



**Satan.** Edited by Father Bruno de Jesus-Marie, O.C.D. New York, Sheed and Ward, 1952. pp. 506. \$5.50.

An old saying—"You can't tell a book by its cover."—does not hold in this particular instance (if you choose to glance at the now famous jacket by Van Romberg). It looks like the devil and the book is all about him. The title, "Satan Self-Beastialized" is well suited to the grotesque and fantastic monstrosity which has received a repulsive response from many critics. Because it was hated so much the publishers produced another more conservative design, but the present edition has both jackets, either of which may be disposed of according to the sensibilities of the reader. Seldom do covers get a review, but this one deserves a special mention.

Although a number of articles have been deleted from the original French edition of *Etudes Carmelitaines* on which this volume is based, a like number have been added to the American version, the most outstanding of which is "The Devil Himself" by the late Father Walter Farrell, O.P. In this respect we believe the English edition excels the original. The vivid depiction of Lucifer, the bearer of light become the prince of darkness, flowing from the pen of a master of the teachings of the Angelic Doctor, affords a profound yet clear analysis of the "adversary of mankind" which will lead the reader to a better understanding of who and what the devil really is.

The scope of the thirty Essays in the book ranges from the theological discussion of the existence and nature of Satan and evil to the psychological consideration of demonic possession and witchcraft. The vast amount of material available on the psychological aspects of demonism is too extensive to be comprehensively treated here. This section, however, provides an enlightening and interesting exposition of possession, diabolism and the proposed place of psychiatric treatment where there is no case of direct "interference" by the devil.

Excerpts from various literary works bring to light the effective devices authors have employed to demonstrate the diabolical presence down through the centuries. Striking illustrations arrest the attention of the reader all through the book and the section on art itself is instructive. Beginning with the philosophical concepts of evil in early

pagan civilizations and their consequent effect on the representation of the "evil one," the evolution of the portrayal of the devil in art is traced from the angelic devil of early Christianity to the modern abstractions such as Dali's "Temptation of Saint Anthony."

A galaxy of experts in their respective fields has made this book an outstanding one. It is spiritual in tone, scholarly in research, and with the exception of a few unduly technical articles, fascinating in presentation.

A.J.D.

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**St. Benedict Joseph Labre.** By Agnes De La Gorce. Translated by Rosemary Sheed. New York, Sheed & Ward, 1952. pp. 213. \$3.00.

In the eighteenth century Europe was swarming with beggars. They travelled in little bands, rude, ungrateful, sometimes mischievous to say the least. In those days the words of Christ, "the poor you always have with you" were well understood; though frequently understanding was tinged with bitterness in the minds of those who were badgered by these mendicant bands. They were "tramps . . . lazy good for nothings" who refused to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow and so lived off the rich and poor, city and country folk alike.

Yet often in these little bands, although he sometimes travelled alone, there was one who was different from the rest. He was among them but was not one of them. He was a beggar, but more than that—he was a beggar-pilgrim! To cover the length and breadth of Europe visiting shrines and begging for food along the way may seem a pointless, vagabond existence. But to Benedict Joseph Labre it was a singular vocation, yet as real as that of the priest, the lawyer, the farmer. God was asking him to leave a humble yet comfortable home, to forget marriage, any kind of worldly success, friendship, pleasure, peace; to dress raggedly, be eaten by vermin, constantly on the road, experiencing hunger. To many it seemed a lot of nonsense. Even in our own day it is hard to take.

But to be a saint is not to be ordinary, and Benedict Joseph Labre was not an ordinary man. His was a life of constant humiliation. "Poor, begging, lost to the world" is the author's description of him. His life story is vivid, moving, and compelling. It loses none of its vitality in Rosemary Sheed's capable translation from the original French edition.

J.F.

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**Christ in the Liturgy.** By Dom Illtyd Trethowan. New York, Sheed & Ward, 1952. pp. x, 150. \$2.50.

At some future date when Sheed & Ward decide to publish an