*Fourth Station*).

But they speak to the imagination, and they play on the emotions. The play is a clever piece of descriptive imagery ; it narrates the story of the Passion in vivid word pictures . . . but it gives nothing to the mind, and leaves the will untouched. Such art is not indicative of a virile catholicism. J.P.

**THE BOYHOOD OF A PRIEST.** By a Country Rector. (Sands & Co. ; 3s. 6d.)

In this novel the author gives us an interesting, at times powerful picture of the struggle between the forces of good and evil in a youthful human soul. The scene is laid amidst the only too familiar realities of a modern industrial city. Sweated labour, grinding poverty, the haunting and unnerving fear of unemployment or sickness with consequent starvation, demoralisation and desperation are not the conditions most favourable for an early and vivid realisation of eternal values. Yet it is from this milieu that God chooses a future priest, and having refined his soul in the crucible of mental and spiritual sufferings shapes it towards the sanctuary and sanctity.

The author displays shrewd psychological as well as deep spiritual insight in dealing with the difficulties and problems of a peculiarly sin-sensitive and God-conscious character. The distinctly spiritual tone of the book does not lessen but rather adds depths of interest to the ordinary interplay of human emotions and passions. The book leaves us with the definite feeling that we would like to hear more about Paddy O'Brien.

E.L.K.

**KEN, CANDY AND CO.** By Millicent Inglis Thomas. (Burns, Oates ; 3s. 6d.)

In this clever and lively tale the author takes the twins Ken and Candy all the way to Greece for a series of exciting adventures. They find themselves in several tricky situations, which fortunately end well for them. Ken and Candy are delightful children who will be enjoyed by boys and girls, and their parents are just the right sort of parents. The rest of the characters,

of whom there are quite a number, are varied and different and well drawn.

Athens with its museums and ruins, its quaint little streets and shops, comes alive under the author's pen.

J.A.Q. DU P.

## PERIODICALS

The deeper implications of evacuation are the subject of thoughtful articles by Denis Gwynn in *The Clergy Review* and by the Rev. Gilbert Shaw (of Poplar) in *Christendom*. Mr. Gwynn sees in the event a challenge and an opportunity for English Catholicism of as great moment as the Irish Immigration; Mr. Shaw sees in it the preliminary stage to a social revolution of the first magnitude which holds immense possibilities both for good and for evil. Both articles should serve to offset the facile idea current in some quarters that evacuation is a 'leftist plot to divide families and debauch children'—as *The Cross and the Plough* ironically describes it. 'Failed' as evacuation is alleged to have done in its immediate purpose, it is still true, as Mr. Shaw concludes, that 'there can be no return to 1938 . . . The future is pregnant with possibilities. The one thing that is certain is that if the situation is allowed to drift, however good the intentions of those who would muddle through, the end can only be the hastening of the break-up of society.'

The Editorial in *Christendom* opens with an obvious but pertinent and qualified repudiation of the 'united nation' protestations, whose very frequency are perhaps their own repudiation. The point is illustrated by a lengthy critique of one of the Editor's own more emphatically 'non-conformist' contributors. The debate is interesting and, we hope, will continue. Mr. Mackinnon, in drawing attention to the importance of Drucker's 'End of Economic Man,' insists that there is 'no way back from Hitler.'

The 'non-conformist' case is pleaded with vigour under the heading 'To War or not to War?' by Thomas F. Doyle in *The Catholic World*, whose Editor extends his campaign for American neutrality with a vigorous offensive on Chamberlain, Halifax, Churchill, Duff Cooper, and H.M. the King.

'Guerre ou Révolution' is the title of a slight but shrewd article by Joseph Folliet in *La Chronique Sociale de France*. That the present conflict has more of the character of a radical international revolution than of a war in the accepted sense is