

Nora Rowley, and Priscilla Stanbury. They and their like stand at the gates of the city whose inhabitants include Heathcliff, young Copperfield, Jude, Nostromo and Scobie.

This is the rewarding part of the book, and one is grateful for the critical integrity the author has observed in speaking of the novels, not of the man.

JAMES REED

IRISH PILGRIMAGE. By Daphne D. C. Pochin Mould. (Gill; 16s.)

The history of the great Irish centres of pilgrimage is remarkably little known when compared with that of their main continental counterparts. Most visitors to Lourdes or Fatima must know about Bernadette or the three children; but few penitents at Lough Derg or Croagh Patrick could give any but the vaguest account of the history of the exercises on which they are engaged. Yet if they could forget their sore feet for long enough to think about the matter, they would find plenty of questions to be asked. Why should the place of pilgrimage be on an island (or the top of a mountain)? Why is it visited only at certain periods of the year? What is the origin of the 'stations'—those curious circles of stone round which the pilgrim stumbles reciting his endless prayers? Why does he always go round them right-handed?

To these and other questions Miss Pochin Mould's book provides the answer. She puts the more famous Irish pilgrimage centres in their full setting: she describes from personal experience the other and lesser-known pilgrimages, such as the gruelling round at Glencolumbkille; she traces back their history so far as it is known, and she offers an explanation of their probable origin in the earliest days of Celtic Christianity. She has written a pleasant, discursive book, based on a wide knowledge of Celtic history. The illustrations are admirable: it is a pity that there is no map.

J. H. WHYTE

NO PASSING GLORY. By Andrew Boyle. (Collins; 16s.).

To write of a man who has become a legendary figure in his own life-time, and that before the age of forty, must present a biographer with special difficulties. And Group Captain Cheshire is perhaps only at the beginning of the career for which he will be ultimately remembered. Yet Mr Boyle was abundantly justified in writing a life of his friend, if only to set in proper focus the wilder legends of the war-hero who saw the Bomb drop at Nagasaki, became a Catholic and henceforth devoted his life to the most heroic exercise of the corporal works of mercy. The picture is not as simple as that, and Cheshire's true greatness already demands an interpretation.

The merit of Mr Boyle's book is that it does not moralize. We are given a straightforward, and obviously accurate, account of family, schooldays at Stowe, undergraduate life at Oxford, the years of war as a brilliant bomber pilot, the uncertain years of peace, conversion to Catholicism, grave illness and the immense enterprise of the Cheshire Homes for the chronically sick. Cheshire emerges as a man of boundless energy, impetuous, humble and yet undaunted in pursuit of whatever he thinks needs to be done. And the popular impression that faith came to him in the mushroom cloud of an atomic explosion is properly dispelled. Mr Boyle does well to begin his book with an account of Cheshire's enthusiasm at the time of Nagasaki. It was rather the school of suffering and the impetus of charity that gave to his faith the dimensions it now so plainly possesses.

In our uniformly ordered welfare society Cheshire's work for the hopelessly ill of mind and body takes on a tremendous meaning. The easy assumption that the increasing provision of the state has removed most of our social problems is movingly shattered in the story of the whole movement associated with Cheshire's name—at first a grim failure—in the organization to settle ex-service men in communities, and then in a landslide of practical charity through the Cheshire Homes, which have caught the public imagination to a degree perhaps only paralleled by Abbé Pierre's work in France.

And faith is the secret: a faith that has known all sorts of setbacks, from within the man's own nature as well as from suspicion and cynicism in others. Group Captain Cheshire's work has been well served by Mr Boyle's absorbing book, which speaks with honesty and understanding of a man who has followed his conscience throughout—and a conscience moved by divine charity can achieve more than even the remarkable record can show.

I.E.

THE QUIET AMERICAN. By Graham Greene. (Heinemann; 13s. 6d.)

The distinction made by Mr Greene between his 'novels' and his 'entertainments' could no doubt be justified according to seriousness of theme. But the although latest tale is not called an entertainment, it has no overt religious interest and it will scarcely engage the sort of theological speculation which made *The Heart of the Matter* and *The End of the Affair* into seminary texts. *The Quiet American* is a novel of impressive competence, written with a sustained assurance in narrative and dialogue that is deceptively easy to read. But it is certainly serious.

The futile warfare of the last days of French rule in Vietnam is exposed with devastating irony. Pyle, the American of the novel's title, is a product of Harvard, an optimist who thinks that a 'Third