changes of a living and growing language.

Miranda is perfectly aware of this need for self-correction. It is to his credit that this book boldly opts for the importance of potential fruitfulness as against the risks of error. This reviewer cannot pinpoint any particular error but agrees with Miranda's footnote 3 on p. 47 that one peculiarity of the Filipino character leans "more to the intuitive, emotive and sentimental rather than the rational and the intellectual." This peculiarity can be a source of errors in the task of constructing from literary Tagalog a technical Tagalog capable of meeting the need for univocally definable terms in systematic ethics and moral theology.

This construction requires expertise and consensus. Miranda has established his expertise. We await other experts to establish a broad and reliable consensus.

Vicente Marasigan, S.J.


Some of the best fruits of the ecumenical movement today are being harvested in the area of spirituality. Many Protestants are rediscovering their contemplative roots in pre-Reformation Christianity; and, at the same time, many Catholic pray-ers are realizing their kinship with spiritual giants of the Reform like John and Charles Wesley. Rev. Gordon Smith, a minister of the Christian Missionary Alliance and, until recently, dean of their Alliance Biblical Seminary in Quezon City, is uniquely positioned to bridge the gulf between the two Christian traditions. The son of missionary parents, to whom Essential Spirituality is lovingly dedicated, he completed his doctorate at Loyola School of Theology in 1987 — with a well-received dissertation comparing the optimistic, pietist, missionary (and discernment)-oriented spiritualities of John Wesley (in whose tradition he stands) and Ignatius Loyola.

Essential Spirituality, his first published book, can be seen as an outgrowth of the research and reflection he did for his dissertation. Written primarily for his Protestant brethren, it presents a methodical ("Methodist") approach to spiritual growth — one which incorporates, clearly and accurately, many of the basic insights familiar to pray-ers in the Ignatian tradition: the examen, the retreat, apostolic service, a balancing of the "mystical" and the "earthly dimension(s) of Christian Life," and of authority and discernment.
But Gordon Smith, whom I have been privileged to know and to journey with during his discovery of Catholic spirituality, is very much a man of his own Wesleyan tradition. Hence his book is also valuable for Catholic pray-ers. It presents, in a style that is simple, direct and practical, a fresh and illuminating perspective on truths that have perhaps become too familiar, too ‘ordinary’ to us Catholics. He makes us aware of the fact that some truths of our faith (for example, the special and central role of the laity in the Church of Jesus Christ) have been better preserved and explored by the Protestants in the centuries since the Reformation. And he also makes us realize that some of our cherished spiritual values are very much part of at least some Protestant traditions.

All in all, Smith’s book is ecumenism at its best — not in theory but in practice. Even his current ministry is ecumenical: he is the new pastor of the “nondenominational” Union Church in Makati. As we continue our journey towards unity in Christ, we can pray that Gordon Smith (and others like him) will continue to enlighten our way.

*Thomas H. Green, S.J.*