

THE NEW EVE. By John Henry Newman. (Newman Bookshop, Oxford; 3s.)

The Newman Bookshop must be congratulated on this cheap and well-printed selection of Cardinal Newman's writings dealing with Catholic belief in our Lady. Here is the book to give or lend to Protestants who do not understand Mary's position as the Second Eve or the Mother of God; the meaning of her Immaculate Conception, her Intercessory Power, or the various aspects of devotion to her. There is a useful Introduction by Patrick Tardiffe, a well-selected list of books, and helpful notes which clarify obscure points. It is good to see that three more paper-bound volumes, uniform with this one, are in preparation by this enterprising firm, whose address is 30 Walton Street, Oxford.

P.F.A.

THE ASCENT OF MOUNT SION. By Bernardino de Laredo. Translated with introduction and notes by E. Allison Peers. (Faber and Faber; 21s.)

Reviewers can scarcely keep pace with Professor Peers's abundant output. Here we are once again in his debt for translating an historically important treatise by a Franciscan laybrother born in 1482. He was a Spaniard and forms part of that little-known but influential Franciscan spiritual revival which prepared the way for the wonderful renaissance of the Church in Spain during the sixteenth century. It was the very book under review which reassured St Teresa of Avila when she was in 'a sea of trouble'. Thus *The Ascent of Mount Sion* is of importance in the history of mysticism—if such a study really exists or could be written down. In itself the book lacks order—perhaps a relief after spirituality by numbers, a danger of a certain type of modern treatise.

Professor Peers in his most instructive preface says that we do not find here much concerning the highest flights of the spirit; that should not distress us, as I am sure that most of us are more at home on the nursery slopes. Nevertheless, there is about this Franciscan laybrother and one-time physician that fire of love which leads on the sluggard and ignites the dry wood in our hearts. At the end of the third part of Fray Laredo's work we see peeping out what in St John of the Cross is going to be so magnificently done, a running commentary on a poem, in this case 'coplas' and followed too by aphorisms—and good ones—in the original Spanish they are rhyming couplets. What connection is there between Laredo and St John of the Cross? Certainly the title 'The Ascent of Mount Carmel' is reminiscent of 'The Ascent of Mount Sion'. But it would require more time and more space to go into this more thoroughly than there is room for here.

X