

generation, in St Thomas's words, *de virgine materialiter, de Spiritu Sancto vero effective*. 'Materially' does not of course necessarily mean 'non-vitally' (the causality of prayer is dispositive); and beyond the physical vitality involved, Mary contributed the knowing acceptance that her child was to be the Son of the Most High, who should save his people from their sins. Her dispositions which God employed to condition the coming of the Saviour were then not merely biological but fully human. In our author's words she was both physical and moral dispositive cause. So far there seems no ground for disagreement, which is more likely to arise over the application of the idea to the accomplishment of the Redemption on Calvary, for it is just here that the rival schools of thought are at variance. Our Lady's co-operation on Calvary is obviously primarily in the moral order, by contrast with her contribution to the Incarnation which however fully understood and freely willed is still basically physical. Perhaps the reversed order in which P. Bur treats of her physical and moral dispositive causality in relation to the Incarnation and the Redemption is a reflection of this difference which is not otherwise stressed.

P. Galot's theologically informed meditations on our Lady's life and virtues are a most acceptable addition to one's Marian library. In his opinion that our Lady's virginity was vowed eminently and virtually rather than in so many words, he does not perhaps give due weight to St Thomas's reasons, which to us seem very strong, for the other view.

The publishers' claim that Fr Most's book is the first 'that co-ordinates and integrates the dogmatic truths . . . with a solid, unsentimental, and balanced application of these truths to the life of the soul' is enough to put anyone off. It is in fact a collection of ascetical conferences which will be helpful to some but rather too full of gear for others. Twenty-three sets of questions for discussion could be useful.

P. Spicq's meditations for a month of Mary are simple and attractive.

IVO THOMAS, O.P.

THE WATERS OF MARAH. The Present State of the Greek Church. By Peter Hammond. (Rockliff; 21s.)

The Rev. Peter Hammond has recorded his personal impressions of the Orthodox Church in modern Greece. This helps to explain both the limitations of his study and its great charm. He would seem to have centred primarily in Salonica and secondarily at Athens and most of his anecdotes are drawn from the north, from Macedonia or Thessaly. This is to be regretted since the Peloponnese is still in so many ways the heart of Greece and the orthodoxy of the islands has its own particular notes and devotions. His close contacts would seem to

have been primarily among priests and lay theologians. In consequence I think that he underestimates the extent of indifferentism and the strength of embittered anti-clericalism; modern Greece is in many ways an oddly Latin country. But because his book is written primarily from personal knowledge and personal love it is the best introduction to contemporary Greek Orthodoxy. It is admirably illustrated and written vividly and informally and candidly. More space should have been given to the devotion to the mother of God which is so vital a factor in the religion of the people. The apparently Western elements in the Zoe movement seem under-stressed. There might have been more discussion of sacramental practice. But as a whole Mr Hammond's account is as convincing as it is inspiring. It could only have been written as the result of many close personal contacts based on mutual trust. It may be suggested that these were only possible because of the traditional friendship between Hellas and England. It is good that this book should be published at a time when that friendship is being so violently and so wantonly destroyed.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.

VISITS TO THE MONASTERIES OF THE LEVANT. By Robert Curzon. (Arthur Barker; 25s.)

Robert Curzon of Parham Park in Sussex travelled in Greece, Palestine, Turkey and Egypt in 1833-34 and in 1837-1838. He possessed an immense gusto, a vivid sense of the picturesque, and a favourite hobby, the collection of old manuscripts. The extent of his knowledge of Byzantine architecture is suggested by his statement that it was different from Lombardic and Saracenic and inferior to both. He knew so little of Byzantine art that he believed that the eighteenth-century painters guide by Denis of Fournas was a tenth-century treatise. Travelling in the Egypt of Mehemet Ali and through the post-Napoleonic Levant he seems oblivious of the new fashion of Westernization. In his account of his visit to the Patriarch of the Phanar there is nothing to suggest the existence of that sophisticated group of Phanariot families with western sympathies who formed the cadre of the hereditary advisers of the ecumenical throne. Primarily he was intent on picturesque detail and in noting everything that was most different from Parham Park. *Visits to the Monasteries of the Levant* is therefore of slight value as an historic document. But Curzon's own capacity for enjoyment makes it one of the most enjoyable of travel books. And this new edition complete with Curzon's own drawings and plans and with new photographs will ensure that it keeps its place among Victorian classics.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.