

country as in France. It claims to cover ground neglected by Catholic theologians and philosophers. Stimulated by Kierkegaard, well versed in the Scriptures, familiar with the thought of the Angelic Doctor as well as with the writings of his contemporaries, the author makes good his claim of avoiding extremes ('Cassandres chrétiennes . . . mélangeant Spengler et l'Apocalypse' on the one hand, and 'une théologie de sérénité souriante et détachée du présent' on the other). But one wonders whether his dissatisfaction with St Thomas (pp. 16, 116) is not caused by the limitations of his own interpretation of the saint's thought rather than by the limitations of the doctrine itself. It seems a questionable presupposition to assume that St Thomas does not consider what the author regards as related problems only because he does not discuss them in his articles on 'Timor'—rather gratuitously identified with 'l'angoisse'. It is a pity that several quotations have suffered from misprints (p. 64 is Ps. IV, 2, not II, 4; p. 70 is Eph. IV, 12, not III, 12; p. 44 is Ps. XVII, 17-18 and not XVIII, 2; p. 112 the quotation is from Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, not *Physics*, etc.). Further, it seems that the translator could have broken down the involved chains of sentences in German not to force the reader of this fascinating study to struggle often even through sixteen lines (p. 112) to reach the next full-stop.

C.V.

**PADRE PIO.** By Malachy Gerard Carroll. (Mercier Press; 3s. 6d.)

In this short book Mr Malachy Carroll sets out to give, as he puts it, 'a level account of Padre Pio and the wonders that cluster about his name'. He tries to avoid what he calls the 'lamentably hysterical' element apparent in some of the available literature. His book is perhaps the most readable account that has so far appeared in English.

Probably no book about a living person with a reputation for high sanctity can seem really satisfactory; the available facts are few and have to be sifted from much that is merely hearsay. Hence Mr Carroll has to draw most of his material from previous writers. In connection with the date of the appearance of the stigmata there is a curious slip into which Fr Martindale too seems to have fallen in his article in *The Month* for June 1952. It seems established that P. Pio received 'invisible stigmata' on 20th September 1915 and that the actual wounds appeared on 20th September 1918. Mr Carroll writes of the former (p. 19): 'Significantly enough, it was 20th September, the Feast of the Stigmata of St Francis.' But in fact this feast falls on September 17th. On p. 21, describing the onset of the visible stigmata, he says: 'Again it was the Feast of the Stigmata of St Francis. On the Friday within the octave—20th September, 1918—' etc. which suggests that he is conscious of some discrepancy. It is a small point, but if the stigmata had in fact appeared on that feast the coincidence would not escape the notice

of those inclined to think that they were caused by auto-suggestion.

In conclusion, the present reviewer would urge a strong plea that no one should write a book about Padre Pio without having first visited him, assisted at his Mass, listened to him, talked to him, not once but many times.

C. NEWLYN SMITH



## NOTICES

THE PRACTICE OF THE VOWS. By Rev. L. Colin, c.ss.r. (The Mercier Press; 15s.)

This book is a little more than its title suggests, starting with the religious state, going through each vow separately and ending with a kind of epilogue on perseverance. It is full and complete but is a little lacking in freshness. Must we call chastity 'angelic'? D.J.S.

POUR UNE ACTION PAROISSIALE EFFICACE. Par G. Michonneau et R. Meurice. (Les Editions du Cerf: Blackfriars; n.p.)

You may disagree with the theme of this book but it would be hard to disregard its direct appeal in the name of Christ. If you are conservative you will probably reject it as reactionary. There is some hard hitting, some outspoken criticism, but this is never in a spirit of bitterness. It breathes a zealous and sincere apostolic spirit which demands action and attention. The enemies of the Church are very hard at work and this is a call to action, hard and demanding great self-sacrifice which commands our attention, and especially that of those faced with the problems of parochial life. It is to be hoped that many will read it and give it the serious thought it deserves. May we hope it will not be given the same treatment as the Maid of Orleans by an apathetic clergy or a stiff-necked generation. DOMINIC J. SIRE, O.P.

LA PRIÈRE. No. XLIII. Cahiers de La Pierre-qui-Vire. (Desclée de Brouwer; 78 fr. belg.)

This is not a book of prayers or instructions on how to pray (separate volumes are to be published for these purposes), but a series of expositions of the nature of Christian prayer and its relation to that of other religions. Designed to meet the reproach that 'prayer' has deserted the Church, it consists of many-angled 'shots' (the imaginative photographic illustrations suggest the image) of doctrine, tradition, variety, actors, and practice, particularly contemporary practice (although Origen and St Augustine are not excluded). Inevitably the question arises of opposition between 'Prière Liturgique et Prière Privée', and