

TO LIVE IS CHRIST, by R. W. Gleason, S.J.; Gill, 18s.

This is a fine book on the relation between nature and grace in the life of a religious. The general principles on which Gleason works and many of the particulars he produces would suit any priest or laymen as well as a religious. He presents the real imitation of Christ through participation, the realization of the individual as a member of the holy People of God, 'the very power to follow is given by the one in whose Mystical Body we have our life'.

Our life in Christ is a growth in love, we know that we love the children of God when we love God, and we know that the great enemies of love are formalism, ritualism and casuistry – we must make a gift of ourselves to our community, and our community is a reflection of 'the Trinitarian life as it is lived by Father, Son and Holy Spirit'. We are to be active in community, not retreat into communal protection. Gleason is rightly indignant with those who appear to consider ordination or profession an escape from responsibility and work while claiming for themselves a constantly increasing comfort. The love of comfort leads to the destruction of the community (and here he is writing as much of the family and the nation as the specifically religious community) for it leads to stagnation and apathy while the selfish prefer to 'float along the stream of their order's accepted traditions without contributing anything personal or without vitally absorbing or understanding these traditions. Whatever is done in the particular community in which they live, whether or not it be in accordance with the genuine spirit of their institute, is to their liking'. Professor Knowles has shewn us such men in the past, Fr Gleason draws attention to their presence here and now. Lively imitation of Christ implies growth and development. Gleason has a wonderful passage about devotional practices which inhibit rather than foster the love of God by outmoded and ridiculous forms which have only custom and a past use to recommend them. And he is happy in his advice to Superiors to take modern men as they are, generous and quickly responding to encouragement, independent and unused to the idea that authority does not abide question, reserving faith for divine truth.

A man does not become a religious to obey authority but to fulfil the talents God has given him and fulfil them in a way which helps him to become the friend of God. We must learn to have a proper respect for nature as well as for the supernatural. We must learn to have confidence in our Father who will be glorified in us. These are the two lessons of this book. There is none more worth the saying. An excellent book.

HAMISH SWANSTON, CONG. ORAT.

GRACE, by Robert W. Gleason, S.J.; Sheed and Ward, 10s. 6d.

Fr Gleason's book is intended to shew 'how relevant theological realities are to the psychic needs of modern man'. A worthy aim. The expectation is dis-