



**The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy.** By Etienne Gilson. 490 pp. Chas. Scribner's Sons, New York, N. Y. \$3.50.

For Etienne Gilson, the essence of medieval philosophy is Christian philosophy, and "the spirit of medieval philosophy is the spirit of Christianity penetrating the Greek tradition, working within it, drawing out of it a certain view of the world specifically Christian." He is well aware that the very idea of a Christian philosophy has been held to be impossible; but for him the concept of Christian philosophy "does not correspond to any essence susceptible of abstract definition, but rather to a concrete historical reality, as something calling for description." Accordingly the whole purpose of his book is "to reveal in history the presence of an influence exerted on the development of metaphysics by the Christian revelation." The resulting philosophy is called Christian philosophy, and its content is "that body of rational truths discovered, explored or simply safeguarded, thanks to the help that reason receives from revelation."

The demonstration attempted is purely historical. The author chooses some of the master problems of philosophy, such as being, providence, personality, free-will, law, and morality. He endeavors to point out how the medieval philosopher, be he Peter Lombard, Saint Thomas or Duns Scotus, developed and completed the Hellenic tradition on these concepts in a way that *de facto* manifests the influence of Christian revelation.

As the author realizes, "the task is immense and full of pitfalls." Yet he makes the venture, and if one grants his acceptance of his terms, his thesis is plausible enough. The inductive nature of the book makes it a contribution not so much towards the solution as the reconciliation of the contentions of the opposing camps of deductive reasoning on the question of the possibility and existence of a Christian philosophy.

M.B.

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**Reality and the Mind.** By Celestine N. Bittle, O.M.Cap. 390 pp. Bruce Publishing Co., Milwaukee, Wis. \$2.25.

The everyday facts of knowledge are so evident to the ordinary man that any question or doubt regarding their veracity seems almost

incomprehensible to him. He knows things, and he is certain that his knowledge of them corresponds to reality. In spite of this certainty, it is necessary to subject human knowledge to a critical and scientific examination, because some of man's spontaneous convictions of the past have been proved false. So it is incumbent upon philosophers to establish the rational foundation and veridical validity of human knowledge. *Reality and the Mind* takes the reader on a journey of critical investigation through the various solutions of the fundamental questions of Epistemology. Positive solutions are the object of such an examination, for a negative answer means intellectual bankruptcy of all human knowledge and science.

Considering first of all the possibility of human knowledge, the author emphasizes the imperative necessity of a correct start on the epistemological jaunt. He examines and condemns skepticism and Descartes, universal doubt, then outlines the rational foundation of the three primary truths of Dogmatism. He likewise shows the impossibility of the position of Cardinal Mercier, who, attempting to dig deeper, really dug himself into skepticism, from which he extricated himself by unwittingly accepting the three primary truths.

A major portion of the book is devoted to the question of the validity of human knowledge. A long history of modern philosophy is given, in which philosophers from Descartes to Whitehead, and solutions from Ultra-Spiritualism to Objective-Realism are paraded before the reader's eyes. Their one point of unity is disclosed—that of attempting to bridge the Epistemological gap, which had been excavated by Descartes's doctrine of antithetical dualism. After wading through the lengthy solutions given by modern philosophy, the reader will undoubtedly sigh with relief at the common sense doctrines of Scholastic Presentative Realism.

Of course, the greatly disputed question of the trans-subjectivity of secondary qualities comes in for a long discussion. Are they formally objective or only causally so? The author admits that the well founded view that all sense qualities are objective without exception, explains the facts so fully and convincingly and is so backed up by the universal conviction of mankind, that it amounts practically to a scientific and philosophic law of nature. However, he seems to be somewhat enamored of the opposite side, for he proposes it as a very possible and likely theory, and strongly defends it against the charges of partial Idealism and potential Skepticism. He appears to assume falsely that modern objections against the trans-subjectivity of the secondary qualities have not and cannot be adequately answered by the Scholastics. His defense is by no means compelling and seems

inconsistent with his general purpose of avoiding the pitfall of Skepticism.

Before considering the criteria of truth, the author gives a detailed study and history of the problem of Universals. He completes his investigation with a splendid exposition and defense of the truth value of inductive and deductive reasoning.

The author has included much that is not strictly within the province of Epistemology, with the purpose of making the treated questions clearer for those who are not acquainted with the subject. Although he attempted to eliminate as far as possible the bugaboo of terminology, he had no more success than his predecessors. However, the glossary of definitions is most useful, and the recapitulation added to each chapter will be helpful to all. Father Bittle's book is excellent supplementary reading, perhaps even—with certain limitations—a good textbook; but that it will prove interesting to the general reader, as its author hopes, seems unlikely. R.M.G.

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**Restoration of Property.** By Hilaire Belloc. 144 pp. Sheed & Ward, New York, N. Y. \$1.50.

*Restoration of Property* is not a complete treatise on the question of private property. Its aim is merely to set forth the ways of recovering economic freedom. At the outset Mr. Belloc admits that his solution is not a perfect one, that it is deficient in some respects, but that it is sufficient to give freedom to the individual.

Supposing that economic freedom is a worthwhile good, the author starts to work out his problem. As the basis of his solution he proposes two principles necessary for success. The first is decentralization of resources and the second protection by law of the newly distributed property. Guided by these principles he sets forth the plan for the reestablishment of three classes of men, the small distributor, the craftsman, and the farmer. In regard to these groups, the application of the first principle is not a very difficult task, for there are many in each class who have kept their independence. The second principle demands the coöperation of the state, for the protection advised by the author is that of legally established guilds and of a system of differential taxation against those either within or without the groups who would attempt to centralize power. As to large corporations whose existence is necessary, there should be a distribution of shares to many individuals and also a differential tax governing the number of shares allowed to each.

The treatment of the subject is characterised by the author's desire to effect some result here and now. He is for immediate ac-

tion. Though he doesn't overlook the position of those who believe that a requisite condition for the recovery of economic freedom is the education of the people in the correct philosophy of values, Mr. Belloc holds that practical works should accompany this work of conversion. The situation, he admits, is not very encouraging, for under present government there is little chance of obtaining the needed legislation. Yet some start must be made, some example of economic freedom must be given that the people may learn to appreciate and desire it. Mr. Belloc has made such a start. C.T.

**Fire on the Earth.** By Paul Hanly Furfey, Ph.D. 156 pp. The Macmillan Company, New York, N. Y. \$2.00.

*Fire on the Earth* is a plea for supernatural Sociology, for a Catholic system of social thought and action based upon Revelation. "That is to say, its most distinctive principles must be revealed truths. . . . It is quite frankly other-worldly, quite frankly more concerned about Heaven than about the earth."

Such a plea is fitting at a time when Catholic sociologists in imitation of modern humanitarianists are too likely to forget the supernatural character of the end of their subject. Doctor Furfey points out and emphasizes the fact that true Catholic sociology must be built on the loftiest ideals, and not on ones that are merely acceptable. He indicates the vital forces behind Catholic social thought and action—grace and the virtues. He contrasts the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Satan, and in the latter half of his work drives home the principles he has laid down by answering four interesting questions: What is the place of Catholic sociology in politics? What does the Christian's duty to bear witness to the truth involve? Are there worldly activities from which the good Christian should abstain? And is true Catholic sociology workable here and now?

*Fire on the Earth* is a long step in the right direction. It is a valuable contribution to Catholic thought merely as a presentation and clarification of practical present day problems. But it undertakes also to meet and solve these problems. Doctor Furfey's answers will not find universal approval; but in some instances at least, this will be due not to mediocre standards, as the author leads one to believe is his opinion, but to a reasonable disagreement over the selection of means to the end for which all are striving.

This reviewer can not subscribe to many of Doctor Furfey's sentiments. One would gather from his work as a whole that it is impossible to mix caution and moderation with certain practical conclusions which in the author's opinion follow necessarily from ideal Catholic doctrine.

In particular, disedification at a Catholic's use of prayer book or Rosary at Mass is unreasonable. The implication that a just war is impossible today is much too sweeping a doctrine. St. Joseph Cottolengo's manner of financing charitable works was not the ordinary method. God's ordinary Providence is usually the norm of action and this dictates preassurance of financial support.

The above enumeration is, of course, not complete. With full knowledge that the idea will not meet with the approval of Doctor Furfey, this reviewer would sum up this portion of his criticism with the suggestion that the work would not suffer by the inclusion of a chapter on prudence in the application of the solutions it proposes. With the above reservation, *Fire on the Earth* is heartily recommended.

W.C.

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**A Humane Psychology of Education.** By Jaime Castiello, S.J. xxiii-254 pp. Sheed and Ward, New York. \$2.50.

A stimulating book on education is a rarity. This book is not only stimulating by wholesome, interesting and solid—a distinct achievement for any author. Naturalism, Mechanism, Positivism and Behaviorism have bound American education hand and foot. The lamentable result from our point of view is that they have percolated in some form or other through our Catholic Colleges and Universities. In our mad desire to be up to date we have frequently sacrificed our priceless heritage for the proverbial mess of pottage. Newness and truth have been accepted as correlative terms, so that a student is urged to accept S. R. bonds rather than a spiritual substantial soul. Dewey, Thorndike, Rugg and Kilpatrick are accepted as saviors of American education rather than the modern four horsemen of the Apocalypse. To criticize these men objectively is frowned upon in educational circles as being un-progressive and un-American. Traditional educational theory and practice are assumed to be but dead bones of the past. We must shudder at the very thought of examining them, much less resurrecting them. Religion and the supernatural are unwarranted inclusions in contemporary educational trends. Only those misguided individuals who "wear their collars backward" insist on according them a place in the scheme of American education.

When one reflects on the part the school must play in the social structure of the nation, it is saddening to speculate on the pernicious effect these educational "gods" are having in our economic, political, moral and religious life. Hundreds of teachers, consciously or unconsciously, are deeply steeped in naturalistic tenets and consequently openly or covertly are indoctrinating the youth of the land with false notions concerning their nature, origin, destiny and place in society.

Man-made morals, a theory of life in which man finds himself continuous with animal nature and not superior to it, a religious fanaticism for the all-sufficiency of scientific methods and measurements—these and countless other teachings do violence to the nature of man and destroy the distinctive mark by which man can claim to be man and not an animal or an angel.

*A Humane Psychology of Education* is a blessing for the field of education. Written in a clear, popular, light vein, with happy illustrations and examples, it is nevertheless thoroughly solid food, wholesome, nourishing and what is more important, easily digestible. We recommend Dr. Geoffrey O'Connell's dissertation on *Naturalism in American Education* (Catholic University) as a companion volume to this work of Dr. Castiello. The former should be read first as it gives a penetrating philosophical exposition of the actual teachings of the "American gods" in education.

Louis Mercier's preface to the present volume is fundamental in setting the stage for what follows. He points out that there are two fundamental conceptions of life: this-worldliness, and this-worldliness plus other-worldliness. Since educational theory follows philosophical theory, true education must be interpreted in terms of the whole of reality. In his introduction the author states his purpose and throughout the rest of the book lives up to his advance notice. Three sections comprise the book, the first being an analysis of thought, creative power and self-making activity as contrasted with "association," "conditioning" and "bond-making mechanisms." The spiritual nature of the former postulate a spiritual source. With honest and clean thrusts of his rapier-like pen, Castiello destroys materialism, behaviorism and all organicist psychologies. In this section is found a critical analysis of completion tests, true-false tests and intelligence tests. The psychology of habits and the role of morality in life, as found in St. Thomas, are vindicated and contrasted with contemporary naturalistic theories.

The second part of the volume considers the principal study courses and their relation to the intergation of personality which is the aim of all education. The modern confusion as to the meaning of personality is avoided when the author carefully distinguishes between the psychological and social meaning of the term. Language, history, science, philosophy and religion as the basis of education, are investigated with the consequent castigation of utilitarianism, dilettantism, superficiality and glibness. Philosophy, the unifying and central element in education, is a necessity, if things are to be judged in their totality and all one-sided theories rejected. Dewey is no

doubt in the author's mind when he pleads for reflective thinking against that activity which inevitably wears any mind threadbare. Great heights are attained when religion is discussed as the core of all education, and the role it must play in the school is outlined. The elective system is thoroughly discredited by Castiello, for he maintains it places all subjects on the same plane of equality, "which is to be color-blind." Herein we would remark that it is the abuse of the elective system which is wrong, for, under the careful guidance of competent counsellors, the elective system could mean more than different courses being like mere peanuts in a bag; for clearly it makes no difference which peanuts one eats and in what order. The defense of the classics against Paulsen is rather long-winded and out of proportion to the rest of the book. Their value is more or less recognized by educators. What is disputed is the imposition of them on all students indiscriminately.

The final section of Dr. Castiello's book deals with the personality of Christ and the necessity of His influence on educational theory and practice. The responsibility of the school for the personality of its students and the inspiration of the teacher are carefully noted. The volume closes with an appendix listing suggested topics for discussions in each chapter and suitable references and readings. While the book is not heavily documented, this in no way detracts from its distinct contribution to American education. The author rightly refuses to sacrifice one jot or tittle of the great heritage of Christian thought; and yet his study was pursued not on *a priori* grounds but from an empirical and experimental standpoint. We hope that other students will come to the front and meet the challenge of Dewey, Thorndike, Rugg, and Kilpatrick on their own grounds—as Dr. Castiello does—and thus destroy forever the malign influence they have exerted on American education.

R.S.

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**The Odyssey of Francis Xavier.** By Theodore Maynard. 365 pp. Longmans Green & Co. \$2.50.

Mr. Maynard's latest work presents a very interesting and descriptive exposition of the missionary activities of the great apostle of the Orient. The author brings to life by means of his own intimate knowledge of the East, the many scenes of the Saint's apostolic zeal. His detailed description of India and the history of its people are fascinating. The narrative takes on a definite historical trend, and it is within this setting that the accomplishments of Francis are revealed. To understand fully the obstacles which the Saint had to overcome, this historical background is necessary.

Motivated by an intense love of souls, Francis is portrayed not only as a true Ambassador of Christ but also as a real human being. At an early age he set out for the University of Paris. It was there he met Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus. Many years passed before Francis decided to throw in his lot with Ignatius. On the feast of the Assumption, 1534, Ignatius together with Francis and five other companions pronounced their vows. It was not until September, 1540, that the Company was approved as a religious Order, at which time Francis was in Lisbon. At the request of King John of Portugal Ignatius consented to send two of his Company to India. For this work Francis was chosen. At last his desire to preach to the heathen was to be fulfilled. His task was not an easy one. It required a man of great sanctity, prudence and fortitude to overcome the obstacles he encountered from within and without. From India he journeyed to Japan where he met comparative success. His one dream was to bring Christianity to China, but God saw fit to call him to Himself before this could be realized.

Mr. Maynard does not sacrifice the truth for the sake of edification. He presents the facts as he sees them and leaves the reader to draw his own conclusion. This work as a whole is to be recommended. It will serve as a memorial to the life of one who has been hailed as the greatest Apostle since the time of Saint Paul. J.A.F.

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**Catherine Tekakwitha.** By Daniel Sargent. 246 pp. Longmans, Green & Co., New York, N. Y. \$2.00.

Daniel Sargent's *Catherine Tekakwitha* is more than a biography of a unique and pure Indian maiden, for the author has taken his heroine not only as an individual but also as a type. Catherine is the Christian Indian. As such she crowns the Christian missionary zeal of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; as such she fulfills at last the destiny of a race that had waited long. Catherine is the point of convergence of diverse stories, and Mr. Sargent tells them well.

Behind Tekakwitha is the past of her ancestors, the Algonquians and the Iroquoians (for she was one of the stock of both). Mr. Sargent has analyzed the character of these two peoples. The Algonquians were spiritual but passive, almost quietists. "They were the symbol of pagan patience, of the noblest of pagan patience, that which in various primitive tribes believed still in a High God, and waited for him to give them they knew not what." The truth they had apprehended but vaguely, and it was becoming more vague as the years wore on. Their religion was, at best, unhappy, blind. The Iroquoians, on the other hand, were intensely active. They prized a

material culture identified with their nation. Not content to wait, they wished to be gods. "By owning a precious treasure of traditions, and by binding themselves into a sacred body, a church, they wished to be more than men." But the Iroquoians, though in most respects antithetically, had this in common with the Algonquians, that in the drama of life they were "playing a tragic part."

But there were some Indians, such as Kyrn, Anastasie, Marie Threse, Hot Powder (a very interesting character), whose roles were not tragic; and Catherine Tekakwitha's was triumphant. Behind this exception lies an epic of European history, for Catherine was made possible under God's Providence only by the flaming up of an ardor for the conversion of the New World that brought to the fore characters strong enough to overcome great difficulties—women like the two Mariés de L'Incarnation and the Marquise de Guercheville, men like the intrepid Jesuit missionaries.

To view Catherine Tekakwitha with Daniel Sargent, then, is to take in a broad perspective. Unexpectedly, a prodigy appears among a people reputed savage. Yet, viewing Catherine's spiritual blossoming as "the climax of a long drama," we do not exclaim, "How suddenly she has come," but rather sigh, "How long, how long, the world waited!"

J.C.M.

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**Characters of the Reformation.** By Hilaire Belloc. 342 pp. Sheed and Ward New York, N. Y. \$3.50.

Because of its illegitimate beginning, its see-saw progress, and its monstrous consequences, the Reformation will always be an important point of history. Behind the factual knowledge and chronological data are the men and women who peopled that period. Hilaire Belloc gives us twenty-three studies of twenty-three characters from the time of Henry VIII to the time of Louis XIV, who were important figures or figureheads in that important period of history.

In the first chapter of his book, Mr. Belloc gives concisely an outline of the whole period of the Reformation. The following chapters treat the characters individually, and in them the outline is more fully detailed. The figures of the English tragedy "on which all that was to follow turned," arise in order: King Henry VIII, Catherine his Queen, Anne Boleyn, his paramour, Thomas Cromwell, his minister-master, Sir Thomas More who withstood him, Thomas Cranmer, his ecclesiastical agent, Stephen Gardiner, Clement VII, the Tudor Queens, Mary and Elizabeth, Mary Stuart, and the great William Cecil. The next described are men of the seventeenth century: Henry IV of France; James I of England; Emperor Ferdinand;

Gustavus Adolphus, the military genius in the pay of the greatest statesman, Richelieu; then Laud—to illustrate the internal difficulties of Protestantism—finally Oliver Cromwell. Two unexpected figures are included, Descartes and Pascal. The last chapters deal with William of Orange and Louis XIV.

There you have the twenty-three figures chosen to illustrate his thesis: the rise of religious revolt; the recognition of its existence; finally the seventeenth century drawn-battle to suppress it—England all the while being the pivotal point, because, Protestantism would have died by its own hand had England remained faithful, and today there would be a united western Christendom. Thus the Reformation, in its inception a religious issue, grew into a political problem with avarice and nationalism as its offspring—whose progeny exist in our own day.

Perhaps it is St. Pius V rather than "St. Sixtus V" than the author intends on page 239—at any rate, sources available do not show Sixtus V as being sainted. There certainly was a supernatural element about the now canonized Thomas More's tenacity, and perhaps it was the working of two gifts of the Holy Ghost, Understanding and Knowledge, that fostered his resolution and gave him heroic faith.

R.H.A.

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**On Being Human.** By Paul Elmer More. 202 pp. Princeton University Press, Princeton, N. J. \$2.00.

With few exceptions, every essay included in this third volume of the New Shelbourne Essays appeared originally in the *American Review* or in its forerunner, *The Bookman*. A few titles will suggest the fields into which Paul Elmer More's thought sallied in the present work: A Revival of Humanism, Irving Babbitt, James Joyce, Proust: The Two Ways, Religion and Social Discontent, The Church and Politics.

In treating of the first two subjects mentioned, it would seem that More would be on territory that ought to have been covered again and again by humanistic thought cavalry, but his thought is still amorphous on important battleground. It seems strange that it was not until 1930 that he was provoked—the concurrence of critics and his own reflections were responsible—to see a rather obvious lack in humanism. He feels keenly the difficulty of the relation between religion and humanism, but his discussion of it does not give a solution that will satisfy anybody, not even himself. It is elementary but important to remember that the validity of Christianity depends upon its inherent truth and not upon its adaptability to correlation with the humanistic system. Catholicism is valid only if it is true; it neither

gains nor loses in validity whether its doctrines dovetail or not with the teachings of humanism.

More's devotion to his friend Irving Babbitt is admissible from one point of view, but there is a chance that certain aspects of Babbitt's teaching may prove an impediment to More's arrival at the complete truth. In the latter's efforts to present and elucidate a sort of last statement by Babbitt, there can be found in a brief passage three phrases which appear at times characteristic of some phases of Babbitt's thought,—“a something”—“dimly aware”—“in some untraceable manner.” Again, it is elementary but important to maintain that *something* is not made true merely by Babbitt's statement that it is so; if it claimed to be the truth, philosophical or experimental, evidence must be marshalled in proof.

May Paul Elmer More and the entire humanist school be comprehensive in their study of man so as to include his source and his destiny; and when these two are found to be identified in a Personal Being, may they accept His revelation. For this they must pray.

W.R.

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**The Autobiography of G. K. Chesterton.** 360 pp. Sheed and Ward, New York, N. Y. \$3.00.

It is the peculiar function of an autobiography to present a picture of a man's life as he sees it himself; and in that sense the present work is well named. But in the sense that an autobiography gives a complete view of a man's life, certainly the term can not be applied to this book. There were many doctrines which Mr. Chesterton made jokes of in his life, but he did not make a practice of joking about people. Yet in his own case he invariably reversed the process. His beliefs and doctrines were very serious and sacred to him, but he never ceased poking fun at his own person. So it is that the record which he wrote of his life is a medley of very serious considerations of his doctrine and other people's persons, and of equally humorous stories about queer doctrines and his own queer self. His book is a sheaf of very interesting memoirs, but it is far too incomplete to merit the name of autobiography.

A graphic and analytic picture of the Victorian period into which he was born, of the politics, art and religion of that day and this, of great literary and political figures he had known, are poured in his inimitable fashion into the pages of this book to make a narrative interesting and amusing. But he wrote, as always, more of doctrines and ideas than of persons, and more of his own ideas than of himself. He remarks, “I could not be a novelist; because I really like to see ideas or notions wrestling naked, as it were, and not

dressed up in a masquerade as men and women." The remark is verified in his autobiography; for while it begins with some lights of the general background of his life, it hardly contains more of his personal life than many of his volumes of essays.

While the book does not justify the claim of the publishers that it is "a story, carefully and even architecturally told"—much of Chesterton's charm was due to the fact that he was seldom careful or architectural in his writings—it is an interesting and very worth while work. The important men and matters of our time are pictured in its pages with a clarity and depth which were peculiar qualities of Chesterton. Flashes of wit abound on almost every page; and of stories which incite to genuine laughter there is no end. To the very end, the book makes pleasant reading. But those who knew and loved Chesterton will probably close the book wistfully with the wish that he had devoted more of it to himself. F.M.M.

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**A Papal Chamberlain.** By Francis A. MacNutt. 398 pp. Longmans, Green & Co., New York, N. Y. \$3.50.

For interesting and light reading the Catholic Book Club could have made no wiser selection than the autobiography, *A Papal Chamberlain*. Written in clear and flowing style, it makes no claim to philosophical or scientific value. Its merit lies in the recounting of the main and vivid incidents of the author's life, which revolved around the Church at large and the Vatican in particular.

Francis MacNutt was born of a Protestant family in a small American village. At an age when children ordinarily receive the use of reason, this precocious child suddenly found himself confronted with the huge problem of becoming a Catholic. Drawn by curiosity, he had entered the Catholic church and almost instinctively "found himself at home." Despite the opposition of his family, and to some extent of the pastor, he managed to carry on a conspiracy with a few nuns who willingly instructed him in the faith.

He describes his early school days, his home life under the tyrannical rule of his aunt "shrewish but lovable." Unlike his brother and his school companions, he fatalistically decided that he could not settle down. He did not know what he wanted; changed to one school after another, until his uncle in despair dispatched him to Europe in the hope that travel would open some avenue to a profession in life. In Rome he met members of the Catholic hierarchy, and before long entered the Church. Believing that he had a call to the priesthood, he made several attempts at clerical studies. Finally he enlisted as a papal chamberlain.

Within the circle of the Vatican court he came into contact with the great ones of that world. Popes, Cardinals, Emperors and Princes file past in the pages of the book, and he has an interesting incident to relate about each. His descriptions of the ceremonies of the Vatican are complete to the minutest details: conclaves, councils, secret conferences—even the petty jealousies of lesser officials, fall under his keen observation.

Commissioned with diplomatic work both by the Popes and the American Government, his life was one of incessant travel; America, Europe, Asia, and even Africa were scenes of his labor. Everywhere he found life interesting, and he has set down his impressions for the interest of others.

The book can be compared with the life of another famous convert, John L. Stoddard. It will prove interesting to those who are curious about the inner life of the Vatican and the social activities of the diplomatic corps of European and American nations. U.C.

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**Voltaire.** By Alfred Noyes. 643 pp. Sheed and Ward, New York, N. Y. \$3.50.

Judged exclusively on literary standards, this is easily one of the finest works Mr. Noyes has written. But therein lies its danger; for the literary beauty of the book is so dazzling and its magnetic interest so powerful, that the reader is likely to be led blindly to accept its thesis, *viz.*, that Voltaire was in reality a virtuous hero who has been maliciously calumniated.

E. S. Haldane anticipated by twenty years the white-washing intentions of Mr. Noyes. But the biographers and historical critics of Haldane's time as well as those of the present day, using their sources scientifically, have come to conclusions concerning Voltaire that are at variance with those of Haldane—and now of Noyes. The former have branded Voltaire as a radical destroyer. Haldane and Noyes have lifted him to the pedestal of a salutary reformer, and have placed on his head the crown of a defender of truth and justice.

Mr. Noyes reaches his conclusion by essaying the rôle of psychobiographer; by interpreting Voltaire's letters and plays not according to their obvious sense, but rather in relation to Voltaire's state of mind or condition of the body at the time, as these seemed to be to Mr. Noyes. For the excellent case which he presents in defense of his thesis, the author is to be commended. But he is not the last word on the subject. The letters, essays, and plays of Voltaire provide just as much evidence to support opposite conclusions and interpretations.

In the prefatory note, the author makes capital of the fact that he was permitted to use the Isham Collection of Boswell Papers. It is rather singular to note that this same collection was refused a place in the *Rolls National Source Book of English Sources*, on the grounds that the Papers were incomplete, and, moreover, bore strong evidence of fraud and forgery.

Another point. Mr. Noyes either undervaluates or ignores the influence of the English enlightenment on Voltaire. He fails to render it even the tribute of brief consideration. A comparison of Voltaire's writings with those of Shaftesbury, Tindall, and Chubbs, clearly points to the Lockean influence at work in both French and English writers. It is true that by reason of conditions in France, Voltaire's writings took on a far sharper and more virulent tone. However, the academic Deism of the English and the biting, sarcastic crusade of Voltaire against what he termed the forces of obscurantism and oppression, have one thing in common: they are unrelentingly alligned against many of the traditional tenets of Catholicism.

Mr. Noyes draws an interesting picture of the epistolary relations between the erudite Benedict XIV and Voltaire, but fails to present the complete picture. Some of the letters that passed from the Pope to Voltaire contain sternly phrased warnings, and one,—that of July 10, 1746,—condemns Voltaire's attacks against devotion to the Saints. Cf. *Liberi Epist. Pontificalium*, Vol. 16 (Innsbruck, 1906). One thing is certain, no matter how favorably inclined we may be to the thesis of Mr. Noyes that Voltaire never separated himself from his religion, there is no gainsaying the fact that he aided in separating a large part of society from it.

This volume may well be styled a novelized biography, having all the attractiveness and appeal of the well penned novel, with a serious attempt to include a rigid adherence to fact. J.M.

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**Wrestlers With Christ.** By Karl Pflieger. Translated by E. I. Watkin. 297 pp. Sheed & Ward Inc., New York, N. Y., \$2.50.

The struggling journey of a single soul through the dark night of sin and error into the bright dawn of righteousness and truth, if competently written, is a story well worth reading. Karl Pflieger in *Wrestlers with Christ* has given us such a book for its deals, competently and understandingly, with seven such journeys. To be sure, not all the journeys involved struggle; and not all the souls walked into the bright dawn; but the book contains enough of the necessary combination to be of immense interest.

The travelers or, to adhere to the figure employed in the title, the

wrestlers are seven, all of them writers: Bloy, Peguy, Gide, Chesterton, Dostoevsky, Soloviev, and Berdaiev. Because they wrote, Karl Pflieger's task of interpreting them was, from one aspect, made easier. But because what they wrote was so out of the ordinary, so highly individualistic, so tempered (Chesterton excluded) by prevailing mood and fancy, so subtle with the subtlety of intellectual shrewdness, Karl Pflieger's task was very difficult. However, his acquaintance with the works of the seven is not a relation of a few years' standing, nor has his reading of them been superficial. Add to this the fact that he himself is possessed of a facile and broad mind, a capable faculty of expression, and an incisive sincerity of purpose; then one must conclude that *Wrestlers with Christ* is an important book.

Throughout the whole of the book the reader is kept fully aware that everything is revolving around Christ, no matter what individual of the seven is under discussion, no matter through what tortuous and terrible channel the discussion has led. The author in interpreting the experiences and the writings of a man like Gide (now an apostate) must necessarily enfold many disturbing and horrible things; but even in considering the most abject and sinister failings of a Gide or a Bloy, Pflieger manages to separate the sin from the sinner and shows, that behind each wayward and perverted search for peace and happiness lay the tremendous urge for union with Christ.

The first three sketches of the book most properly belong under a title such as *Wrestlers with Christ*, for most certainly they contain moving accounts of close and fierce spiritual combat. And Gide the Prodigal has left his Father's house once more to squander his substance in foreign lands. He once admitted Christ the victor, but has now returned to the mat again, this time wearing the red robe of Communism.

Chesterton's place in such a group (i. e., of wrestlers) is not so easily seen. One almost instinctively visions him as always and irrevocably on the side of Christ. Still, Pflieger's essay on the great Englishman is, to this reviewer's mind, one of the most engaging and enlightening of the seven.

The final three essays deal with Russian writers, and in these the author seems to veer somewhat from his usual method of treatment. While still emphasizing, with a fine critical exposition, the central importance Christ plays in all the literary output of Dostoevsky, Soloviev, and Berdaiev, and the supreme place He holds in their philosophy of life and living, Pflieger gives much time and space

—especially when writing of Soloviev and Berdaiev—to the question of union between the Latin and Russian Churches; and seems willing to concede too much to the tenets of Eastern Orthodox theology.  
P.H.

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**Angels' Mirth.** By Ethel Cook Eliot. 299 pp. Sheed & Ward, New York, N. Y. \$2.00.

This is a novel concerned with a thesis rather than a tale. Yet the story itself is never obscured by the moral proposition which provokes it. Nor is the contrary true either, for the definite attitude of the authoress towards divorce is graphically though not dogmatically asserted.

Such a novel, of course, would usually be dull. However the extraordinary facile prose of this one ever entreats the reader's interest. It effects this by mirroring in the earnest mind of a young lady, what a harrowing situation an imminent divorce can create in the lives of those effected by it. Mary Stevens, the sixteen-year-old daughter of a widower whose love for a married woman is the occasion of the divorce, finds herself forced to grope through the entanglements her father's love creates in both her own life and the lives of the children and husband of his wedded lady love.

First of all she comes upon her own supernatural significance in life, and then upon the realization that the strange but too human behavior of her father and Mrs. Sands, her future step-mother, is unassuringly tenuous. Mrs. Sands, too, becomes aware how unpromising is her prospective and promiscuous marital relationship, and she shelters herself in an irretrievable tragedy. Indirectly is the theme of the story borne upon the children, to suggest how unhappily would the fickle conduct of their elders rebound upon themselves. Thus is contrived a fairly good story of the Kathleen Norris mode; at times naive, but never dull, and always proving itself profitable reading for anyone.

But it lacks the impressive depth which could make it a great story, because it never reaches sufficiently beneath its characters to explain or explain away their idealistic or errant urges. It uncovers their glittering individualities without every probing the motive force which urges them to live decently or otherwise. Had *Angels' Mirth* but pierced the surface of human conduct, it would have been an arresting contribution to Catholic literature.  
B.L.

## DIGEST OF RECENT BOOKS

**DEVOTIONAL: The Holy Bible**, an abridgement and rearrangement by Ronald Knox, is a work intended to incite more people to read the Bible. The author gives a very complete outline and reference list pertaining to his work which make easy access to the Bible itself. He does not treat the Old or New Testament in their entirety, but only the parts necessary for a good knowledge of the Christian faith. Though the work fills the author's intention admirably, yet the footnotes seem too few for real completeness, but we must not forget that this work is not the Bible. (Sheed & Ward, New York, N. Y., \$3.00.)

That devotion to the Sacred Heart can be an aid in making our lives Christo-centric, is demonstrated in **The Sacred Heart of Christ**, by Reverend F. Konz, O.M.I. In this book, which is intended for Spiritual Reading, the author devotes a short chapter to each of the invocations of the Litany of the Sacred Heart. There is a fund of doctrine in the book, especially concerning the Incarnate Son of God, and all is presented in a clear and readable fashion. The author does not exhort as much as convince. Conclusions are left to the reader. It is a pleasure to recommend this book; the evident time and labor put into it, coupled with its intrinsic merits, make it worthy of a widespread reception. (Benziger Bros., New York, N. Y., \$2.00.)

Combining numerous quotations from Sacred Scripture with the fruits of his own meditations, Father Winfred Herbst, S.D.S., in **Jesus and His Mother** has carefully woven a pleasing fabric of devotional essays. From Bethlehem to Calvary the successive stages of Our Savior's life are treated; and the virtues and prerogatives of Our Lady are enumerated and discussed. Explanations of the better known Catholic devotions and the seasons of the liturgical cycle are introduced in their proper places. Of peculiar delight to the lover of the Mass and the Most Blessed Sacrament will be the seventy-odd pages given to the Holy Sacrifice, Frequent Communion, and devotion to our Eucharistic King. However, Father Herbst has occasionally leaned toward exaggeration, and in a few instances he is guilty of theological inaccuracies. (Frederick Pustet Co., New York. \$2.00.)

The publication of Fr. Martindale's talks broadcast from London on fifteen consecutive Sundays, from January 24th to May 8th, 1932, is contained in **What Are Saints**. Contrary to the opinion of the man in the street, there is nothing dull about sanctity; and the saints are really interesting and unique personalities. Nothing demonstrates this more than the divergence between such figures as St. Paul and the Cure D'Arns, St. Thomas Aquinas and St. John Bosco. To indicate this individuality and its source was the task of Fr. Martindale. This he has done admirably. (Sheed & Ward, New York, N. Y., \$1.00.)

An excellent consideration of Christ the King and His kingdom in this world may be found in **Christianity is Christ**, by C. C. Martindale, S. J. The volume is composed of a series of considerations that are at once eminently practical in their application, apt in their scriptural quotation, and written in a simple and informal style. It is a work that is distinctively original and novel in its presentation of very old and fundamental truths. (Sheed & Ward, New York, N. Y., \$2.50.)

In his book **Remember**, Father Lasance offers for meditation, thoughts concerning the end of man, the four last things, the Passion of Our Lord, human suffering, humility, and patience. The underlying truth of these reflections may be expressed in the words of St. Paul: "we have not here a lasting city, but we seek one that is to come." As Father Lasance says, "it is from eternity's point of view that our life will be judged, and we would do well to estimate the value of our acts from this same stand-

point." And what more salutary means is there to aid one in doing this than meditating on the end of man and the four last things: Death, Judgment, Heaven, Hell. In this book reflections on the sufferings, Passion and Death of Christ are fittingly applied to life; and it is seen that human suffering, when borne in the Christian spirit, takes on a deeper significance, being centered in the supreme tragedy of Calvary. (Benziger Bros., New York, N. Y., \$2.50.)

Most people give to God with one hand, many of them take back with the other. Few there are who ever fulfill their royal destiny and give with both hands all that they have, all that they are. In **Songs in the Night**, by a Poor Clare Colettine, we hear the jubilant notes of an artist whom God has blessed with a glorious voice capable of expressing the mysterious ways of His love. She sings and she counsels two-handed giving. Deep, mystical, at times hauntingly beautiful, the book is by no means easy reading. It will be appreciated by those only who are attempting or who seriously wish to attempt the flight that leads to "the untrammelled quest and pure possession of God." The author, like her songs, remains in the night. (Sheed & Ward, New York, N. Y., \$2.50.)

**The Garden Enclosed** by Sister Mary Eva, O.F.M., is our Blessed Lady under whose protection the garden of the soul is to be cultivated, so that it may bloom with the various flowers of virtue so necessary for the soul's beauty. These virtue-flowers, as they are called, are taken care of separately, each in its own chapter; so that in this book, just as in a garden, there is an evident oneness. But we must say that it is a unity of book rather than a unity of life which this method begets; for they hinder rather than aid the unification of the soul's ends and motives, and hence retard that centralization of the soul's forces which is so necessary for spiritual progress. However, this does not mean that the work is not full of wise counsels. (Benziger Bros., New York, N. Y., \$1.25.)

In order to provide children with a simple manual of prayers, Lamp-lighter has prepared **A Week Of Communions**. Children demand variety, and this the volume offers. Besides being advised to use the prayers actually contained, the young readers are encouraged to make up their own. For this, scenes from the Gospels are reduced to their simplest forms in order that children may draw a practical application from them. (Sheed & Ward, New York, N. Y. \$1.00.)

Many Catholics, religious and lay alike, seek a prayer book in which the prayers used by the Saints are to be found exclusively. Such a one is **The True Prayers of St. Gertrude and St. Mechtilde**. Its contents are varied, and the language is simple but profound. Perhaps the reason for these last qualities may be found in the words of the translator, Canon John Gray: "it is owing to the scrupulous heed paid to God and His truth that the devotion found in these writings is suitable for all." (Sheed & Ward, New York, N. Y., \$1.50.)

The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius have long been an aid to holiness not only among religious but also among the laity. It is a true and sure guidebook to sanctity. Father G. Bliss, S.J., in his **A Retreat With St. Ignatius**, has very capably and attractively adapted the Spiritual Exercises for children. Apart from the spiritual benefits to be derived from it, boys and girls will find the book itself attractive. (Sheed & Ward, New York, N. Y., \$1.25.)

To induce a more attentive assistance and a more devout piety among the laity at Mass, and at the same time to permit all to use a Missal, Benziger Brothers have issued Fr. Lasance's **The Sunday Missal** in editions costing but fifteen and twenty-five cents apiece. They are complete and sturdy and will easily fit the ordinary coat pocket. (Benziger Bros., New York, N. Y.)

**The Way of Life**, by Rev. Leon A. McNeill and Madeleine Aaron, is a series of religious instructions based on the Baltimore Catechism. The first chapter of the book shows from Scripture how Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life. The authors then begin a discussion of sin and its kinds and treat in order each one of the Commandments of God and the Precepts of the Church. Part of the work is devoted to the Sacred Liturgy and an explanation of the Hierarchy of the Church. The authors throughout demonstrate the relation of each and every obligation of our religion to the Mystical Body of Christ. Though primarily intended as a religious textbook for Catholic children attending public schools, study clubs will find it very instructive, written as it is in simple language and containing all the necessary matter for a study of the Commandments. (St. Anthony Guild Press, Paterson, N. J., \$0.50.)

**HAGIOGRAPHY:** In the life of **Jean Baptiste Debrabant**, Alice Curtayne indicates how God used this humble and pious priest as His delicate instrument in converting the ignorant and rebellious children of France, who, in the aftermath of the great anti-clerical movement of the 19th century, were little better than savages. The authoress relates in a most interesting style how Father Debrabant accomplished his task by founding the now flourishing and worldwide religious institute of the Holy Union of the Sacred Hearts. (St. Anthony Guild Press, Paterson, N. J. \$1.00.)

The greatness of an age is measured by the number of saints it produces. In 1901 there was born a girl who may bring greatness to our age, because of her extraordinarily holy, if hidden, life. **Sister Miriam Teresa**, by A Sister of Charity, is an account of that life. Although she hardly lived to be twenty-six years old, Sister Teresa was an expert in spiritual horticulture, having, like all good gardeners, done most of her work on her knees. Less extraneous quotation would have made this volume more interesting. Then too, we think even more details of Sister Teresa's life could be gleaned. If she is a saint, the world needs to know her. (Benziger Bros., New York, N.Y. \$2.00.)

In **The Soul Of Elizabeth Seton**, by a Daughter of Charity, we have the interesting and inspiring story of one of America's noblest daughters. Some of her trials and sorrows are related to show us the greatness of her confidence in God. Indeed, her life of prayer and self-sacrifice prepared her well to teach by word and example that mothers are to lead their children to God. It would be well for all American Catholics to know the life of Mother Seton. (Benziger Brothers, New York, N. Y., \$1.50.)

**LITERATURE:** In a few words on the first page of his **Songs For A Listener**, Fr. Feeney himself provides the occasion for it: "perhaps it's time for reason to return to rhyme." Unfortunately—for the author does possess genuine poetic gifts—most of the work remains but rhyme. The volume is small, hardly three hundred lines, of which the last hundred or so are the best. (Macmillan Co., New York, N. Y., \$1.25.)

A lucent lyricism is shed from **The Happy Christmas Wind and Other Poems** by Sister M. Madeleva. It echoes her simple femininity as her devout art and craftsmanship consider the mystery of the Incarnation. The hallowed significance of Christmastide is evoked from her verses about the wind, the stars, the midnight Mass, the swaddling clothes and other subjects of intimate kinship with the mystery of mysteries. Yet deep-rooted as are her songs, they are fashioned with such a stark clarity that sentiment rather than sentimentality concerning the Christ Child is communicated. Since such a message pervades her work, Sister Madeleva fulfills the ultimate duty of a poetess. Thus her tiny tome cannot but delight the most discerning audience. (St. Anthony Guild Press, Paterson, N. J., \$0.50.)

Christmas stories, if they carry even a spark of the spirit which is associated with that beautiful feast, are always pleasing. Certainly **The Triptych of Felix Timmermans** is a delightful and genuinely impressive Christmas story. Briefly, it is the story of three men, a shepherd, a beggar, and an eel-fisher. On Christmas Eve, dressed as the three Kings, they go from house to house begging and acting. The tale is concerned with their subsequent adventures. (McFarlane, Warde, McFarlane, Inc., New York, N.Y., \$1.00.)

Sigrid Van Sweringen presents in her semi-historical novel entitled **As the Morning Rising**, the striking character of Elizabeth Bayley Seton, who has become so well known as Mother Seton. Elizabeth Seton was born of Episcopalian parents and after her conversion she founded the Daughters of Charity at Emmitsburg, Maryland. The authoress points out, that all through her young life Mother Seton manifested a most unique devotion to the poor, and being blessed with all that money could buy, she showered her love and help upon those in need of the bare necessities of life. The novel deals with the early life of Mother Seton up to the time of her conversion, and is based on many events that actually occurred in her early life. The story is well written and very interesting. (Benziger Brothers, New York, N. Y., \$2.50.)

**MISCELLANEOUS:** To the pastor, seminarians, sisters, and lay persons engaged in the catechetical instruction of children, **Teaching And Preaching Religion To Children** by Rev. J. K. Sharp, S.T.B., will be an asset. The brief summary of the important ecclesiastical legislation regarding the importance and necessity of religious training will impress the teacher with the full import of his responsibility. The course of instructions proposed for the children's Mass on Sunday contains a complete list of dogmatic and moral subjects in which children should be instructed. (P. J. Kenedy & Sons, New York, N. Y., \$1.50.)

Latin is fast losing its hold in American schools. Teachers find it almost impossible to convince their pupils of its cultural value. Students—and, unfortunately, many teachers, too—feel that the long hours they have spent over their Latin books have been lost entirely. **Latin For Use**, by L. B. Holsapple, M.A., presents a course that is designed to fit the average student of Latin with knowledge that will be of inestimable use to him throughout his life, and to show him from the very beginning exactly what the fruit of his efforts will be. If Mr. Holsapple's purpose were the purpose of every American teacher of Latin, doubtless many a high-school and college student would find excellent reason for putting *amo* through all her paces. (F. S. Crofts & Co., New York, N. Y., \$2.50.)

To help in the fulfillment of the desire that the Catholic nurse be an intelligent hand-maid of the priest and a consolation to her Catholic patients in sickness, Father Daniel E. Ostler, O.F.M., in **A Nurse's Manual** states clearly and precisely the nurse's responsibilities before God for the charge temporarily in her care. The author treats of the Nurse's Duty, Baptism, the Last Sacraments, Holy Communion, Extreme Unction, and Prayers for the dying in such an instructive and lucid manner that very little additional explanation will be needed. (St. Anthony Guild Press, Paterson, N. J., \$0.50.)

**De Iure Parochorum** by Louis Fanfani, O.P., is a completely revised and extended edition of the work which the same author gave to the public twelve years ago, on the canon law relating to parish-priests. Several new chapters have been added so that the present edition runs almost one hundred pages beyond the first. Throughout this excellent treatise there is clear evidence of the canonical learning as well as of the practical experience which the author had for many years as parish-priest of the church of the Minerva in Rome. Pastors and curates will find it worth having and thumbing. (Marii E. Marietti, Turin, Italy, L. 20.)

**Au Service De Jésus Pretre** is the third series of intimate letters of Mother Louise Marguerite Claret de la Touche, foundress of the *Institut de Béthanie du Sacre Coeur* whose chief aim is to obtain by the prayers and sacrifices of its members, the graces necessary for priests to become the salt of the earth and the light of the world. In these pages the reader will see heroic virtue practised; a humility which is something more than courtesy, a knowing how to get along with others; a mortification as prudent as it is intense. The venerable religious and her daughters not only practised prayer to a heroic degree themselves, but encouraged others to join their ranks in "*L'Alliance Sacerdotale*," whose purpose likewise is to foster the glory of God and the reign of His Love in souls by praying for His ministers. (Marii Marietti, Turin, Italy, Frs. 12.)

In an orderly, scientific exposition of the subject matter, Fr. Matteo Conte De Coronata, F.M.Cap., marshals the canonical legislation for the Franciscan Third Order in his **Le Tiers-Ordre Franciscain**. It has been translated into French by P. Alfred De Molieres, F.M.Cap. The nature, origin, and varieties of Third Orders are treated first. A consideration is then given to their members, their obligations and privileges, and to the government of the order itself. Lucidly written, it should be of great utility to directors of the Third Order. (Marii Marietti, Turin, Italy, Frs. 20.)

**BROCHURES: The Franciscan Message In Authentic Texts** indicates what is true Franciscanism by a compilation of the documents issued to the Order of St. Francis by the Roman Pontiffs. He who would interpret the Franciscan message to the modern world must discover it in the words of the Vicars of Christ on earth. (B. Herder Book Co., St. Louis, Mo., \$0.40.) A new paper covered edition of the **Hound Of Heaven** and other poems of Francis Thompson has been issued in a handy size. In addition, G. K. Chesterton contributed the introduction. (Bruce Humphries Co., Boston, Mass., \$0.25.) Book II of the catechism of the **Catholic Faith** has been prepared by the authors, Rev. F. M. Kirsch, O.M.Cap., and Sister M. Brendam, I.H.M. It is based upon the Catechism of Cardinal Gasparri. The illustrations are by C. Bosseron Chambers. (P. J. Kenedy & Sons, New York, N.Y., \$0.30.) The third in the series entitled **Children Who Loved God** presents Jane Bernadette McClory. Its author is Sister M. Vera, S.N.D. It is intended for juvenile readers. (P. J. Kenedy & Sons, New York, N. Y., \$0.25.) In an effort to bring the life of Our Lord closer to children, the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine has issued the **Life of Christ in Pantomime and Dramatization**. The subjects range from the Nativity to the Last Supper and are accompanied by appropriate directions and suggestions. (\$0.25 each.) The same group has prepared its **Course of Study in Religion** for Catholic children attending the public schools. It is intended for pupils of the Fifth through the Eighth Grades. (\$0.10 each.) (St. Anthony Guild Press, Paterson, N. J.)

**PAMPHLETS:** From the Preservation of the Faith, Silver Spring, Maryland, comes **Catholic Extremism**, by P. H. Furfey. It represents the main thought of his book *Fire On The Earth*, which is reviewed in this issue of DOMINICANA (\$0.10). The Queen's Work, St. Louis, Mo., presents **The Sacrament of Catholic Action** by Daniel A. Lord, S.J., a consideration of Confirmation and its effects. (\$0.10.) From the American Press, New York.: **On The Condition of the Working Classes** and **The Christian Constitution of States**, the two encyclicals of Leo XIII; and **Communism in the U.S.A.**, a study of its prevalence in our country (\$0.05).

**BOOKS RECEIVED:** From Samuel French, Inc., New York, N. Y.: **Catalogue of Plays; Love on the Dole**, by R. Gow and W. Greenwood (\$0.75); **Flowers of the Forest**, by John Van Druten (\$1.50); **Most of the Game**, by John Van Druten (\$1.50). From Benziger Bros., New York, N. Y.: **The Great Bridge**, by Wm. F. Hendrix, S.J. (\$1.50); **Redrobes**, by Neil Boyton, S.J. (\$1.50).