

## THE FRIARS' BOOK-SHELF

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**The Virtues of a Religious Superior.** By St. Bonaventure. Pp. 112. 60 cents net. B. Herder, St. Louis, Mo.

Nothing so greatly makes for the happy family spirit in a religious house as the example of a holy and, above all, prudent superior; for his virtue, or lack of it, is sure to be mirrored in the spiritual character of his charges. This work by the Seraphic Doctor is expressly for the superior. It stresses the virtues peculiarly useful in a ruler,—justice, pity, patience, edification, prudence, and prayerfulness; it flashes before his conscience the necessity of bringing home to himself in good earnest what he so often demands of others, lest perhaps when he has preached to others he himself should become a castaway.

This excellent translation deserves an honest hearing; it should prompt soul-searching meditation, for the author was not only a saint—which in matters of government is by no means enough—but was above all a prudent superior. The author is the book's best commendation. C. D.

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**Preaching.** By Fr. W. B. O'Dowd. Pp. 235. \$2.25 net. Longmans, Green & Co., N. Y. C.

This work contains much valuable information, and many practical suggestions for both the seminarist and for the priest actually engaged in parochial work. The author sets forth in clear and convincing language the exalted and responsible dignity of the office of preaching, and offers useful hints toward making the Catholic pulpit of our own time more effective in the needs of the day. In the chapter on "The Ministry of the Word" are shown the conditions under which the Apostles preached, and the marvelous results. The chapter on "The Making of a Preacher" contains much sane advice, as does also the chapter on "The Preparation of a Sermon." The chapter on "St. Augustine's Views of Preaching" is of exceptional value. Every chapter in this book is well worth careful study. In the Appendix is given a plan for a course of instruction in Christian Doctrine for three years, together with a bibliography of references to reading matter for each sermon. By following the indications given sufficient material can easily be obtained out of which to fashion a substantial discourse. A. P.

**Exposition of Christian Doctrine.** By a Seminary Professor.  
Pp. 638. \$2.75. J. J. McVey, Philadelphia, Pa.

The second volume of the work bearing the title, "Exposition of Christian Doctrine," and treating of "Christian Moral," vindicates its right to such an appellation. The Principles of Morality (human acts), Virtue and Sin, the Commandments of God and of the Church, the Evangelical Counsels, and Beatitudes are admirably exposed in catechetical form. The questions are pithy, and the answers succinct. The doctrine of the Church on the topics cited above is set forth in a clear and lucid style. The author gives copious quotations from Scripture, sometimes apologetically, at other times for purposes of motivation. This commingling of Bible study with catechetical instruction enables the student to get a working acquaintance with the revealed Word of God, the basis of moral teaching. At the close of each chapter is found a list of historical references, a summary and synopsis of the matter immediately preceding. This feature of the book manifests the pedagogical skill of the author. The historical references are to the Old and New Testaments, being citations of instances wherein the doctrine under consideration was put into practice. Those parts affected by Canon Law have been revised according to the Code of 1918. The use at times of a negative form to teach a positive doctrine is faulty. For example on page 528: "The use of both fish and meat at the same meal is not forbidden." With less danger of misleading this sentence could have been worded: Fish and meat may be eaten at the same meal.

Strengthened by the teaching expounded in this volume, the Brothers of the Christian Schools will be enabled to communicate to the youth under their charge a thorough knowledge of Christian morality, and thus prepare them to lead good clean lives as adults. Other teaching congregations could adopt the use of this manual with profit to themselves and the Church. Educated laymen will glean much information from a perusal of its pages. Even priests and seminarians will find many bits of useful knowledge within its covers which are not to be had from the study of our ordinary compendiums of Moral Theology.

R. M. B.

**Lady Trent's Daughter.** By Isabel C. Clarke. \$1.75 net Pp. 373.  
Benziger Brothers, N. Y. C.

The widowed Lady Trent and her daughter Olave, unknown to each other, are affianced to the same man, Guy Quinn, who in turn is ignorant of Olave's identity. Miss Clarke has indeed constructed a unique problem, and she proceeds to develop it easily and naturally as far as the denouement. But in the solution we think she somewhat fails. Shrinking from visiting on the fair head of Olave the results of her folly, and showing us another instance of the sins of the parent cropping out in the offspring, she swerves about and appends to the tale the conventional happy ending. Guy is apportioned to Olave, for better or for worse; and lest the mother go down in grey hairs and tearful sorrow to the grave, an old lover of hers, Alick Clibborn, is resurrected from the tomb of the past to take her to wife and make her happy ever after. To us the ending is most unconvincing and most unsatisfying. Throughout our acquaintance we conceived little but a hearty hate for Guy Quinn's caddishness, and even a lurking dislike for Olave; and naturally we resented being cheated into an apology in the last dozen pages of the book.

Aside from the weak ending, however, and the total lack of humor, the story is splendid, and has many sparkling traits in its favor. The uniqueness of the plot, the deftness of characterization, and Miss Clarke's usual brilliancy of diction are the best features. In Miss Ardern, Olave's aunt and guardian, we have the finest character in the book. Calm and cool, tactful, loving, and unselfish, she reminds us strongly of Monsignor Benson's lovable Maggie Brent. If we have been a bit severe in our criticism, it is because we hate to see a good authoress other than at her best; but however much we might wish a different ending for "Lady Trent's Daughter," it still remains a splendid novel, with a vital interest that must commend it to lovers of clean and vigorous fiction.

L. C.

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**Mary the Mother.** By Blanche Kelly. Pp. 249. \$1.00.

**Month of Mary.** By Archbishop Kenrick. Pp. 136. \$1.00 net.  
The Encyclopedia Press, Inc., N. Y. C.

Here are two pretty little books to encourage devotion to our heavenly Mother. The first contains a short and simple life of the Blessed Virgin, and then a condensed account of the de-

velopment of Catholic devotion to Mary, of her Feasts, Titles, Shrines, Confraternities, and Position in Art.

The second is intended for the May Devotions, the titles of Our Lady's Litany suggesting the meditation, example, prayer, practise, and aspiration for each day. It is a book that has stood the test of time, for this, a new edition, is the result of the ever-increasing demand which its worth has provoked.

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**Man's Great Concern: The Management of Life.** By Ernest R. Hull, S. J. Pp. 177. Cloth, \$1.25; paper, 35 cents. P. J. Kenedy & Sons, New York.

In this work Father Hull has dealt with a question of the utmost importance. The science of life is here treated in its many phases, spiritual and physical; its activity, improvement and enjoyment; the laws which perfect the life of the individual with regard to himself and as a member of the great human family. These problems are dealt with in simple catechetical fashion. The most profound philosophical and theological truths are couched in language that can readily be understood by all. A laudable feature of the book is its conciseness, which should commend it to such readers as have neither the time nor the patience to pore over volumes in which the same subject is handled at length.

G. B. S.

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**Reflections for Religious.** By Fr. Lasance. Pp. 591. Net \$2.00 Im. leather; \$3.00 Am. Seal. Benziger Bros. N. Y. C.

This book will not need the power of the author's reputation to make it popular among those for whom it was compiled. Fr. Lasance has culled from many and saintly authors precious bits of advice and consolation dealing with every phase of the religious life. The book is a rich mine yielding golden ore almost for the asking. It will undoubtedly become a "vade mecum" for all who have the good fortune to obtain a copy.

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**A Dictionary of Canon Law.** By the Rev. T. Trudel, S. S. Pp. 233. \$1.50 net. Herder Book Co., St. Louis.

The advent of the New Code of Canon Law has elicited a surprising number of commentaries. This one differs from its forerunners in arrangement and aim. From the title of the book one would naturally expect to find within its pages, defined and

explained, the terms which occur in the study of Canon Law. However, the reader is disappointed. Not only are the legal terms "action," "presumption of law and of right," "notoriety of fact and of law," and others equally important, entirely omitted, but the definitions of topics treated are in almost every case passed over: e. g. Novitiate, Profession, Celibacy, Marriage, etc.

After careful perusal, then, one is forced to admit that to designate this work, "A Dictionary of Canon Law," is to use loose terminology. The first sentence of the preface: "This Pocket Manual of Canon Law is a digest of the entire Code," more accurately announces the content matter of the volume. Father Trudel has amplified the analytic part of material, to which the compilers of the Code gave the appellation, "An Analytic-Alphabetic Index of the Code of Canon Law." It is an epitome, a compact, alphabetically arranged, representation or synopsis of most of the topics treated in the Codex. It is a catalogue "raisonne," and strives for clearness and conciseness. At times utility, and clarity are sacrificed for brevity. However, the volume will prove a handy reference book for those who are not conversant with the language and arrangement of the present system of ecclesiastical jurisprudence. The superiors of our Brotherhoods and Sisterhoods will find it serviceable.

"It contains all that the average priest should know," remarks the preface. We can hardly acquiesce in this statement. The fact that on many vitally important points only a partial summary of the codification is presented, and that many discrepancies loom up between the English version and the original text, prove that it is scarcely a safe norm or desirable guide for clergyman, on things canonical. On page 91, the translation: "The vitandus is not permitted private Mass for the repose of his soul," does not seem to render the Latin text properly. Again, (VIII) "Impotence invalidates marriage," should read, "Impotence, antecedent and perpetual." On marriage (122), "there can be no valid marriage between Catholics without it being a sacrament," ought to be worded, "between baptized." Page 198, "Rescripts take effect the moment they are signed," the term "rescript" should be qualified. "All duly authorized confessors (198) have the power of absolving from episcopal reservations during the paschal time," should be rendered "All Parochi and Vicarii paroeciales (invested with full parochial powers)." These are a few of the inaccuracies found in the work.

Obviously, "A Dictionary of Canon Law," is not for priests or those studying the Code. At least it should only be used in reference to the Codex, never to its exclusion. The work under review contains much information for the casual reader, religious or lay. And being the first of its kind to appear, it will enlighten many concerning Catholic legislation, and give impetus to the dissemination of canonical knowledge in English-speaking countries.

A. McD.

**The Love of Brothers.** By Katherine T. Hinkson. \$1.75 net. Pp. 272. Benziger Bros., New York City.

Sir Shawn O'Gara and Terence Comerford were intimate friends, but in a moment of violent anger Shawn causes Terence's death, which is attributed to an accident. Years afterward Shawn's son Terry is betrothed to Stella Comerford, the adopted child of the dead Terence's mother. Shawn, however, knows that Stella is in reality the child of his dead friend and Bridyeen Sweeny. In order to dissuade his son from marriage, he reveals the secret of Stella's birth. But the noble-hearted Terry remains true to the girl. She also discovers the secret and sacrifices everything to be reunited with her mother.. In the end the truth is brought to light whereby Stella's birthright and her mother's honor are happily established.

The novel's chief merit lies in the vital reality of the characters. Terry, his mother, and Stella are especially lifelike and appealing. There is a splendor and nobility about them that is rarely found in modern fiction. Irish life, on the whole, is faithfully portrayed, except that the religious element is too faint. It is not the best thing for the novelist to saturate his work with religion. The novel must portray and interpret life with due proportion; but when a portrayal of Irish life is but faintly tinted with that sacred thing which so profoundly influences the Irish character, it falls short of being a faithful picture.

On page 45 there is a sentence which, for lack of punctuation, comes very close to being ungrammatical. On page 101 a line, or part of one, is missing.

—N. E.

**The Catholic American.** By Fr. G. T. Schmidt. Benziger Bros., New York City. Pp. 148. \$1.25 net.

This little book answers the need of the Catholic American who desires an acquaintance with those great questions of vital import to the Catholic Church in America. Here in succinct yet attractive form he will find the Catholic's answer to such timely questions as Spiritism, Sex-Hygiene, Evolution, Freemasonry with other of no less importance arranged under eighteen captions. An acquaintance with the great problems facing Catholicity in America, such as "The Catholic American" is well calculated to give, is the first step towards solving them. Such a book is a valuable asset to Catholic library. —B. J.

**Summarium Theologiae Moralis** (Fourth Edition). By Rev. A. M. Arregui, S. J. \$1.75 net. Pp. 653. P. J. Kenedy & Sons, New York City.

For the busy priest who wishes to bring his canonical knowledge into conformity with the *Pian Code*, there is no better compendium than this little work by Padre Arregui. That its worth is already recognized is clear from the fact that it has reached a large fourth edition within eighteen months from its first appearance. This last edition including recent decisions by the Pontifical Commission for the interpretation of the *Code*.

Father Arregui has based his work on the teaching of the most reliable moralists from St. Thomas to Ferreres. The *Summarium* is strikingly logical in its division of the different tracts. Typographical features are also brought in to help impress the matter on the memory. By its handy size and excellent get-up this book commends itself to one's frequent consultation.—C. D.

**Penal Legislation in the New Code.** By V. Rev. H. Ayrinhac, S. S. Pp. 392. \$3.00 net. Benziger Bros., N. Y. C.

Dr. Ayrinhac is already known to us by his excellent work on marriage legislation in the *New Code*. This later book deals with the legislation to be found in the fifth book of the code. Dr. Ayrinhac is brief and to the point. The history of a law has seldom detained him long; rather he has gone to the heart of each canon in turn, sustaining *Cappelo*. This book will be of great advantage to confessors for the section on excommunications is especially well done. C. D.