



# FRIARS' BOOKSHELF



**The Gospel of Jesus Christ.** By Père M. J. Lagrange, O.P. Translated by members of the English Dominican Province. 2 Vols. xvii, 320 and 330 pp. Benziger, New York. \$3.00 ea.

It is a year now, since the grave closed over Père Lagrange, O.P. In that time glowing tributes to his memory as a religious and a scholar have poured in from all quarters of the globe. Some have enthusiastically hailed him as the man providentially raised up by God to meet the brilliant sallies of rationalism. The more cautious have declared his work to be essentially constructive. All agree that the Catholic Church has lost one of its greatest biblical scholars.

Perhaps Père Lagrange is most widely known by his great commentaries on the four Gospels, "a monumental ensemble," as Père Grandmaison has put it, that marks "a date in Catholic exegesis, and of which it may be justly proud." Of their very nature, however, these mighty tomes move in a somewhat mysterious region, beyond the grasp and even interest of any but the specialist. But the present book, now available in English in two volumes, was written deliberately as a synopsis of his larger works for those who are untrained in scriptural controversy, for those even, its author hopes, "who are engrossed in manual labor."

Ordinarily one would term this study a Life of Christ. Its author prefers to entitle it *The Gospel of Jesus Christ*. "The gospels themselves," he notes, "are the only life of Jesus Christ that can be written. Nothing remains for us but to understand them as best we can." In keeping with this intent, Père Lagrange published a number of years ago a Synopsis of the Gospels, which has since appeared in English under the title *A Catholic Harmony of the Four Gospels*, with introduction and notes by Mgr. John Barton. The "present work," the author modestly tells us, "is little more than a rapid commentary on the Synopsis along with a few historical observations."

As might be expected, we have here a strictly critical study, but in an eminently readable form. The author has taken pains to spare his readers "even the very appearance of erudition." Accordingly there is no elaborate system of footnotes, no series of appendices, no extended development, such as characterize the fine Lives of our Lord that are currently popular. But we do find in these pages a very full commentary on the Gospels, adapted at once to the needs of

the general reader and the student. The exigencies of his time made it imperative that Père Lagrange in his great commentaries should be scrupulously careful not to explain one Gospel by the other. Here, however, he may and does comment on the combined narratives of the four Gospels, and with such success that scholars have acclaimed this volume the crown of all his works on the Gospels.

It is impossible for us to point out here many of the fine points of this work. But we may attempt a few general observations. Hardly has one completed the quite important preface than he realizes that he is sitting at the feet of a master. It may well be doubted that any other student of our era had his finger so authentically on the pulse of the Jewish people of the time of our Lord as did Père Lagrange. He knew their hopes and he knew their failings; he knew their tongue and he knew their customs. And what manuscripts and archaeology could not teach him, more than forty years of residence in the unchanging Orient brought within his ken. This little note, anent the narrative of Peter's denial of our Lord, speaks for itself: "The writer has often listened to the first cock crow at the beginning of April. The time varies much, but 2:30 a. m. appears to be the earliest."

It is a real joy to follow the great exegete as with sure and unfaltering step he gathers up the thread of the various narratives, accounts for their variegated colors, weaves them into a pattern of beautiful simplicity and then sets off the authentic whole in its historical perspective. What a revelation, for instance, is the narrative of the Last Supper when collated with the Paschal meal of the Jews. Or again what a splendidly human Peter comes forth from these pages, when all the nuances of the Gospel text are pointed out and explained. Even today men would choose such a man as their leader.

Add to this any number of excellent summaries on subjects that have called forth floods of literature, such as the nature and end of the parables, or the whereabouts of "the country of the Gerasens," and we glean some notion of the value and authority of this work. Nor must we pass over in silence the epilogue, which responsible critics have termed a masterpiece.

Accordingly we recommend these volumes without reserve. They were written expressly for the general reader, but like so many books of that category they will delight and inform the scholar. The ordinary cleric, for instance, who has these two volumes may well dispense with other commentaries. It is to the English Dominican Fathers that we owe the English translation. That it was no light task we well appreciate, and we are grateful for their labors. M.O'B.

**De Deo Uno, Commentarium in Primam Partem S. Thomae.** By Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P. 582 pp. Desclée De Brouwer et Cie, Paris. 115 fr.

This is the first volume of a Latin Commentary on the *Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas which promises to be one of the outstanding contributions of modern times to the great library of Thomistic literature. Written by the foremost Thomist of the day, *De Deo Uno* is a work which, almost in the manner of the *Summa* itself, beggars description. Father Garrigou-Lagrange, a profound scholar, a zealous religious and a teacher of long experience, shows how well the timeless principles of St. Thomas can be applied to present-day theological thought and action. Fully conversant with modern trends and heresies in theology he uses his magnificent speculative powers to indicate what a bulwark of strength the Catholic Church and Catholic theologians possess in the *Summa* of St. Thomas.

In the Introduction Father Garrigou-Lagrange defends the method of procedure used by St. Thomas, a method often spoken of today as too conventional or too medieval. In truth, he says, it is a method in full conformity with the normal progress of the mind in investigating theological or philosophical truth. Pointing out that each article of the *Summa* begins with the word "utrum," which most certainly does not imply either affirmation or negation, he holds that it is not strictly logical to speak of the paragraphs immediately following as "objections;" they are rather difficulties to be discussed and clarified in the body of the article. "Just as he who wishes to loosen a bodily bond must first inspect the bond and the manner in which it is tied, so he who wishes to solve a doubt must first consider all the difficulties and their causes (Comment. in III Metaphys. I, 1)." The Introduction then takes up the matter of inductive definitions, the demonstrative medium, the perfect union of analysis and synthesis found in the *Summa*, the plenitude of contemplation from which its doctrine proceeds. It ends with a brief but compelling essay on the relation of the study of theology to the interior life which explains their mutual interdependence and indicates how surely and richly each is enlivened by the other.

*De Deo Uno* covers the initial twenty-six Questions of the First Part of the *Summa*. Throughout, one may mark a rigid adherence to principle, an eminently fair explanation of non-Thomistic opinions, a clear understanding of theological controversies and a full awareness of present-day errors and difficulties. The text of the *Summa* is not reproduced verbatim but the *Summa* is omnipresent in each part of the book.

After giving the title of each article Father Garrigou-Lagrange

considers the *status quaestionis*, making plain therein the limits of the article's treatment, gives necessary pre-notes, such as definitions and divisions, and lists the difficulties which are summarizations of the "objections" in the *Summa*. If the question has been defined by the Church, the author refers to the sources of the *de fide* declarations. The doctrine of the article is explained next, buttressed where necessary by references to the other works of St. Thomas, and is followed by solutions of the difficulties. Then come the corollaries and *dubia* which deals with matters not definitely settled in the article. Father Garrigou-Lagrange next answers the objections offered by post-Scholastic theologians to the doctrine of St. Thomas, taking occasion to refer copiously to the Commentaries of Cajetan, John of St. Thomas, Gonet, etc. He ends with an examination of relative heretical doctrines and an analysis of their errors.

Father Garrigou-Lagrange has treated at length of the Existence of God, ontologism, the Beatific Vision, the Eminence of the Deity, Divine Knowledge and Scientia Media, the Antecedent and Consequent Will of God, the Universal Salvific Will, Grace and the decrees of the Divine Will, and Predestination. His work is truly representative of the Thomistic tradition.

P.H.

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**The Protestant Crusade, 1800-1860.** By Ray Allen Billington. 514 pp.  
Macmillan, New York. \$5.00.

Working over a period of more than seven years on this study in the origins of American Nativism, Ray Allen Billington, assistant professor of history at Smith College, has produced in this volume the finest and most comprehensive work yet offered in that field. He first probes into "The Roots of Anti-Catholic Prejudice" deeply set in the English colonists long before the outbreak of the American Revolution and then proceeds to trace through six decades the ebb and flow of that stream of anti-Catholic intolerance which reached flood tide in the "Know-Nothing" political victories of the middle fifties. The burning of the Boston Ursuline convent, "No Popery," the "save the (Mississippi) valley" cry of Lyman Beecher, and the Philadelphia riots of 1844—all receive special treatment, while the periods of 1835-40, 1840-44, and 1850-54, particularly given over to anti-Catholic bigotry, have two, three and five chapters respectively accorded to each of them.

Text books in American history both past and present either ignore Nativism or treat it as a political force of rather small importance. Professor Billington quite definitely corrects such unhistorical attitudes and shows Nativism in its full vigour together with its origins in religious intolerance. Apparently unnoticed by the author is

the interesting social phenomenon that, just when each wave of anti-Catholicism seemed ready to inundate the country, it was broken on the destructive shoals of a major war.

To present day American readers of this work, separated as they are from its time by almost a century, the accusations and eagerly accepted untruths listed therein concerning the Catholic Church will seem puerile and grotesque. They may even cause laughter. But to sincere and thinking Protestants the book will be at once a severe embarrassment and a warning. For here, plainly indicated, are the main-springs of a peculiar and an American type of Fascism. Like a subterranean stream their waters still flow unchecked and unnoticed beneath a top soil of religious tolerance, but their brackish currents could be channeled into the open again should a modern Protestant leader of the Lyman Beecher type rise on an appropriate occasion and with the proper slogans. Catholics could profit well by careful reading of the book, not only to better grasp the psychology of successful attack against their Church, so well delineated for them by one not of their faith, but also to consider certain mistakes of policy which, though harmless, frightened Protestants and served to swell the rising tide of religious rancor.

Probably no Catholic historian will agree with the author that "Trusteeism" was a "blunder," since it arose through no fault of the Church. The civil law on the matter of ecclesiastical organization had been formulated when Catholics were numerically few. These laws conformed to the Protestant ideal of lay administration of Church property. Hence the Catholic laymen who assumed control of Church affairs were acting quite naturally, even though they little realized that such a condition, if allowed to develope, would seriously hinder Catholicity in the United States. True, the early bishops' unalterable opposition to such a plan helped the cause of Nativism and seemed to mark the Church for a while, as un-American, but three quarters of a century of peace in the administration of Church property has vindicated the far seeing wisdom of the bishops. Two other "blunders" of the Church, as conceived by Professor Billington, namely: "ill-advised comments of some of its leaders" and "the struggle over school funds," are worthy of earnest consideration by Catholic superiors, if only because they come from a disinterested non-Catholic historian. The account and criticism of Maria Monk's *Disclosures*, "the greatest of all the nativistic propaganda works," could have been rendered even more perfect by perusal of the extended review of that scurrilous piece in *The Dublin Review* for May, 1836.

*The Protestant Crusade* is rich, nay more, it is luxuriant in notes, documentation and bibliography, the latter alone making it invaluable to students. It carries also nineteen illustrations, seven maps, a handy index and an appendix which reproduces the constitutions of the era's three greatest anti-Catholic societies. The only other aid that could be suggested would be a graph showing the peaks of intolerance against the Catholic Church from 1800 to 1860.

F.R.

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**The Three Ways of the Spiritual Life.** By R. Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P.  
112 pp. Benziger, New York. \$1.25.

The author of *Perfection chretienne et contemplation* and *L'Amour de Dieu et la Croix de Jesus* has prepared *Les Trois Conversions et Les Trois Voies* at the request of many readers for a brief outline of his larger works, setting in clear relief the main principles of ascetical and mystical theology. But this little volume, which has been translated into English, under the title: *The Three Ways of the Spiritual Life*, offers far more than a mere synopsis of its forerunners, a repetition and rearrangement of familiar material. It is the matured expression of a recognized master of the spiritual life, co-ordinating and unifying a life's work in the light of first principles. For the author sets out "to consider the whole subject from a point of view at once more simple and more sublime," from the mature point of view which fully appreciates that "the most sublime and most vital truths are precisely elementary truths, deeply studied, prayerfully considered, and made the object of supernatural contemplation."

The three traditional stages in the spiritual life—the purgative, illuminative, and unitive—are examined minutely in relation to their corresponding analogues in the physical life of man and in the spiritual development of the Apostles, especially of St. Peter. To this simple plan of procedure is brought all the breadth of vision and profundity of thought evidenced in the earlier writings of Father Garrigou-Lagrange. The writings of St. Catherine of Siena, St. John of the Cross, Bl. Henry Suso, John Tauler, the doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas, and the Gospel narrative according to St. John are made the chief witnesses to the author's conception of the spiritual life as a vital, organic unity. We have here no "mechanical juxtaposition of states, but an organic development of life . . . a vital development in which each stage has its own *raison d'être*." The transition from one stage to another is marked by a conversion which begins a process of purgation more or less lengthy depending upon

the will of God and the dispositions of the soul. The first conversion takes place at the first impression of sanctifying grace into the soul. The purgative process is carried out by the soul itself with the aid of actual grace. There are, however, many defects that cannot be completely eradicated until God subjects the soul to new purifications. The second conversion, which leads the soul to the illuminative way, is according to Father Garrigou-Lagrange, following St. John of the Cross, a passive purification of the sensible faculties. After this terrible torment the soul comes into the serene calm of infused contemplation. The purifying fires return once more. It is the third conversion, the passive purification of the spirit, which penetrates the spiritual faculties of the soul and rids them of all imperfections. The height of spiritual peace and joy are finally reached in the loving and continuous union of the soul with God.

Containing all those qualities usually associated with any work of Father Garrigou-Lagrange: insistence upon principles, clarity of thought, forcefulness of expression, this book will serve equally well as introductory or supplementary reading of important aspects of the spiritual life.

F.W.

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**Colored Lands.** By G. K. Chesterton. 238 pp. Sheed & Ward, New York. \$3.00.

Since the death of Chesterton a wealth of literature has sprung up to keep fresh his memory. But the memories of the "gigantic unity" that was G. K. cannot be kept alive half so well through the literature that has arisen about him as by the force of his personality expressed in his own writings. This latest collection of his unpublished writings recalls Chesterton again and once more we hear him through the voice of his prolific pen. We hear him roll out his thunderous laughter in his caricatures of himself and his fantastic stories. One might almost say that we do better in the huge task of understanding the man through this literary visit than we could have done through one of his personal visits. The collection takes us rapidly through the literary attempts of Chesterton, from the time when he was the literary genius of his schoolboy debating club to his later and mature days.

All his life Chesterton attached importance to fantasy as a literary channel. Although it is the *Autobiography* that makes us realize how great a part fantasy played in his interior life, it is his earlier works which show us its evolution. Chesterton the agnostic, is not quite so sure of himself in the realms of fantasy as is Chesterton the believer. For to be successful, fantasy must be anchored to truth. As Chesterton himself expressed it, fantasy is truth read backwards.

It is interesting to see that his earliest attempts at the fantastic are weighted down with undue solemnity. Much that could have been treated lightly and in a more easy style receives ponderous treatment. But perhaps that is asking too much of a very young man with a sometimes over serious concept of himself in the field of literature. At any rate as he advanced in years and wisdom he became more and more the master of the situation and the realms of fantasy became a pleasure to himself and his readers.

Fantasy in the mature Chesterton was neither ponderous nor was it all nonsense. While he considered it a means for easy treatment of light topics, he also used it as a satisfying channel for weighty messages. His greatest enjoyment was to indulge in the paradox of outlandishly serious statements. At times an apparently pointless story is carrying an awesome truth and at other times the story may be just a literary adventure into the fantastic.

During his career as a lecturer, Chesterton was famous for his ability to laugh away his opponents. In this book he often turns that laughter on himself and his grotesque self-caricatures are sights to behold. His sense of humor was as big as himself and he had the happy faculty of enjoying a joke even if he were the victim. The book abounds with the merry, informal Chesterton, the man whom millions loved. He has long been established as a writer and this book can do no more in that line. *Colored Lands* is full of enjoyment for those who appreciate good humor and as an addition to the Chestertonian library it is not to be missed.

U.F.

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**Through Lands of the Bible.** By H. V. Morton. 440 pp. Dodd, Mead, New York. \$3.00.

Among the many reasons that make H. V. Morton the popular writer of travelogue are his wide range of knowledge and his deep understanding of human nature. The author in his travels encounters many strange and bizarre creeds and customs, yet he never makes them an object of ridicule or censure; on the contrary he always attempts to comprehend their history and their meaning. Seldom does a work whose object smacks of archeology or any other form of antiquarianism arouse interest in the average reader, yet the adventurous spirit of Mr. Morton, the numerous personal anecdotes, and his easy-flowing style make his works as interesting as the ever popular detective story.

Mr. Morton's recent book, *Through Lands of the Bible*, blends the excellence of his previous works with a freshness of approach to the historical spots of the Old Testament and age-old shrines of Near-

Eastern Christianity. Crossing the Syrian desert to Bagdad, he stopped on his way to view the ruins of the Church of the renowned St. Simon Stylites. At Bagdad he visited the Chaldean Christians and at the risk of his life secretly observed the Shia flagellants of the Moslems. He explored Ur and Babylon, ruminating upon their ancient greatness and their present ruin. Thence he journeyed to Egypt, where he spent a good while with the little known Coptic Christians, visiting their ancient churches and monasteries. His pilgrimage ended at Rome.

For its sheer interest the work surpasses anything that has come from the versatile pen of the author. We must add, however, that when the author touches questions of Biblical Introduction, even though this be done *quasi per transennam*, we cannot always be in complete accord. The statement (p. 89) that the Book of Daniel "had more religious significance than historical accuracy," and the assumption of possibility of error in other canonical works are difficult to reconcile with the divine inspiration and consequent inerrancy of the Scriptures. We do not, moreover, expect Mr. Morton to feel himself bound by the decisions of the Biblical Commission with regard to the so-called "Deutro-Isaiah," but we do take exception to his blithe assertion of such a shadowy personage without, apparently, taking into account the very serious arguments to the contrary. After all, the existence of a "Deutro-Isaiah" has not yet been proved. The same may be said of his assertion of the late date for the Book of Daniel. DOMINICANA has no desire to be captious, but this book has been proclaimed and praised even on the front pages of Catholic journals. We presume, we even hope, that many Catholics will read it, but the Catholic public has the right to be warned that not all the doctrine therein contained is accepted as truth by the Church and her biblical scholars.

H.A.

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**Heroes of Thought.** By John Middleton Murry. 364 pp. Messner, New York. \$3.75.

Like many of his fellowmen John Middleton Murry, the renowned English critic, is worried about the future of the world, especially of democracy. To save democracy, to make men cognizant of its story, its ideals, its failures, its need of redemption, he has written *Heroes of Thought*.

The work is a splendidly written plea that men return to a consciousness of democracy's origins. To portray the story of democracy's growth from medieval society, Mr. Murry has analyzed the minds of those men who, in his opinion, have experienced that growth

in thought and imagination. Montaigne, Cromwell, and Milton are here represented as prophets of the individual; Rousseau and Marx as proclaimers of new societies; Goethe, Godwin, and Shelley as seekers of new foundations for religion; and finally, William Morris as a modern medievalist.

From the author's interpretations of the thought of these men the reader acquires a fair knowledge of his philosophy of life. Certainly Mr. Murry has no sympathy for modern "isms": Totalitarianism he castigates, Liberalism and Individualism he abhors, Nationalism and Sectarianism he rejects. Society and Christianity must be regenerated and that, not by mere social legislation, but by the rebirth of the individual. He demands a universality of religion, a return to Christian love, a re-creation of an acknowledged spiritual authority. All this would seem to make the author one with the Catholic Church. Yet in spite of a very pronounced sympathy with the Church, quite patent in his essays on Chaucer, he rejects the Church and subscribes to the doctrine of Invisible and Visible Church. The reason is not hard to find; for M. Maritain has given it, in his masterful work *Three Reformers*.

In this book, the eminent French Thomist gives a profound study of Rousseau and his doctrine. He shows that Rousseau perceived important truths which his age had forgotten: the existence of God and of the soul, the justification of virtue, the essential dignity of man, etc. All these are Christian truths, but for Rousseau they have lost their substance; for they are not based upon reason and faith but upon feeling. Christianity is stripped of the supernatural. It becomes naturalized. "To believe that we are called to lead a divine life, but to believe it of our natural life, not our life of grace; to proclaim the law of love for our neighbor, but in separation from the law of love of God and so to lower love to the level . . . of humanitarianism; to understand that there is in this world something awry, something horrible which ought not to be . . . to want to have the world restored by man's power or natural effort and not helped by the divine medicine dispensed by the Bride of Christ. In a word to laicize the Gospel, to keep the human yearnings of Christianity but do away with Christ . . . a Christianity separated from the Church of Christ," this is Rousseauism. And Mr. Murry is a Rousseauist.

V.M.

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**The Vatican As A World Power.** By Joseph Bernhart. Translated by George Shuster. 443 pp. Longmans, Green, New York. \$4.00.

"The more conscientiously unadulterated historical truth is ex-

plored," said Leo XIII, "the more clearly will every unprejudiced mind see that despite the many shadows which can be discerned on the human figures of the popes and their associates, that history as a whole speaks with sovereign insistence to the mind of man of a Church of Christ that is divine." It is upon these human figures of the popes and their associates that Joseph Bernhart throws the spotlight of history, revealing a world power the most universal and the most enduring the race has known.

With unflagging interest we follow the Papacy in its bitter conflict with the powers of this world. From the days of St. Peter to the threshold of the reign of our late Holy Father, Pius XI, we behold the Papacy in its moments of greatness and weakness. We are not reading a dry assembly of historical facts. We seem actually to live again with those great Consuls of Christ, Gregory I and Leo I. At Canossa we are present at the unforgettable scene between Gregory VII and the Emperor, Henry IV. During the pontificate of Innocent III we see the heritage of Gregory carried to its full perfection. The Papacy becomes the throne of the world. Then as the reign of Boniface VIII draws to its close, and later during the Western Schism, catastrophe all but overwhelms it. It recovers, only to take up the struggle once again; now against the revolters of the sixteenth century, now against Napoleon and Bismarck. From all the upheavals of its life the Papacy emerges essentially unchanged, unvanquished, indestructible; for in the words of Schiller (as quoted by the author): "Though every time a Pope dies the chair of succession is broken and must be linked together again at every new election and though no secular throne has ever so frequently changed its incumbent or been so stormily assailed and abandoned, yet this remains the only throne on earth which seems never to have changed its occupant. For only the Popes die: the spirit which informs them is immortal."

*The Vatican As A World Power* is not a philosophy of the history of the Papacy, because, as the author says, there can be no philosophy of that history, any more than there can be a logic of the Christian story of salvation. Neither is it a detailed and complete history of the Church; it is, rather, a rapid and clear-sighted summary of the outstanding events in the reigns of the successors of St. Peter.

We are indebted to Mr. Shuster not only for making this excellent work available in English but also for a crisp, vigorous translation that makes the book thoroughly readable and enjoyable. S.D.

**Lord Macaulay.** By Richmond Croom Beatty. 381 pp. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman. \$3.00.

Perhaps no other public figure of the last century was more whole-heartedly loved and hated, more universally admired and condemned, more sought after, lionized and fawned upon than the homely, lumpy and ungainly Lord Macaulay whose genius was acknowledged even by his enemies and whose hatred for them in return was profound and implacable. His speeches and writings were more widely read and discussed than those of any of his contemporaries; his vibrant and forceful personality was the deciding factor in many a debate and his caustic tongue and pen alike spared no enemy, be he prime minister of England, governor general of India, author, poet or member of Parliament.

In this, the most recent of his biographies, there lives again not only the gifted author of the *Laws of Ancient Rome*, the *Trial of Warren Hastings* and the classic but non factual *History of England*, but also England's most ardent liberal, her most eloquent member of Parliament and her stoutest champion of the rights of her middle class to property ownership and to suffrage. Mr. Beatty's treatment of his illustrious subject does not begin and end with his literary and political career nor does he merely sketch a portrait of the Victorian Whig. The whole life of Lord Macaulay is painted on a broad canvas and his genius, his character, his good and bad points, his successes and failures are all discussed with unbiased candor. Nothing is exaggerated, nothing is minimized. The result is a complete picture that cannot help but please the eye of the most discriminating lover of biographical art. The dominant, pugnacious little Whig enlivens every page and it is with pleasure, mingled with not a little regret, that the reader puts down the book after a delightful journey through nineteenth-century England with Tom Macaulay as a traveling companion.

Nine biographical studies, exclusive of the present one, have been written about Lord Macaulay. Mr. Beatty has consulted them all but for his primary sources he has used almost exclusively the works of Macaulay himself. These are the *Edinburgh Edition of Macaulay's Works*, in eight volumes, edited by his sister, Lady Trevelyan; his *Life and Letters*, by his nephew G. O. Trevelyan, and his *Journals*, in eleven volumes. The *Parliamentary Proceedings of Hansard* were used for Macaulay's speeches in the House.

Mr. Beatty has made a valuable, learned and notable contribution to the biographical field of literature and his readers are assured of a biographical treat when they take his *Lord Macaulay* down from their book-shelves.

R.V.

**The Great Heresies.** By Hilaire Belloc. 274 pp. Sheed & Ward, New York. \$2.50.

A vague modern notion represents heresy as greatly troubling the poor medieval mind, but having no present import, thanks to the tolerant spirit of our age. Belloc evinces no sympathy with such a notion. He insists that the historian without a knowledge of heresy has a weak grasp of modern conditions, a poor insight into the past. Since heresy "is the dislocation of some complete and self-supporting whole by the introduction of some novel denial of some essential part therein," Christian heresy becomes the disruption of that Christian culture which was productive of the European mind. Heresy is formative of a new society, it originates a new life and vitally affects the society it attacks. Whether the doctrine attacked be true or not, the historian must realize that this new doctrine determines the future of the society which believes it. This, for Belloc, is the historical importance of heresy.

From the long list of heresies which have risen against the Church, Belloc chooses five as basic and typical. Arianism exemplifies the destruction of a root of faith, Mohammedanism the attack from without, Albigensianism the cancerous growth from within, and the "Modern" the rejection of all transcendental affirmations. The natures of these heresies, their origins, the story of their attack, and finally, their actual or possible effect upon social life are analyzed in that Bellocian manner which is so well known to the historian's disciples.

This work is important because it is, in great part, a summary of much that Belloc has written. The treatment of Mohammedanism recalls the *Companion to Wells' Outline of History* and *The Crusades*; the chapters on Protestantism revive memories of *Europe and The Faith* and *Richelieu*; while the warnings about the present struggle against the Church, which he calls "The Modern," reverberate with the challenges of the opening chapters of *The Crisis of Civilization*. The principles basic in these works are here emphasized with added earnestness and simplicity; their important facts are again marshalled and examined; their conclusions are restated and reaffirmed.

V.M.

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**What is Communism?** By E. Delaye, S.J. Translated by B. Schumacher. 186 pp. Herder, St. Louis. \$2.00.

**Communism and Christians.** Translated by J. F. Scanlan. 294 pp. Paladin Press, London. 7/6.

To meet and conquer an adversary one must understand his doctrine in principle and conclusion; for emotional outbursts against

the opponent are ineffective and only clutter the field of battle, ignorance of important principles in his system engenders a weakness in one's own failure to recognize whatever of truth is present in his thought prejudices the chance for success. In a word, he must be recognized for what he is. This is especially true of the Catholic in regard to Communism. Too many Catholics have failed to see Communism as an integrated system of thought, few have realized that Communistic materialism is not Epicureanism, most of us have failed to recognize that "the danger of Marxism lies in that imbrication of truths and errors which guarantees its solid foundation." In the acquisition of this complete understanding of Communism both these books will be of invaluable help to the Catholic.

Father Delaye's avowed purpose is to give to the layman a clear and brief exposition of Communism. He proposes to recite, as it were, in a very simple and orderly manner the Communist creed. In as intelligible a way as the obscurities of Hegelian philosophy will allow, he shows the deep rootedness of Communism in the Hegelian dialectic, even though it does throw the emphasis from the ideal to the material. Proceeding to reveal the Communist notion of man, he exposes its degradation of the human personality. In his analysis of Communism as a religion, Father Delaye shows that Communism is a religion of this-worldliness with a creed, a clergy and a future paradise, the triumph of the proletariat. He closes his treatment with an examination of the opposition between Communism and Fascism.

*Communism and Christians* is the reply of French Christians to the "outstretched hand" of Maurice Thorez, the general secretary of the French Communist party. The collaborators are, in the main, Roman Catholic: Mauriac, Père Ducatillon, O.P., Daniel-Rops and Alexandre Marc; one, Berdyaev, is a Russian Orthodox Catholic, while Denis de Rougemont, is a Calvinist.

Mauriac's essay is a brief statement of the question of Catholic cooperation with Communism. The four essays of Père Ducatillon which follow are concerned with the fundamental basis of Communism and consequently treat much the same matter as does Father Delaye. Père Ducatillon is almost scrupulous in his care to give an objective expression of Communist doctrine. Alexandre Marc's portrayal of the fate of religion in Russia during the past twenty years shows that the activity of the Union of the Godless and other Russian anti-religious organizations should make the Christian wary of any union with Communism. Berdyaev and Denis de Rougemont reject Communism for its anti-personalism and totalitarianism respectively. The final essay, by Daniel-Rops, is an impassioned plea

that Christians become true followers of Christ, for Communism is born of Christian negligence.

Clear in exposition, forceful in language (thanks to the translators), objective in treatment, both these works are highly recommended.

N.H.

**The Science of World Revolution.** By Arnold Lunn. 355 pp. Sheed & Ward, New York. \$3.00.

A comparative study of the French Revolutions of 1789, 1848 and 1871, and the more recent upheavals in Russia and Spain have led Arnold Lunn to the conclusion that there is in these social revolutions a similarity of pattern approaching scientific exactness and identity. The seeds of revolt are always planted by radical intellectuals who reap the fruit of their folly by disappearing from the scene when the revolution actually arrives. Their place is taken then by more practical leaders, to whom persons or principles mean nothing when they block the road to power. Mr. Lunn gives practical point to the results of his research when he shows that in England the destructive work of the intellectuals preceding all social revolutions is growing in effectiveness. Admitting that there are parallels in this country, he allows American readers to draw their own conclusions with regard to conditions here.

Finding little difficulty in proving that even the history of revolution repeats itself, Mr. Lunn devotes most of his time to a "survey of Socialism in practise and a criticism of Socialism in theory." On every page the careful logic of an experienced controversialist is in evidence. Well-documented throughout, this book contains a diversified array of damaging quotations from authoritative Socialist sources, from Karl Marx to Earl Browder. However, Mr. Lunn is unfailingly fair to the opposition and does not hesitate to defend Socialism against arguments which he refuses to accept as valid.

The cowardice and sloth that shirks the difficulties of moral and intellectual problems is, in his opinion, the basic cause of the revolt against civilization. "The Utopia of Communism is the paradise of the escapist taking refuge from reality in a world of wishful thinking." Civilization's defense must be not only the intellectual rearmament which assails the fallacies upon which Socialism rests, but also the convincing moral argument which translates into action the social implications of Christian thought.

Mr. Lunn is always interesting and witty as well as scholarly, even when his subject is "The Labor Theory of Value." However, some noticeable repetition might have been avoided by a more orderly arrangement of the material. Still, the author can scarcely be

blamed for his almost impatient insistence on the unreasonable character of Communism and its defenders who shout but do not argue, who assert but do not prove. Besides being an enlightening explanation of events in the very recent past, this volume repeats with vigorous clarity a warning word which has been heard before but must be more attentively heeded.

A.O'C.

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**Sir William Blackstone.** By David Lockmiller. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill. \$3.00.

Like other important figures in the world of thought, Blackstone has been overshadowed by his work; Blackstone the man has been forgotten for Blackstone the commentator. His work on the laws of England has been a legal classic for centuries but of the man who wrote it the world knows very little.

To make men cognizant of the life of this lawyer, who was also professor, poet, critic, member of Parliament, reformer and judge, is the purpose of this biography. Whether the author succeeds or not will depend, in great part, upon the reader's opinion of what a biography should be. For there are two ways of writing biography. One we may call the chronological method, the other, the philosophical. In the first the author resembles a photographer. From original sources, contemporary evidence, and from later research he gives a photograph of the subject—a photograph complete, objective, balanced, but also, uninterpreted. You see the outer man in all his detail but the soul, the inner urge, the spring of activity is lacking. In the philosophical biography the author is a portraitist whose aim is to bring into greater relief those basic elements which are the key to the rest. In this method there is selection of detail, an emphasis upon one fact, a softening of the other, an interplay of lights and shadow. Belloc is the classic artist of this method.

Now Mr. Lockmiller has followed the first method and that from necessity; for this work brings the number of biographies on Blackstone up to the grand number of three. The author's research has been extensive but the data on much of Blackstone's private life is still rather meagre. Each phase of Blackstone's life has been given consideration. The life of law students, the condition of the bar, the practice of the judiciary are treated with as full a wealth of detail as present knowledge will allow. For this the author is to be heartily thanked. Hence, for the legal student who would have a greater knowledge of this all-important colleague, the book is indispensable. But the layman, whose interest is not in detail but in interpretation, must wait for some future Belloc to reduce the compound that was Blackstone into its basic elements.

V.M.

**Political Philosophies.** By Chester C. Maxey. 692 pp. Macmillan, New York. \$4.00.

These days of totalitarian ascendancy and democratic decline have witnessed a revival of interest in political philosophy. When, therefore, an author sets out with the avowed purpose of rejuvenating political theory by "reanimating dead men, forgotten issues and fading ideas in such a way as to make them vivid and real to modern minds," his efforts are bound to receive more than passing notice. Professor Maxey has attempted this objective by the pedagogical process of combining a swift biographical account of each supposed master of political theory with a concise exposition of the nature and import of his work. A summary of each author's writings and doctrines and a few selected quotations from his important works, intended to give the reader a familiarity with his thought as expressed in his own words, make the volume a worthy addition to the literature on this subject. The author rounds out his contribution by a survey of the present status of democracy and a personal evaluation of the function of political philosophy.

Never pedantic, persuasive in style, generally thorough in analysis Professor Maxey lacks little in the mechanics of his work. Undoubtedly Catholics will view with regret the relatively meagre space given to the findings of great scholastics. Their prince, Saint Thomas, is granted a hearing but it is a rather brusque one. There are indications that the author has not sought intellectual solace in the writings of the Saint himself. His quotation from a non-Thomistic source, *Coker, Readings in Political Philosophy*, his unhappy choice of the relationship between the state and a murderer (p. 131) as an exemplification of the futility of the Christian thesis concerning the moral nature of the state, and the utility of amoral Machiavellianism, are indicative of this failure.

The word "unhappy" is used advisedly because two hundred years before the Florentine Chancellor saw the light of day Saint Thomas held the state to the same ethical standards as a private individual in order to validate its authority for taking the life of a criminal. In the *Summa Theologica* IIa IIae., Q 64., A. 2, Saint Thomas declares: "Hence we see that if it be expedient for the welfare of the whole body that some member should be amputated by reason of its being bad and corruptive of the rest of the body, the removal of that member is praiseworthy and salutary. But every individual is related to the whole community as part to the whole; and hence if any man be dangerous to the community and is corrupting it by reason of some crime then it is right and wholesome that he

should be put to death for the sake of the common good." No explanations are required for this reasoning; its conclusions are patent. It is well to note that the Thomistic doctrine denies to the state the authority of taking the life of an innocent man. He is a rational creature and as such is not a mere part of the state. It is only when, as Saint Thomas says in his reply to the third objection, a man removes himself from the order of reason by acting irrationally that he becomes a mere part and subject to the same treatment than an individual exercises on a diseased member of his own body. The Angelic Doctor has here vindicated the right of the state to take the life of a criminal without granting it immunity from the conventional rules of private morals. Thus the charge of the Professor that the moralist who refuses to do so "makes himself absurd" (p. 131) falls flat; the series of absurdities which he enumerates (p. 131) are straw men consumed by the flame of fact. Perhaps the present plight of governmental institutions can be attributed to a philosophy of government which holds with Profesor Maxey that "All clear-minded political thinkers are in substantial agreement with Machiavelli as to the practical impossibility of subjecting states and statecraft to the same rules of morality as private individuals" (p. 132).

However viewed in its broad outlines Professor Maxey's work is well done. He is to be congratulated for his effective treatment of our political inheritance, for the continuity preserved in his story, for the ease in expression so apparent throughout the text. The work can be highly recommended as a source for anyone seeking a ready knowledge of political theory, particularly as proposed by thinkers outside the Catholic tradition.

C.B.

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**Cosmology.** By Paul Glenn. 338 pp. Herder, St. Louis. \$2.25.

During the past few years, Father Paul J. Glenn has written a series of text books in philosophy which has gained much recognition from professors and critics. Recently his *Cosmology* has appeared which is the tenth and last book of the series.

Although this work should have been treated after logic, Father Glenn has reserved it until the end because of a certain fear of broaching matters cosmological. For on the one hand, as he remarks in his preface, such a book would surely be accused of stepping rashly and irreverently upon the sacred field of physical science; on the other, it would inevitably be taken warmly to task for not noticing more fully the data of modern science. In spite of this fear the author has ventured to accomplish his task, due to the need of a fresh statement of the subject.

The matter usual to such a text—the character and constitution of bodies, creation, development and finality of the world, nature and her laws—is given full exposition. When considering certain problems in detail, such as hylomorphism, quantity, and miracles, the author proceeds in a manner which exhibits his experience and skill in this subject. His exposition as a rule is clear and concise enabling the student to grasp quite easily the question under discussion. In one place Father Glenn deviates from the teaching of St. Thomas, and that when he says, that multilocation is not intrinsically or absolutely impossible (p. 76).

The text is intended by the author for undergraduate students and does not, therefore, treat the problems as exhaustively as a more advanced student would desire. Those, however, who are strangers to the study of cosmology will find in this work a clear, orderly and sufficient exposition of this important science.

J.M.J.

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**Great Catholics.** Edited by Claude Williamson, O.S.C. 456 pp. Macmillan, New York. \$2.50.

Fervent Catholic lives are beyond doubt the most forceful apologetic for the true Church of Christ. In St. Ignatius Loyola, whose story is among those included in this fine volume, we have proof that even the mere record of such lives has a power to inspire the soul's return to God. These pages tell of the lives of thirty-seven men and women who lived on this earth the teachings of Christ. Some of our finest Catholic writers have contributed the biographies that make this book an outstanding achievement, C. C. Martindale, S.J., Christopher Hollis, Margaret Yeo, Shane Leslie, and Hugh Pope, O.P., among them.

The standard by which the greatness of Catholics as Catholics must be measured is sanctity, for that is the end of the Catholic life. Even when they are great as measured by other norms, they are not great Catholics unless it is the supernatural life of grace and charity that gives form and color to the whole. But though all the Saints are great Catholics, not all great Catholics are saints. Accordingly the editor of this collection has wisely chosen many of his subjects from our uncanonized greats, including such men as Ozanam, Francis Thompson and Gregor Mendel. Among the Saints who live again in these pages are St. Augustine, St. Catherine of Siena, St. Thomas More and St. Vincent de Paul.

It would be difficult to conceive of a more varied group of personalities. Every vocation and station of life has its heroes and heroines and each is represented here. Most of the men and women are

close to our own day; less than ten of them having lived before the sixteenth century. English Catholics predominate but Italy, France and Spain are also well represented. Charles Carroll of Carrollton and the late Cardinal Hayes are the New World's contribution to this galaxy of the great. The unity and universality of the Church as well as Her sanctity are fully demonstrated in these lives of the children She mothered.

It is not with any intention of disparaging the others that we admit to a special appreciation for Michael de la Bedoyere's "Leo XIII" and Mgr. Fulton J. Sheen's "Cardinal Hayes." There will be few readers who will not find all these biographies interesting and inspiring. Some will undoubtedly be disappointed at the omission of names they would like to have seen. That only argues for a volume of *Other Great Catholics* to succeed this excellent work.

A.O'C.

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**A Philosophy of Work.** By Etienne Borne and Francois Henry. Translated by Francis Jackson. 221 pp. Sheed & Ward, New York. \$2.50.

"Those Christians have betrayed their vocation, who have united their intelligence to their hardness of heart in order to make the barbarous answer: 'Because Adam was guilty of sin, you must work and suffer in working.'" To those of us secure in our virtuous acceptance of work as a necessary evil, this assertion comes as a shock. So will the whole book. But it is a pleasing shock. We are actually going to be made to like work. This is a Christian glorification of work for the idealistic worker, who cannot accept the Communist apocalypse. Dedicated to the Catholic Working Youth (J.O.C.) of France, these lucid and challenging meditations devoted to modern manual labor offer a joyful and vigorous *credo* to the modern worker.

The authors' history of labor begins with the concept of labor in pagan Greece, where work was for slaves and speculation for men; and never the twain shall meet. Passing to the middle Ages, work, in the light of revelation, assumes significance not only as a necessary consequence of sin, but as a salutary discipline for the will, and a sign of man's dependence on fellow-man and on nature for his perfection. With the Reformation and the divorcing of work from contemplation, comes the notion of work for its own sake. Prosperity becomes the sign of predestination. The stern Calvinistic religion of production foreshadowed the bourgeois religion of material success. Work is thus ushered into the modern era as something devoid of joy and finality, an implacable law grinding away the soul of the worker. The formulation of mysticisms of labor to regain the lost vision and joy is the necessary consequence.

Russian Stakhanovism, a possible solution to the problem, is sympathetically and realistically reviewed and rejected as found wanting in ultimate satisfaction of human aspirations. The imperious and growing aspirations of labor can be satisfied only by a reconciliation between the vocation of labor and the religious vocation of man. The descriptive definition of labor, transient action destined to perfect an exterior object, is completed by the motive of fraternal charity and the preparation for contemplation. The necessary painful effort thus becomes not only tolerable but ennobling and joyful. United to the spirit of faith, this concept of work retains the noble aspirations of the worker and avoids the dead-end of Communism. In the gradual unfolding and development of Christian truth, it becomes the shape of future civilization.

The chapters are short and thoughtful, arresting by the constant appearance of revolutionary assertions, supported by acute analyses of labor in all its imposing realness and aptly illustrated by history and contemporary events. The style is lively, masterful and refreshingly aggressive, free from the measured and colorless monotony that sometimes creeps into such essays. If the reader of this book cannot yet call himself a pessimist for not liking work, he will at least have some new ideas that will put life in his veins, and an eminently soul-satisfying and bright ideal to set before him in his work in the future.

H.C.

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**The Risen Christ.** By Most Rev. Tihamer Toth. Translated by V. G. Agotai. 207 pp. Herder, St. Louis. \$1.75.

The name of the author and the universally acknowledged practicality and opportuneness of the works that have already come from his gifted pen are ample guarantee for the merit of these present sermons. In the fine translation of V. G. Agotai they have lost none of that power and attractiveness which they must possess in their original tongue.

One half of this book is dedicated to a series of sermons on the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the last judgment; the other half, to sermons on the Blessed Virgin.

What can offer more profitable matter for meditation than the Resurrection of Christ? For as the author says, "It is the crown of His labors, the final assurance that He is the Son of God. It is the foundation of our Faith, the triumph of truth, encouragement in our strenuous life and a pledge of our own resurrection." In his sermons on the Blessed Virgin the eloquent bishop explains Mary's right to

our veneration, her dignity and her influence upon her sex, as woman, virgin and mother.

The thought, well ordered and clear, is rendered easy to follow by the natural outline of the subheadings within each chapter. Apposite stories, striking comparisons, and pointed illustrations capture our attention, clarify the ideas and leave us with a vivid, tangible and permanent apprehension of the truth they are intended to convey.

S.D.

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## DIGEST OF RECENT BOOKS

To those who may be seeking a clear and concise notion of Catholic Action and a brief resumé of its organization throughout the world we recommend **A Guide to Catholic Action** edited by Rev. John Fitzsimons and Mr. Paul McGuire. Besides the editors, other outstanding men have contributed to this work. What Catholic Action really is has been set forth simply and briefly by establishing its relation to the doctrine of the Mystical Body and the liturgy. A glimpse of the world scene of Catholic Action follows, showing how each country plays its part in its own way. The growth of Catholic Action in Italy, Belgium and France is examined in detail because it is in these countries that it is most especially developed. A fitting conclusion to the work is a chapter on Formation Technique dealing with the organization of parish units. The work is eminently practical for both clergy and laity. (Sheed & Ward, N. Y. \$2.00).

With a scholarly and experienced pen, R.H.J. Steuart, S.J., has written **In Divers Manners**, a series of essays (or meditations) all inspired by the mystery of the Incarnation. Following the guide of traditional Catholic thought, Father Steuart has used heart and mind to unveil some of "the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God." The result is such splendid essays as "The Higher Pantheism," "The Word was made Flesh," and "The Hope of Our Calling." (Longmans, Green, N. Y. \$2.00).

In **Mystical Poems of Nuptial Love** by **Coventry Patmore**, Father Terence Connolly, S.J., as editor, presents to lovers of genuine poetry an excellent and revealing clarification of the meaning of *The Unknown Eros*, *The Marriage Sermon* and other poems, which might otherwise remain vague but which are today deserving of reading and thoughtful consideration. So it is that one cannot but believe that a debt of gratitude is owed to Father Connolly for having at this time called special attention to the work of Patmore who is too generally known only for his *The Toys*. The world needs to know more of the life and work of one who, upon the solid foundation afforded by Saint Paul and the Doctors and Mystics of the Church, saw in marriage an exalted vocation and in nuptial love a reflection of Divine love. Coventry Patmore was "a much married man." If he knew and appreciated thoroughly the meaning of Christian marriage it was not because he was a Victorian but because he knew and appreciated the boundless love of the Divine Author of Christian marriage. (Bruce Humphries, Boston. \$3.00).

Since parents are the first educators of their children, the task of teaching children to read resolves in great extent upon them. In order

that parents may have a guide in performing this duty, M. Pradel, who has distinguished himself in the field of education, presents parents with a valuable aid in his work **Les Lectures des Jeunes**. The author divides his work into four sections corresponding to the four duties of parents in supervising their children's reading: to watch, to protect, to direct, to form. Under each section the author gives all the suggestions necessary to achieve these ends. M. Pradel has given parents a work which is indispensable for complete parental guidance. (Tequi, Paris. 12 fr.).

"Slender volume" seems to be a tag reserved for the publication of poems, but it may be usurped here and applied to a short novel of clerical life, **The Burden Light** by Rev. Edward P. Keenan. The brisk progress of Father Keenan's story takes a newly ordained priest and his co-laborers through a full week of pastoral activity. Still there is room for an interesting, unromantic story whose joys and griefs are seen in three priestly lives. Father Keenan's simple style imparts a sense of familiarity that vitalizes his story. It should have a wide Catholic appeal. (Kenedy, N. Y. \$1.75).

If you wish to be **At Your Ease in the Catholic Church** you will find many helpful hints in Mary Perkins' volume of that title. In a pleasing, and at times amusing, manner the author strives to assist Catholic lay people in making their religion an integral part of their distracted everyday lives. Dipping into sources of moral theology, canon law, and the liturgy, in addition to an ordinary book of etiquette the author has set down a fund of information which every Catholic should have stored up and ready for immediate use. Readers will be happy to find satisfactory explanations of things which have perhaps puzzled them for many years—the duties of godparents, preparation for a sick call, publication of the banns of marriage, the case against cremation, proper method of addressing members of the hierarchy, the meaning of abbreviations after names of religious, Lenten penance and Easter joy, indulgences, the index, religious contact with non-Catholics, and many other interesting items. (Sheed & Ward, N. Y. \$2.00).

For those who read **The Happiness of Father Happé** there are many smiles in store. In this, her last work, the late Cecily Hallack portrays a rotund and jolly Franciscan who, though unused to the English idiom, charms the inhabitants of a small English village with his delightful stories. Famed as a genealogist and botanist, Father Happé is, nevertheless, altogether guileless. He is full of glee, this mellowed Franciscan Friar, and draws all to a happier service of God. In blending the rich humor of Father Happé with that tender sympathy which he exhibits towards those with whom he comes in contact, Miss Hallack displays a delicate artistry. Simplicity is the dominant note from start to finish. We believe that this book should be widely read, (Kenedy, N. Y. \$1.50).

**The Cloister and Other Poems** by Barbara Elizabeth Foley is a very slender volume of poems (twenty-four in all) which breathe deeply of the religious spirit. Themes for the poet's pen are found in her friendship with God, her love of the Blessed Virgin, her resignation to sorrow and the tenderness of prayer. Unfortunately, the path to these lofty heights is cluttered by numerous mechanical faults. The meter often lacks perfection and there are many unfelicitous choices of end-rhymes. These imperfections may be minor, but they are distracting. "To A Little Boy" is the finest poem; the smoothest, "House of Beauty." Father A. Page, C.S.C., has written a brief, but very fitting foreword. (Bruce Humphries, Boston. \$1.00).

From the center of Christian thought and culture comes the fourth volume of the new series of the **Acta Pontificiae Academiae Romanae S.**

**Thomae Aq. et Religionis Catholicae Annis 1936-37.** In the main a collection of dissertations and discussions held by the academy, the *Acta* are concerned with such problems as the objectivity of the extra-mental world, the begetting of the intellectual concepts from the phantasm, the relation of morality to religion, and the fourth way of St. Thomas for proving the existence of God. The authors of the papers read include Gredt, Grabmann, Cordovani, and Xiberta. Those who have followed the opinions expressed by these famous philosophers and theologians in the previous volumes of the series will not be disappointed in this one. (Marietti, Turin. L. 10).

Short, simple, yet profound as the creed are the fourteen essays in **Staircase To A star** by Father Paul Bussard, well known as editor of the *Catholic Digest* and the *Leaflet Missal*. Blending a rare literary excellence with intimate knowledge of the ways of God and man, the author reveals created beauties as finite symbols and signs which should guide men to the infinite and uncreated Beauty of God. Father Bussard has discovered the secret of allowing the reader to do some of the thinking so that the essays come very near to being meditations. Readers of this volume will welcome the return of Columbine and Pierrot, the pair who voice the truth to misguided men with such clarity and forcefulness. (Kenedy, N. Y. \$1.50).

In **French's Oral Readings for Moderns** chosen and edited by Elise West Quaife we find an apt collection of new, up-to-the-minute readings suitable for use in Clubs, High Schools, Colleges, Declamatory Societies and the like. Miss Quaife has cut and arranged important scenes from such internationally popular books as *Gone With The Wind*, *The Good Earth*, *God's Angry Man*, *Three Cities*, and *The Power of the Sun*. Variety is added to her selection of material by the inclusion of several charming poems, character sketches and original monologues. Miss Quaife seems to have achieved her dual purpose of gathering a delightful group of oral readings and awakening renewed interest in some of the outstanding internationally famous novels of recent years. This work should be a worthy addition to the increasing number of books of its type containing selections for oral readings. (French, N. Y. \$1.00).

**HISTORY:** Since the time of St. Teresa of Avila no one has done more to foster devotion to St. Joseph than a humble and saintly laybrother, **Brother André, C.S.C.**, the subject of an interesting biography by Real Boudreau, C.S.C. Firmly convinced that St. Joseph, as Protector of the Church, is a steward who distributes God's favors to men, Brother André labored incessantly to make St. Joseph better known and loved. The great basilica at Montreal is a lasting monument to his success. The biography is vivid and realistic throughout. After relating the important incidents in André's youth, the author shows him as a lay-brother who was intent upon becoming a true religious. The story of the spread of devotion to St. Joseph is told simply but forcibly. Lest his readers form the opinion that André was someone above the lot of common man, Father Boudreau wisely inserts a chapter devoted to André's imperfections and shortcomings. The work closes with a list of tributes given by medical men to the favors received from St. Joseph through the intercession of Brother André. (Benziger, N. Y. \$2.00).

Lucien Bezuiller, C.S.S.R., has written an interesting life of a French layman, **Alfred Soussia**, whose staunch Catholic faith led him to accomplish much for God and neighbor. His life as a teacher was most successful; for not satisfied with merely explaining the sciences to his young pupils, he also tried to mold their characters by inculcating a love of the Catholic faith. Tertiary of St. Francis, husband, and father, he serves

well as a model for the modern man. How God seemed to have favored him as the recipient of special graces is brought out by remarkable instances in his life's activity. One hopes that an English translation of this work will be available soon so that this biography will find the ready acceptance it deserves. (Tequi, Paris. fr. 10).

The appearance of the December volume of the new edition of Alban Butler's **The Lives of The Saints** brings to completion the efforts of Herbert Thurston, S.J., and Donald Attwater. After the section devoted to the saints whose feasts are celebrated in December, the editors have inserted short accounts of some seventeen saints or blessed, rectifying accidental omissions in previous volumes. Two appendices are given. The first is a partial account of Alban Butler's memories; the second is a brief but very enlightening account of the much misunderstood processes of beatification and canonization. In every way this volume maintains the high standard set in the previous ones. (Kenedy, N. Y. \$2.25).

**La Simple Histoire du Bon Père Petit** tells the story of a Belgian Jesuit who died in 1914. Ninety-two years of age at his death, Père Petit had labored for over fifty years in the service of Christ, the conducting of retreats forming the chief part of his work. His simplicity, zeal, and transparent goodness had caused him to be revered as a saint even in this life. At present efforts are being made to have his cause introduced in Rome. This inspiring and eminently readable story by Henri Davignon is the novelist's first attempt at biography and the results indicate that he would do well to continue in this field of literary endeavor. (Lethielleux, Paris. fr. 15).

In a small volume entitled **Studi Domenicani**, Angelus Walz, O.P., who has contributed much to the study of Dominican history, has gathered together a number of his studies relative to St. Dominic, St. Catherine and the two Dominican Doctors of the Church. His three papers on the founder of the Order consider the Saint's importance in the history of teaching and preaching, which has not been sufficiently stressed. Likewise St. Dominic's interest in the Universities as agencies of forming his brethren is given special consideration. The other sections deal with the iconography of St. Albert, the devotion to the Sacred Heart as portrayed in the writings of St. Catherine of Siena, and the Thomistic impress on recent theological works according to the papal prescriptions found in the Code of Canon Law and the statutes of Catholic Universities. These studies though different in character, contain much useful material that will stimulate interest. The explanatory notes and bibliography add greatly to the utility of the book. (Herder, Rome).

The first half of the twenty-second volume of the Smith College Studies in History is a translation, by Florence Gragg, of the first book of the **Commentaries** of Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, later Pope Pius II. The introduction by Leona C. Gable gives a brief history of the *Commentaries* as a background for this quasi-diary of the great Italian humanist. Miss Gabel has also enriched the text with historical notes that make easy of control this important source for the history of the *quattrocentro*. (Smith College, Northampton, Mass.).

**DOCTRINAL:** In **Marriage**, Bishop Franz von Streng presents to the faithful a short book of great importance. In a style, both plain and primarily instructive, the real excellence of Christian marriage is depicted for the married and for those who contemplate marriage. The value of this work cannot be underestimated, in view of the light on this august sacrament. After establishing the divine source of the marital union, the author proceeds to place before the reader the dignity to which Our Blessed Lord elevated this sanctified channel of graces. Nor does the

author smother himself in the ecstasy of the ideal. Frankly he enumerates the seemingly unconquerable obstacles constituting the struggle which courageous and self-sacrificing Catholics must overcome in their quest for a true Christian marriage. The venomous ignorance resulting from the false modern day theories of eugenics, sterility, birth control, etc., destined ultimately to degrade this sacred state, is antidoted with the Christ-given enlightenment of truth and sound counsel, that will lead to the marital happiness intended by God. The book is highly recommended to priests anxious to place in the hands of conscientious Catholics a convincing study of the sublimity and inspiring ideal of Christian marriage. (Benziger, N. Y. \$1.50).

A plain, straight-forward exposition of the fundamental truths of the Catholic Church is the sterling objective of **Father Smith Instructs Jackson**, written by the Most Rev. John Noll, D.D. The dialogue between a "Father Smith" and a "Mr. Jackson" eliminates the rigidity of the ordinary catechetical work. The conversation flows pleasantly, gathering into its stream the essential elements of the Catholic faith. A generous collection of appropriate biblical quotations is employed to establish the divine authority for the beliefs of the faith. Since the book will insure a more perfect understanding of the Church, both Catholic and prospective convert will find it of great convenience. This edition is the thirtieth which indicates the work's extensive appeal. (Our Sunday Visitor Press, Huntington, Ind. \$1.00; paper, \$0.50).

The **Sacrament of Confirmation**, from the pen of Father L. L. McReavy, is a collection of six sermons that will prove quite invaluable to young priests and seminarians who seek information on this Sacrament of "spiritual manhood." Written as a Lenten series, popular in style, the work covers every phase of a sacrament too many consider as "merely the occasion of receiving an additional, unused Christian name." Not content with condemnation of this attitude Father McReavy has offered certain remedies and has pointed out the significance, the effects, the present day utility of Confirmation in view of the ever-increasing demand for real soldiers of Christ. A wealth of scriptural authentication for the doctrine expounded within its pages, quotations from Saint Thomas, and a synopsis at the beginning of each sermon enhance the worth of this booklet. (Wagner, N. Y. \$0.50).

Motivated by the belief that "in every age in which a grave disregard for the laws of Christ's Church prevails, we always find a subsequent spirit of disrespect for parental and civil authority as well," Father Clement Crock has published **The Precepts of the Church**. He does so in the hope that it will aid as an antidote to prevalent disregard for authority. The author, in the form of a Lenten series of seven sermons, first establishes the authority of the Church to command, then discourses on the Precepts of the Church, and finally treats of the Resurrection of Our Lord and its significance in human life. Simple in style, instructive in content the work is a definite contribution to the literature on the Precepts of the Church. (Wagner, N. Y. \$0.50).

**SCRIPTURE:** A biblical work which many authorities consider to be the outstanding contribution in recent years to the field of preliminary scriptural study is **Introductio In Sacros Utriusque Testamenti Libros Compendium** by P. H. Hopfl, O.S.B. In the third volume, which is in its fourth edition and has been revised by P. B. Gut, O.S.B., the author makes a careful study of the books of the New Testament. An orderly arrangement which consists in a conspectus of the life of the inspired writer, the authenticity of the book, its time of composition, its purpose and general characteristics is followed throughout. In his treatment of these points the author gives

numerous citations from the important writers of the centuries and the decisions of the biblical commission. (Anonima Libraria Cattolica Italiana, Rome. L. 36).

**LITURGY: The Year's Liturgy**, a two volume work, is another noteworthy addition to the modern liturgical revival. Written by Dom Cabrol, O.S.B., this set retains the essential features of Gueranger's longer and more detailed *Liturgical Year* and, in addition, gives the reader the fruit of Dom Carbrol's long and thorough studies on the liturgy. The first volume, which has just been received, is devoted to the liturgical seasons. In the introductory chapters the author treats of the origin and development of the liturgy. The succeeding chapters give a detailed study of each liturgical season: its history, principal feasts, and the essential lesson conveyed. A careful study of these pages should contribute greatly towards giving the laity a better appreciation of the liturgy and a more intense union with the Mystical Body. (Benziger, N. Y. \$2.10).

The fourth volume of Aloysis Moretti's ceremonial according to the Roman rite, **De Sacris Functionibus Episcopo Celebrante, Assistente, Absente**, is divided into three parts treating of sacraments, sacramentals and services for the dead. Both of the first two parts are divided into two sections. The first section of each of these sets forth the procedure when the celebrant is a bishop, while in the second the author assumes that a priest is the celebrant. Treated in the first part are such ceremonies as the administration of baptism, confirmation and holy orders, the consecration of a bishop-elect and the celebration of the sacrament of matrimony. An appendix explains the rite to be followed in administering the last rites to a bishop. The second part, on sacramentals, enters into detail on such functions as the blessing of an abbot-elect, the dedication and consecration of a church, the consecration of altars, the blessing and reconciliation of cemeteries, and the blessing of bells. The author prefaces the treatment of the third and concluding part with some general observations. However, he is mainly concerned with the appendix in which the procedure in the case of the death of the ordinary is explained. The diagrams and charts are precise aids for a facile understanding of the text, while the frequent use of bold-face type is helpful to one seeking a résumé of the functions of a particular office. (Marietti, Turin. L. 40).

**CANON LAW:** The newest edition of **Ordo Judicialis Processus Canonici Super Nullitate Matrimonii Instruendi** by Ivo Benedetti is accommodated to the Instruction of the Sacred Congregation of the Sacraments of August 15, 1936. The author, an advocate of the Roman Rota, enlarges on his former work to the extent of commenting on this Instruction and supplying various formulas pertinent to the subject. (Marietti, Turin. L. 12).

In writing the **Manuale Practicum Iuris Disciplinari et Criminali Regularium**, M. A. Coronata, O.M.Cap., has produced a guide that is general enough to be of use to all religious superiors, ordinaries and diocesan curias even though there is special reference to the Capuchin Order. The author has presented a lucid explanation of the simplified method of proceeding in the disciplinary and criminal cases of religious orders. The three books explain various judicial and extrajudicial procedures, enumerate faults against which superiors can and must proceed, and give eighty of the more useful formulas to be employed in particular instances. (Marietti, Turin. L. 18).

**DEVOTIONAL: Our Blessed Lady** by Kilian Heinrich, O.M.Cap., is the second volume in the series of meditations selected from the large work, *Mit Gott*, by Athanasius Bierbaum, O.F.M. The meditations are

mainly devoted to a consideration of the salutations of the Litany of Loretto and to the Angelus. The expositions of the titles of the Litany are brief, but suggest sufficient matter for effective thought. As far as possible apt quotations from Scripture are given to accommodate a justifiable reference to the numerous honors paid to Our Blessed Mother. (St. Anthony Guild Press, Paterson. \$1.00).

When indulged prayers are so numerous, it is often difficult to know the correct indulgence attached to each. **Preces et Pia Opera** eliminates this difficulty by presenting in one small volume a collection of indulged prayers corrected to the end of the year 1937. This work was edited by the Sacred Penitentiary in accordance with the plan of the late Holy Father, Pius XI, who commanded that it alone be regarded as the authentic collection. The book is divided into two parts; the first is a collection of indulged prayers for the benefit of all the faithful, the second is for special classes of the faithful: priests, religious, students, parents, etc. While most of the prayers are in Latin, some in Italian and French are interspersed throughout. The indexes, arranging the prayers not only in alphabetical order but also according to subject matter, enable the reader to find any prayer without difficulty. (Marietti, Turin. L. 25).

**Seeking Only God**, by Athanasius Bierbaum, O.F.M., is a book that every priest should read, for its purpose is to stress the importance of the spiritual life in the clergy. After explaining the necessity of the interior life for a priest, if he would not become forgetful of his great calling, the author explains how this life is to be possessed and maintained. Father Bierbaum's insistence upon the ordinary activities of the priest as the important means of sanctification should make evident the great practicality of this small book. (St. Anthony Guild Press, Paterson. \$1.00).

To make the will of Our Heavenly Father the supremely dominating idea of man's life, is the very sum and substance of Christian perfection. In **Yes, Father**, Richard Graef, C.S.Sp., takes us along this road of obedience in the footsteps of Christ, pointing out to us its hardships, its consolations and its beauty, its certain and happy ending in the courts of heaven. As the road is the same for all, this book has an appeal for priests, religious and laymen. Enriched by Gospel quotations, simple yet most profound in the method and ideal it proposes, easy to read in the excellent English translation of Father Rattler, O.S.A., this book will do much to foster the spiritual life of its readers. (Pustet, N. Y. \$2.50).

In his English adaptation of Martin Jennesken's **The Eucharist and Life**, the late Gregory Rybrook, Ord. Praem., has been most successful. With language that is terse and in a style that is direct and forceful, the work describes the entire spiritual life with special emphasis upon the Eucharist as sacrifice and sacrament. The life of grace and the part that the Holy Ghost, the Eucharist, and Mary play in that life are described with simplicity and clarity. This work is unreservedly recommended for both clergy and laity. (St. Anthony Guild Press, Paterson. \$1.50).

**PAMPHLETS:** The Liturgical Press offers three new pamphlets in the Popular Liturgical Library Series. **The Manner of Serving at Low Mass** gives detailed instructions for the carrying out of the rubrics by the altar boy. **Marriage In Christ** is a practical little pamphlet presenting a translation of the marriage ceremony and Mass together with a brief introduction concerning the Sacrament of Matrimony. **Into Thy Hands** is a Compline book for the use of the laity containing the office of Compline for Sunday and every day of the week. (Collegeville, Minn. \$0.10 ea.).

Four pamphlets have been received from Our Sunday Visitor Press. **A Search For Happiness** by Rev. Patrick F. Harvey, S.J., presents interesting arguments to show that belief in God is not only reasonable but

also a demand of reason. Rev. John A. O'Brien, Ph.D., sounds a warning to the youth of America against the enemies of moral cleanliness, in **Youth's Struggle For Decency**. A pastoral letter of His Eminence William Cardinal O'Connell gives us **The Catholic Doctrine of Purgatory**. Bishop John F. Noll, D.D., in **A Christian versus an Anti-Christian Front** advocates with his never-idle pen a "united front" of Catholics, Protestants and Jews to stem the progress of God-hating organizations and influences. (Our Sunday Visitor Press, Huntington, Ind. \$0.10 ea.).

The Central Bureau Press offers: **The Outstretched Hand of Communism** which is the reply of the Most Rev. Aloisius Muench to the communist offer of union with the Church in social activity; and **Donoso Cortés**, which is a life of that eminent Catholic statesman and political philosopher written by Goetz Briefs. (Central Bureau Press, St. Louis. \$0.10 ea.).

A Rosary Novena booklet prepared by Dominic Dolan, O.P., for community use is now available. Lovers of the Rosary will find in the novena prayers, the Divine Praises, and the Litany of Loretto, a ready source of information on Rosary devotions. (Apostolate of the Rosary, N. Y. \$0.10).

An instructive pamphlet on **The Family** has been written by Dr. Maria Schulter Hermkes. In its eighteen pages the author gives the relation that must exist between the family and the Church if a solution to the modern marriage problem is to be found. (America Press, N. Y. \$0.05).

Five pamphlets by Isidore O'Brien, O.F.M., have been published by the St. Anthony Guild Press: **The Shadow of the Cross, Sculpturing Truth, The Father's Shadow, Christ the Physician, and The Church Our Mother.** (St. Anthony Guild Press, Paterson. \$0.10 ea.).

**PLAYS:** The fourth volume of Frances Cosgrove's **Scenes for Student Actors** has been published. Like the previous volumes, this consists of short selections from the contemporary drama arranged for single characters and group scenes. (French, N. Y. \$1.50).