



**Paul the Apostle.** By Giuseppe Ricciotti. Translated by Alba I. Zizzamia. Milwaukee, The Bruce Publishing Co., 1953. pp. 540. \$7.50.

To attempt a biography of Paul the Apostle is like trying to harness a hurricane. Paul was pneumatic, spirit-swept, animated by the breath of God Himself. He in turn moved like a mighty wind over the Greco-Roman world, shaking the pillars of an empire, sweeping everything Christward, to become the veritable Godparent of Christianity. To crystalize in print so boundless a personality is to conquer the unconquerable. Perfect achievement is impossible. The best to be hoped for is a favorable issue with fractional success.

Father Ricciotti has not done the impossible, but he has made a magnificent try. To those familiar with his *Life of Christ* this will be no surprise. As difficult a subject as St. Paul poses, it is child's play compared to a biography of the Son of God. Since his *Life of Christ* is universally acknowledged as one of the finest portrayals of our Saviour ever to appear, it is only to be expected that the comparatively less challenging life of St. Paul would be another triumphant masterstroke. It is, without question.

With a talent unique among authors who utilize biblical themes, Father Ricciotti imparts to his work an orientation neither exegetical, nor literary, nor devotional, nor theological. Fundamentally, he is a classicist who works with Scriptural subject matter. The quality peculiar to his writing is the authentic reproduction of the Imperial Roman atmosphere of the first century, the world in which the fire of Christianity was first ignited. His knowledge of the ancient mind is intimate, and his scholarship evokes a vivid picture of the peoples, times, and cultures which were St. Paul's to vanquish. Not only does his proficiency in the classics enable him to paint the background in such striking patterns, but it is also a powerful influence upon his style. It is a joy to read his narrative so richly laden with citations and references drawn from the incomparable eloquence of the Forum and the Agora.

Preceding the biography itself is a lengthy introduction covering one-third of the book. In it there is presented a wealth of material

indispensable for a thorough understanding of the formal treatment of St. Paul's life. These introductory chapters are masterful studies, more stimulating and absorbing, for the most part, than much of the strictly biographical matter.

The biographical section proceeds in chronological order and includes all the events in St. Paul's life of which any trace has been left. From the standpoint of Scriptural science, the account is conservative, never straying far from the text of the Bible. No evidence appears of any attempt to evolve original theories or to propose ambitious conjectures. Father Ricciotti is obviously concerned primarily with effective presentation of well founded conclusions, and is willing to leave exploratory scholarship to those who are properly biblical experts.

Despite the manifold merits of the book, some imperfections cannot be ignored. The first chapter, a catalogue of unfamiliar names intended to convey geographical background (without maps!), makes for a discouraging beginning. The detailed summaries of each epistle, while fitting quite logically into the general plan, are difficult to follow with sustained attention. And on one occasion, at least, Father Ricciotti gives his imagination too much rope, in reconstructing a conversation between Peter and Paul.

*Paul the Apostle* is a great book, destined to become a classic in biblical literature, to be read, perhaps, for centuries to come. The English version is very ably translated and beautifully printed with a profusion of illustrations. And even if, in any literary medium, the invincible spirit of St. Paul is never to be captured, here, at least, is one book where the captor has a clear view of the prey. L.K.

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**Pius X.** *The Life-story of the Beatus.* By Fr. Hieronymo Dal-Gal. Translated and adapted by Thomas M. Murray, M. A. Westminster, Md., The Newman Press, 1954. pp. 246. \$3.50.

**Pius X.** *A Country Priest.* By Igino Giordani. Translated by Rt. Rev. Thomas J. Tobin. Milwaukee, Bruce Publishing Co., 1954. pp. 205. \$3.25.

The primary duty of a hagiographer is to show that Christ lives again in the saint. If this is well done, then all secondary qualities follow in good order. For the life and times of the saint are a reflection of his special sanctity.

The authors of both these books on Pius X have fulfilled the first requirement. From their depiction of this saint, we see that his whole life may be summed up in the word *Christocentric*. Beginning

with his childhood days at Riese where he imbibed the salutary influence of a holy home; continuing through his days as curate, pastor, spiritual director of seminarians, Bishop, and Cardinal; finally reaching his years as Pope, his priestly heart ever grew in love of Christ and His Blessed Mother. Divine Providence had indeed been guiding him toward his goal of restoring all things in Christ. No sphere of human life escaped the influence of his apostolic activity.

As a result, we also have an excellent presentation of the saint in the perspective of his age. Indeed God raised up the man most needed for the hour of attack upon His Church. Mr. Giordani goes into greater detail concerning the social and political implications of the holy Pontiff's work. Father Dal-Gal makes a separate analysis of his characteristic virtues and miraculous power. But both these books are well qualified to give the reader a more profound appreciation of a great saint in our age.

M.M.J.

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**Whitehead's Concept of Logic.** By Raymond Smith, O.P. Thomistic Studies, Vol. VI. Westminster, Md., The Newman Press, 1953. pp. 179. \$3.00.

An established system of thought which has stood the test of time, cannot be lightly discarded, even though attacked by brilliant men. The philosophy of Aristotle, as enriched by St. Thomas, is such a system. Therefore, when an original thinker like Whitehead assails it in any way, a proper evaluation of his adverse criticism must be made.

Father Smith answers the demand by providing an excellent study of Whitehead's charges against Aristotelian Logic. Proceeding in orderly fashion throughout, the author begins by giving the reader an appreciation of his own purpose and method. He then spends three chapters on an analysis of Whiteheadian philosophy in relation to his logic. The final chapter is a comparison between his concept of logic and Aristotle's. In the conclusion the whole character of the book is epitomized: "The present work has been forced by the very nature of Whitehead's offensive to defend Aristotle's logic. It has really tried to make but one point, namely that Dr. Whitehead misunderstood the scope and purpose of the traditional logic."

The reader who doubts that the defender proves his point with fair play, is invited by copious references to consult the original works of Whitehead. The author has, in addition to making his one point, brought out other good aspects of the prosecutor's system;

he has given Aristotelian logicians an incentive to new life; and he has offered a fine summation of principles in the perennial logic.

M.M.J.

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**The Lord's Prayer—The Beatitudes.** By St. Gregory of Nyssa. Ancient Christian Writers Series. Translated by Hilda C. Graef. Westminster, Md., The Newman Press, 1954. pp. vi, 210. \$3.00.

If 'car' and 'rifle' were substituted for words like 'chariot' and 'spear' one would feel that these sermons were composed by a contemporary. Dogmatic theology, moral exhortation and an analogical explanation of the supernatural mysteries of faith all blend together to make living sermons.

The book contains five sermons on the Lord's Prayer and eight on the Beatitudes. Of those on the Lord's Prayer, the first is concerned with the necessity of prayer in general; the other four explain the various petitions. Usually St. Gregory's writings are predominantly speculative, but, as Miss Graef notes in her introduction, "One of the most striking characteristics is that they (the sermons) are intensely practical, and full of highly colored examples not only from the moral and social life, but also from the medical and scientific thought of his time."

The introduction gives some facts of the life of St. Gregory of Nyssa, shows the connection of the present sermons with the treatments of earlier writers and explains the background against which the Greek Fathers should be read. Such information helps the reader to avoid any misinterpretations. Miss Graef is to be congratulated on this and on the easy and effective style of the translation.

No one who is striving to propagate the message of the Gospel could fail to gain something from these sermons. L.M.T.

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**A Spiritual Reader.** By Francis E. Nugent. Westminster, Md., The Newman Press, 1953. pp. 210. \$3.50.

Francis Nugent has exercised very good judgment in compiling this twenty-five facet anthology of modern spiritual writing. The list of contributors is impressive: M. Eugene Boylan, O.Cist.R., Hubert van Zeller, O.S.B., Vincent McNabb, O.P., Gerald Vann, O.P., Bede Jarrett, O.P., Ansier Vonier, O.S.B., Robert Hugh Benson, and others of equal ability.

Father Boylan's essay warns that spiritual reading is almost a *sine qua non* for Catholics interested in attaining their end—unity with God. We live in a civilization that ignores God and establishes



ideals and sentiments that tend to lead us from God. Picture magazines, digests, radio, and television—all create a passive mind. We must develop a habit of spiritual reading to dispel such distractions.

Leo J. Trese has an excellent essay on, "The Mystical Body." He starts out with the words of St. Paul, "For as in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same office; so we being many are one body in Christ, and everyone members of another." He adequately explains that "Mystical" isn't opposed to "real"—that the Mystical Body of Christ is a very real Body, but a very special kind of a Body. By baptism we become an individual cell in the Mystical Body. It is the Body in which Christ lives and works among men. It is the Church. Christ contributed the immense treasury of the Redemption to the Church—His Mystical Body—and willed that the sharing of those graces be in some way due to her action. "Think of it," exclaims the author, "The rosary that I finger today, the act of self denial I perform, the headache that I bear, the temptation that I conquer, may be the added bit of life which will save some soul across the waters, whom I have never seen!"

Caryll Houselander's contribution, "The Face of Christ," is poignant. She points out that the only reminders of His human face Christ left to us are impressions of suffering and death. One of the impressions is on the cloth with which St. Veronica wiped His face on the Via Crucis; the other on the Holy Shroud at Turin. Both were printed by the bloodstains, dirt and sweat of His agony. He wanted us to have these pictures so that suffering would draw us to love Him and to love one another. She counsels us that when we treat sufferers, we should treat the sufferings of Christ in them. The sufferer soon detects this. Because we believe in Christ in them, they begin to realize the love of Christ for them in us, and that tends to dissipate any hardness of heart. She concludes that when we do this, "we are really wiping away the ugliness of suffering and sin, revealing the face of Christ."

*A Spiritual Reader* provides a pleasantly informal introduction to many outstanding spiritual writers. It should whet the appetite of the reader for continued spiritual sustenance on the authors' major works.

J.H.M.

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**The Mother of God.** By M. M. Philipon, O.P., S.T.M. Translated by Rev. John A. Otto, Ph.D. The Newman Press, Westminster, Md., 1953. pp. 126. Theological Notes 127-155. \$3.00.

Father Marie-Michel Philipon has performed a threefold task in writing this notable little book. He states: "1) we have followed the

successive steps of its (study of Mary) providential development both in the course of history and in the mind and soul of Mary, 2) we have attempted to set forth the whole train of graces and privileges surrounding the divine motherhood, showing how all of them are derived from this fundamental mystery, and 3) in the study of a mystery so intimately related to the very essence of Christianity, we deemed it necessary to connect these considerations of ours with the great tradition of the Church and with her way of contemplating Mary."

For Father Philipon, as indeed for every Thomistic Mariologist, the two fundamental principles of Mariology are, a Motherhood that is divine, and a Motherhood that is redemptive. All her other prerogatives such as her special relationships with the Blessed Trinity; her association with Christ, her spiritual motherhood of all men, and her various perfections, come to Mary because she is truly the Mother of God, of a God who is the Redeemer of the world.

It is obvious that the author wrote these pages after long meditations on the Blessed Virgin. The reader will draw great profit from his profound reflections on Mary. The balance between doctrine and devotion manifested consistently in this book is its best recommendation: both head and heart are well instructed. Therefore, we are happy to recommend it to all true sons of their heavenly Mother, especially in this year dedicated to her.

For the student of Mariology there are several helpful theological notes from important writings of the Fathers and Popes.

C.O'B.

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**The Philosophy of Jacques Maritain.** By Charles A. Fesher. Westminster, Md., Newman Press, 1953. pp. 361. \$5.00.

This is a book on the philosophy of a man, not a biography of the man himself. It is a book on the philosophy of a man, not the evolution of that philosophy. The first three chapters set the young philosopher, Jacques Maritain, in that intellectual background and environment in which he was born and lived for thirty years. The remainder of the book reflects the results of his systematic search and discovery of truth. The author has compiled an eminently and delightfully readable book.

In the preparation of the work, Mr. Fesher had to answer a fundamental question: Can I adequately separate the philosophy and the man without doing an injustice to the contribution of the man himself? He concluded in the affirmative, since the purer the truth, the more separable it is from the man. Maritain is a moving target,

ever evolving, ever controversial. Yet that which he has systematized is quiet and eternal. Our author forced upon himself a rigid discipline to uncover the latter in his subject's life and, as far as possible, to exclude the former. The results of these efforts provide for the average reader an undistracted passage from beginning to end.

It is indicative of Maritain's genius that he survived the maze of prevailing intellectual confusion, hacking his way out of the labyrinth to the daylight of truth. His instructor on this trying pilgrimage was St. Thomas. A reproduction of this tortuous journey would likely have obscured the main points and lost the reader in complex details. Certainly for this suppression the author might be severely criticized by a few scholars. The average reader on the other hand will find this work refreshing, attractive and stimulating. A special reference must be made to the first three chapters. The function of this section is to set forth the full blown nineteenth century Rationalism into which Maritain was born. Here the author has done his best writing; here he sets the stage for his actor.

To conclude that this work is a manual would be most inaccurate. In a manual the blocks of philosophy are aligned in a set pattern. In this book, they are welded together into a dynamic artistic flow. In no part of this work does the fine literary style of the author bog down. Mr. Fesher has ordered the permanent substratum of Maritain's mature thought without devitalizing it one bit in this satisfying and worth-while book.

W.H.

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**The Fulness of Sacrifice.** By A. M. Croffts, O.P. Westminster, Md., The Newman Press, 1953. pp. 296. \$3.00.

The Mass is the central act of Christian worship, and it is also its deepest mystery. It is the awesome sacramental sacrifice wherein Christ as Priest immolates Himself as Victim; it is in reality the mystical renewal of Christ's passion and death, the unique source of our redemption and salvation. It is altogether too profound for perfect comprehension; yet it is altogether too essential for unappreciative indifference.

Since the Mass is so impenetrable and yet so vitally important, an enthusiastic welcome is extended to any book which will serve to introduce one to its grandeur and to initiate one into its mystery. Father Crofts' *The Fulness of Sacrifice* is the latest addition to the extensive and splendid aggregate of literature about the Eucharistic Sacrifice. His book, which grew out of a series of conferences preached in Auckland, New Zealand, is distinctive in its presentation

of the Mass as the perfect consummation of all the lesser imperfect sacrifices of the Old Testament, which were no more than shadows, figures, and prophecies of the one supreme sacrifice of the Lamb of God.

Filled to satiety with Scriptural references and citations, the book is a veritable thesaurus containing every biblical text which has any relation proximately or remotely to the Mass. From one point of view, this preponderance of Scripture is an admirable feature, but from another it is an unfortunate device, since it is often only of inferential relevance and constitutes a serious obstacle to following the continuity of thought. The style and format is somewhat drab, but the book itself is a learned and thorough exposition of the power and beauty of the Mass.

L.K.

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**Meditations and Instructions on the Blessed Virgin.** 2 Vols. By A. Vermeersch, S.J. Translated by W. Humphrey Page, K.S.G. Westminster, Md., The Newman Press, 1954. Vol. I, pp. 438; Vol. II, pp. 468 with index. \$7.50.

A devotional work on Our Lady, firmly rooted in Catholic dogma, is always welcome. But it is especially timely during this Marian Year, when Our Holy Father has expressed his desire for fruitful instruction on the sublime truths concerning God's Mother.

The translation of Fr. Vermeersch's work is well suited for this purpose. After a brief explanation about the method of meditation, the first volume is divided into two parts: 1) meditations for the feasts of the Blessed Virgin, with a short introduction on the origin and meaning of each feast; 2) meditations on Mary in the Gospels for the month of May. The second volume includes meditations on the graces, virtues, and the glories of Mary for the Saturdays of the year. This volume also has a supplement with three sets of meditations: 1) on the Holy Ghost; 2) for various moveable feasts such as the Patronage of St. Joseph; 3) for the five Sundays and the feast of St. John Berchmans.

Each topic, consisting of about five pages, is divided into three parts: Plan of Meditation, Meditation and Colloquy. Thus the book is well suited to those who have a scheduled period of meditative reading.

M.M.J.

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**Patrology.** By Johannes Quasten. Westminster, Md., The Newman Press, 1953. pp. 450.

This second volume of Patrology by Johannes Quasten covers



the Christian literature of the third century. It is a well ordered guide to the writings of Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Hippolytus of Rome, Tertullian, and St. Cyprian, to name a few. Tertullian is given a lengthy treatment which is worthy of special mention.

The facts presented in regard to the various Ecclesiastical Writers cannot but arouse our interest in the faith. For example: Origen died as a result of tortures for the faith; Tertullian in his later years violently attacked the Catholics, whom he described as "enthralled with voluptuousness and bursting with gluttony"; Hippolytus inveighed against the use of drugs for sterility; St. Cyprian seems to have lacked recognition of the primacy of the Roman Bishop although he did not act accordingly; and Peter of Alexandria disapproved of "those who went out to the authorities and sought martyrdom because they acted imprudently and in opposition to the example of Our Lord and the Apostles."

Although some of the arguments of these early Writers are weak, nevertheless they do give the reader a greater appreciation of the central truths. In struggling with the problem of the *Millenium*, Lactantius described it as a state where "mountains shall drop with honey, streams of wine shall run down, and rivers flow with milk." Tertullian, an extremist in his rejection of all pagan thought, called Socrates a "corrupter of youth" and referred to the "miserable Aristotle." Methodius taught that the purpose of Redemption was to reunite that which was "unnaturally divided" by death, apparently forgetting that the damned will also be reunited to their bodies. When one reads the mistakes in the works of great intellectuals like Origen and Tertullian, a deeper gratitude is engendered for the unadulterated fruits of all such labors gathered, sifted and presented by the Church. This work is a worthy successor to the first volume and is recommendation in itself for the quality and scholarship of the works yet to come in this excellent series.

P.F.

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**The Scale of Perfection.** By Walter Hilton. Translated by Dom Gerard Sitwell, O.S.B. Westminster, Md., The Newman Press, 1953. pp. 316. \$3.50.

*The Scale of Perfection* is a book on the spiritual life very much in the style of the *Imitation of Christ*. The reflections contained in this work resulted from a request by a nun who sought Hilton's advice on spiritual perfection. Since its first printing in 1494 there have been innumerable editions of this well known treatise, each edition attempting to bring the language of Hilton up to date.

Fr. Sitwell's work has hit the highest peak in such an endeavor. In comparing the text with an edition put out in 1901, one can easily see the tremendous progress which has been made in rendering Hilton's text intelligible to a twentieth century audience. This work was first done by Miss E. Underhill who translated the text into a partially modern English version. Now Fr. Sitwell offers us a "new popular version and in completely modern English."

He has also provided his readers with a division of the work which serves to bring out very clearly the fundamental point which Hilton is making. The footnotes and the Appendix are by far the most useful part of this edition, for without them, a clear understanding of the text would never be attained. Fr. Sitwell's deep understanding and appreciation of Walter Hilton is manifested in these sometimes lengthy but very necessary footnotes. His treatment of Hilton's erroneous doctrine on confession is very adroitly handled; he points out his mistakes and then explains the historical background from which such an opinion was taken. Fr. Sitwell has done an excellent job in rendering the information contained in this famous work intelligible and readable to the present day reader. E.B.B.

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**The Apostolic Itch.** By Vincent J. Giese. Chicago, Fides Publishers, 1954. pp. 126. \$2.75.

Since Leo XIII's *Sapientiae Christianae*, down to the recent address of Pius XII to the Lenten Preachers, the modern Popes have been attempting to make the faithful aware of their obligation as Christians of dedicating themselves to the common good, to the apostolate. In *Mystici Corporis* our present Holy Father said "... all who claim the Church as their mother . . . have the obligation of working hard and constantly for the upbuilding and increase of this body." Mr. Giese's eleven reflections can do much to accomplish this aim among American Catholics.

In a readable, journalistic style the author is content to state the principles of each topic. The reader is to apply them to his own soul and to the particular part of the apostolate in which his individual talent and Divine Providence have placed him. In the title essay "Apostolic Itch" Mr. Giese distinguishes the self-termed "lay apostle" from an authentic one. The "lay apostle is a foot-loose American Catholic who makes the rounds of various Catholic Action Groups, yet never commits himself; he can talk for hours on such broad subjects as Byzantine art, Eric Gill, large families, the guild system, 'back to the land', whole-wheat bread, Gregorian chant, the 'short

breviary' and of course, poverty," yet he is never a "doer of the word." The real apostle in comparison spends little time in idle talk, so eager is he to spend himself in the service of others, so preoccupied is he in becoming more saintly.

The remaining ten essays easily lend themselves to division into three sections. In the first section the author treats of the individual call of the lay Catholic, his consequent sanctification and the overflowing of his Christian life into the active apostolate. Then, he applies these principles to current issues in the United States. And finally, he gives a forecast of the future of Catholic Action in America.

Each essay is reducible to a syllogism, so that the reader is able to have the argument at his fingertips. To exemplify this, *Role of the Layman* rightly insists that the life of the lay Catholic is far from *ordinary* and that he truly has a positive, personal vocation to extend the life of Christ in all the secular institutions of society. This direct participation in the work of saving souls is too serious a matter "to be placed in the hands of shallow, weak-kneed, selfish men." So Catholic Action must have as a preliminary the individual sanctification of each one of its members.

Mr. Giese's theme may be summed up by saying that the Christian life is not a part time occupation or hobby; it is a life that must be lived every hour of every day. *The Apostolic Itch* can do much to bring Catholics—clerical, religious and lay—to an appreciation of their tremendous vocation as Christians. F.M.A.

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**The Kingdom Is Yours.** By P. Forestier, S.M. Chicago, Ill., Fides Publishers, 1954. pp. vii, 189. \$3.50.

This commentary upon the Gospel is limited to the Sermon on the Mount, which establishes the rule of conduct for every Christian, and the Gospel of the Holy Eucharist (Jn. 6) which gives the individual the motive for exchanging love for love.

Father Forestier substantiates the fact that Christ founded a Church and gave it divine assistance through repeated recourse to Holy Scripture. In the instruction of the Sermon on the Mount, the author shows Christ preparing the minds of His hearers for acceptance of a new law. On six distinct points the superiority of Christian perfection is contrasted with pagan and pharisaic observances. The accent of Christ's doctrine is upon love and not fear. Living the doctrine means cooperating with God's grace for His honor and glory, and never out of presumption of our own capabilities or for the praise of men.

Concomitant with the exposition of this new teaching exposed by Christ, the author makes practical and timely applications of this doctrine to twentieth century Christianity. Forcefully the writer shows that the same doctrine which fell from the lips of the Saviour is transmitted to us unadulterated. He insists that a clear and correct interpretation of the pages of Scripture can be understood only when we are guided by the sole custodian of the inspired words—the teaching authority of the Catholic Church.

Fr. Forestier shows that by the institution of the Eucharist Jesus Christ remains in our midst to sustain and nourish our souls. However, the author leaves the way open to misinterpretation when he treats of the effects of the reception of the Eucharist, by citing extraordinary incidents from the lives of Saint Teresa of Avila and St. John Vianney. These in turn may lead the reader to conclude that lack of similar sensible signs in his own reception of Communion may mean that he is not enjoying the benefits of the Real Presence within him.

Although the format and style of the book is good, it would not lend itself to use in the classroom as a religious textbook. However, it can be used with great profit as supplementary reading for a religion course.

J.E.

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**The Political Ideas of St. Thomas Aquinas.** Edited with an Introduction by Dino Bigongiari. New York, Hafner Publishing Co., 1953. pp. xxxviii, 217. \$1.25.

We live in a politically minded age, and one of the great masters of political theory is St. Thomas Aquinas. In this volume selections are given from St. Thomas' *Summa Theologica* (from I-II and II-II) and *On Kingship* (*De Regimine Principum*, from Book I). The selections treat of law, justice, various social problems and forms of government. The translation of the English Dominican Fathers, which is used for the text of the *Summa*, is occasionally modified by the compiler, the text of the earlier translation being given in a footnote.

One of the most important sources for St. Thomas' doctrine on political matters is his *Commentary on the Politics of Aristotle*. Many references to this and other works of St. Thomas are made in the Introduction by the editor, Mr. Bigongiari, a Catholic layman who is professor of Italian at Columbia University. He evinces a fine appreciation of St. Thomas' doctrine of the state as a natural order, the public power, the forms of government and the fullness of power.



These sections should be of help in understanding the texts given in the body of the book. Incidentally, the Introduction is made up of extracts from the manuscript for a new book by Mr. Bigongiari; judging from the Introduction, the editor's own proposed volume will be a definite contribution. D.K.

**A History of France.** By Lucien Romier. Translated and completed by A. L. Rowse. New York, St. Martin's Press, 1953. pp. xvii, 487. (8 Illustrations; 3 Maps).

*A History of France* treats of the peoples of Gaul before Caesar up to the Day of Liberation, June 6, 1944. The original French edition covered the period from the beginnings to 1789. At his death the author left a manuscript continuing the work up to 1885. The translator has extended the history up to recent times.

This volume, however, presents a problem for the reviewer. On the one hand, the author has knit an interesting, comprehensive and well-ordered fabric of history in a relatively short book. The translator has also produced a fine translation in light and readable English. On the other hand, the undertone of the book leaves much to be desired. It is not unprejudiced. There are many obvious and not-so-obvious half-truths disparaging the Church and her Hierarchy.

The following example will serve to show the point in question:

... By the standards of the time, she [Catherine de Medici] was an able ruler, more humane than her two contemporaries. Elizabeth of England and Philip II of Spain.

[Footnote:] This, so far as Elizabeth is concerned, is untrue: one has only to think of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew.—A.L.R. [Chap. IV, p. 212]. This quotation is obviously colored by the translator's footnote. In this instance, A. L. R. turns the blind eye to the horrors of sacrilege and bloodshed perpetrated by Elizabeth and her Lord Chancellor, Sir William Cecil, upon clergy and faithful of the realm in an attempt to put into effect Cecil's *Device for the Alteration of Religion in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth*. [Cf. Strype's *Annals*, Vol. i, Appen. p. 4, ed. 1709].

Since no copy of the original French edition is available it is difficult to determine whether the general undertone of the work was intended by the author or deliberately introduced by the translator. But even with only a fair knowledge of history, the reader can detect many similar innuendoes. Since some, however, are very subtle, they are apt to escape the unsuspecting reader. It is with reservation, then, that we recommend *A History of France* for the general public.

G.G.C.

**Descartes and the Modern Mind.** By Albert G. A. Balz. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1952. pp. xiv, 492 with index. \$10.00.

This is at once an extremely interesting and an extremely confusing book. It is interesting, because of its subject matter; it is confusing, because of the manner in which its subject is developed. Professor Balz' theory briefly is as follows. In order to perceive Descartes' relation to the modern mind, it is necessary to see him against the background of Augustinian and Thomistic Theology. Wisdom is the progressive understanding of the relationship between man, God, and the universe, and in this unfolding, Descartes is the logical heir of St. Augustine and St. Thomas. He has correlated the methods of these two great thinkers.

To prove this assertion, the author has recourse to much cumbersome terminology, coined by himself, which makes for difficult reading. Moreover, he himself confesses frequently that the conclusions at which he arrives, are at times opposed to the words of Descartes, but that Descartes, in the light of his own principles, "could ask"; "must ask"; "might have perceived" some particular position. Thus, the book becomes little more than speculations or 'meditations' about Cartesian principles, with little reference to what Descartes historically taught.

To the student who approaches the volume in the hope of learning how the thought of Descartes was expounded and expanded by his followers, it will prove a disappointment, for the author gives no indication of this. In fact he warns us (p. 424): "I hope that it will be understood that the content is tentative, conjectural, and explorative." The book, however, will give many interesting insights to one who has the courage to read it through. F.C.

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**The Experience of Death and The Moral Problem of Suicide.** By P. L. Landsberg, Philosophical Library, New York, 1953, pp. 102.

It is claimed that Paul-Louis Landsberg, the author of *Experience of Death and the Moral Problem of Suicide* was a Christian existentialist: but, in the essays at hand, he displays a much more avid devotion to the existential procedure, which continually leads him into confusion and error, than to the fundamental, objective truths of Christian teaching and morality. For all his learning, for all his quotations of St. Augustine, and mystical interpretation of St. Theresa, his familiarity with St. Anselm, the fathers of the Church, he displays less fundamental grasp of objective morality than the child in grammar school who knows the fifth Commandment. The

"Everyman" in Landsberg goes a little too far for truly Christian men when he states, "There is no reason for believing that the Decalogue was intended to cover cases of suicide." (pg. 79)

Probably the climax of the essays (a climax not intended by the author, but the real climax and death blow to the illusion that this can be called Christian) is the consideration Landsberg gives to the arguments of St. Thomas against suicide. Three of St. Thomas' are singled out for Landsberg's superficial abuse. Only one will be considered here. St. Thomas' first argument based on the natural inclination of everything to keep itself in being and to resist corruption concludes thus, "Wherefore suicide is contrary to the inclination of nature, and to charity whereby every man should love himself. Hence suicide is always a mortal sin, as being contrary to the natural law and to charity." (II-II Q.64, A.5, corp.) Landsberg replies, "What are we to make of this argument? First of all, if suicide were, in every case, contrary to natural law, it would not occur, or only in a very few exceptional or pathological cases. I must admit I find it difficult to see that something can be against natural law when it is practised, accepted, and often honoured amongst all non-Christian peoples. Suicide is far from being contrary to human nature. . . . Suicide, no doubt, deprives us of that good which is life. But in fact, and from the Christian point of view, this good is of a highly dubious quality; and, in any case, it is not the highest good and often rather more like an evil." (pp. 80-81) Within this brief passage from Landsberg there are enough errors to dwell upon at great length; however, it will have to suffice merely to point out the basis for most of the errors it contains. St. Thomas' argument is not dependent on an existential condition. Rather it has absolute and universal application because it is founded on the metaphysical truth that an inclination to perfection follows upon every form. There is then, rooted in the very nature of man, apart from a consideration of particular existential conditions, an inclination to perfection. The form that gives man life has an inclination to perfect life, not to destroy it. Landsberg on the other hand, is viewing man, not from the point of view of his nature, but rather from the point of view of his operations as he is in a particular existential condition. He fails to see that there can be a natural inclination in the rational being for its perfection, and yet, on the operational level and in particular existential conditions, the rational being can act contrary to his rational nature. On the operational level reason does not have despotic control over the passions, and therefore man can act in a manner contrary to his rational nature and in accord with his passions. But to act in accord

with the passions alone, is not to act according to man's rational nature. Further, Landsberg is considering man in an existential condition, namely as he is here and now. But the first thing that should be of note to a Christian treating of man in his existential condition is the fact that he is treating of Fallen man. Man not only does not have despotic control over his passions, but in his existential state there is an inclination to act contrary to his nature. The fact then that Landsberg can point to some non-Christian peoples who do not act according to right reason does not prove that their actions are not against the natural law written in their hearts. The fact that man does not always act in accord with the dictates of right reason does not destroy the fact that right reason is the measure of objective moral good or evil. The subjective analysis of man in his existential state would destroy all objective morality. "If people do it, it is objectively all right, and perfectly natural" is hardly the basis of Christian morality.

If the reviewer were in any way suggesting that this book be read, it would be absolutely necessary to point out many other errors, confusions, misleading statements, and, whether intentional or not, misrepresentations of the thought of St. Augustine and St. Thomas. The reviewer is not, however, recommending the book. It remains then only to say that Landsberg, dedicated to an exclusive existential procedure more than to Christian truths, starts out on the wrong foot, and never gains a truly Christian balance throughout the length of the two essays. As a non-Catholic, yet alleged Christian existentialist, he stumbles into a field that is not his own, namely, Theology. It is highly probable that this book falls under the restriction of Canon Law whereby one must receive permission of the local Ordinary to read a work of a non-Catholic which concerns theological matters.

D.L.

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**The Rosary in Daily Life.** By Franz Michel Willam. Translated by Rev. Edwin Kaiser C.P.P.S. New York, Benziger Bros., Inc., 1953. pp. 238.

The favorite prayer of Mary is forever the Rosary. As love for Mary's Rosary deepens, there must follow of necessity a desire to know more about this prayer; a propensity to recite it with a greater understanding of the blessed truths found within its fifteen mysteries.

The primary source for learning these truths is, of course, the Bible. In the appropriate chapters, the inspired writers describe in some detail most of the mysteries of the Rosary, and a brief reading of the particular text before beginning the Rosary will provide much



food for meditation. Among secondary sources are recommended devotional works which explain the Rosarian truths in an orthodox way. When, however, a book is found which includes the entire passage from Sacred Scripture along with a warm yet faithful exegetical explanation of these mysteries, then the Catholic desirous of knowing more about Mary's Rosary has found a treasure. *The Rosary in Daily Life* is such a book.

The work falls naturally into three great sections. Each of these parts contains an introduction in which is explained the psychological natures of joy, sorrow, and glory; and what is most gratifying, how these are ordained to eternal joy and glory. Following the introductions, each mystery is considered individually, sometimes from an emotional viewpoint, sometimes with a study of the historical background, but always an interesting survey of the mystery. At the end of each chapter, in a section titled "Considerations and Self-Explanation," practical conclusions are drawn from each mystery.

To all, then, who desire to know more about Christ through Mary's Rosary, this book is highly recommended. T.J.S.

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**The Holy Years of Mary.** By William A. McLoughlin, O.P. Edited by Right Reverend Joseph G. Cox, J.C.D., LL.D. Philadelphia, The John C. Winston Co., 1954. pp. v, 114. \$1.50.

Theology—and scholarship—are two fearsome monsters in the estimation of many people. But even those who are of such a mind admittedly enjoy theology, or thinking about God, when this thought is woven into a simple, every-day story. They are also ready to give ear to a scholar who can make his factual data live through intelligent interpretation and application. *The Holy Years of Mary* does put theology into a most pleasing story form and the consummate biblical scholarship behind it never becomes awesome.

The elements which go to make up this little gem manifest theology, as wisdom, at work. Of course Holy Scripture is the basis. Scattered from Genesis straight through to the Apocalypse are mariological texts which come in for exegesis. Then the Church is the positive guide, furnishing clear expressions of dogmas pertaining to Mary. The Fathers are brought into play, along with the theology of the schools, to manifest the beauty of God's plan and Mary's place in it. Finally ascetical theology shows the perfection of the spiritual organism, of the life of grace in Mary, and presents her as a model for all her children.

This book is a clear example of sober scholarship in the biblical

field in the service of both theology and devotion. The author is able to speak with familiarity of Jewish life at the beginning of the Christian era. He also can describe accurately places in Palestine he himself has seen. Thus, the account of the hidden life of Jesus and Mary, for example, "reconstructed with a fair degree of probability," has neither too much data for the credulous, nor too many artistic tints for those who like their pious biography straight.

As sort of an appendix, the author has attached historical sketches of fourteen principal Marian shrines throughout the world. The accounts of apparitions and miracles that are part and parcel of these shrines form a fitting sequel to the history of Our Lady's earthly life, for they are signs that she too, with her Divine Son, today "lives unto God."

New books on Mary in the Marian Year have a splendid recommendation to begin with: their subject matter. As such the *The Holy Years of Mary* is valuable as a restatement of Mary's role in God's plan. But its special credentials are the way in which the author wields his tools, mariological theology and biblical scholarship, to produce an exquisite sketch of the life of God's Mother. B.M.S.

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**The Water and the Fire.** By Gerald Vann, O.P. New York, Sheed and Ward, 1954. pp. 187. \$2.75.

To say that one lives an unreal life may seem to be a contradiction. A careful analysis of Father Vann's thought in this book, however, will show that the unreality characteristic of modern life is actually a divorcing of life from God. God is the only sufficient reality for He is all Perfect and creatures derive their perfection from Him. Thus any human activity without God creates an unreality. The author applies this thought to the frenzied tempo of modern city life, to education, to the individual, to the family, to the community, and to man's relation with nature. He shows that without God the souls of men are empty and restless in their every activity. Education becomes deceit and treachery; the individual, family, and community are barren and lifeless; and the nervous rhythm of modern city life destroys the stillness of vision and contemplation. The remedy is simple—the love and contemplation of God and the application of this loving knowledge to all spheres of life.

Ultimately then the question of modern civilization is resolved to this; to be with God or not to be with God. It is a question asked today only by the few who recognize the existence of such a problem. But Fr. Vann clearly unfolds the unreality of the life which many

unconsciously lead today. This is the question and theme of *The Water and the Fire*. The book is recommended for the author's deep insight into the problems confronting our civilization. B.P.

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**The Trial of Oliver Plunkett.** By Alice Curtayne. New York, Sheed and Ward, 1953. pp. 239. \$3.00.

In a recent lecture Alice Curtayne said that she was merely an amateur historian. After reading her recent work, one would know that she must have meant that she is an amateur in history as a whole rather than Irish history. Her life of Archbishop Plunkett is a work that would do honor to any historian. Certainly, the research into manuscripts of the seventeenth century, the understanding of the mind of that time, and the presentation of facts to show the whole picture of the trial of Blessed Oliver Plunkett, could only have been done by a true scholar.

In this quasi-biography of Ireland's Blessed, Alice Curtayne has tried to picture what it means to have the perfections of Christian virtue. This shepherd of souls is shown to have been the true follower of Christ laying down his life for his flock.

His trial was not without parallel in the history of the Church. In the praetorium of Pilate, Christ suffered from the envy of the Pharisees and the selfishness of a judge. His own defense was made a mockery before a crowd which contained but a few frightened friends at most. Modern ages have shown little change in this attitude toward the Church. In recent years Catholic papers have reported on new martyred pastors. Again, the *trial*, the mockery of justice is the keynote; and, again the shepherd stands before the enemy, alone, without friends. This book is a good meditation for Catholics who have freedom to practice their religion. From it they will realize what it means to live their faith under trials.

One would find a reading of this work worth while not only for the history of a great figure in the Church, but for one's own spiritual good. The Archbishop of Armagh was a holy man; therefore, a man to be taken as an example of Christian fervor, a true follower of the Cross of Christ. The book is an honor to Blessed Oliver Plunkett and to the faith of the Ireland which he represented. T.M.

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**Hilaire Belloc:** No Alienated Man. By Frederick Wilhelmsen. New York, Sheed and Ward, 1953. pp. 108. \$2.75.

This critical study of Hilaire Belloc is not a definitive biography of the renowned English Catholic historian, prose stylist, and human-

ist. Rather, as Mr. Wilhelmsen states, "it is an attempt to introduce the contemporary reader to Belloc, and to disengage from the vast corpus of Bellociana, those themes that are of permanent value." His endeavor has been admirably achieved. The well-presented analysis, which considers only the main theses of the controversial and historical works, shows clearly the stature of the subject and the relevancy of his ideas to our chaotic times.

Belloc knew well that Western man had lost the key to life's meaning, yet Belloc's own life was a constant, vigorous assault on the fallacy that "what must be done at all costs, is to exorcise our common heritage, our faith, our corporate memories. A fresh beginning can be the only beginning." In this enthusiastic work, Mr. Wilhelmsen sets forth a cogent presentation of Belloc's assault. The dictum, "The Faith is Europe and Europe is the Faith" is forcefully explicated, as are the reasons for his continual onslaughts on German Historicism, the Whig tradition of history, industrial capitalism, and the Universities. The author's desire to renew an interest in Belloc should be fulfilled when the reader again hears the ring of his congratulations to Chesterton because "he had the singular good fortune to have escaped the University," or his contempt for Higher Criticism in the rebuke: "That is how the damned fools write; and with brains of that standard Germans ask me to deny my God."

The author evidently prizes the lucid intelligence and robust Catholicism of this "latter-day Villon." Yet he does not fail to show that Belloc's effectiveness was thwarted by his belligerent and uncompromising temperament.

Belloc's dogmatic convictions may not always win assent, but Mr. Wilhelmsen's book should whet the reader's appetite for a fuller portion of the dynamic historian who also had the prophetic insight to calmly announce in 1924, long before the New Deal was even a dream, that a great increase in Presidential power would be effected in the near future. Even if the renewed interest in Belloc is not imminent, the author is hopeful that it will arrive eventually. "In some future time, possibly not remote, when New Man will have exhausted himself attempting to escape his destiny, when he will have tried all the doors leading nowhere, when he will have sickened of paper humanisms, he may turn to the gnarled wisdom and the eternal youth of this last guardian of the West."

T.Q.



**A Doctor at Calvary.** By Pierre Barbet, M.D. Translated by the Earl of Wicklow. New York, P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 1953. pp. 178. \$3.00.

If the authenticity of the Shroud of Turin is established, there need be no delay in knowing many of its implications in regard to the Passion of Our Lord. Dr. Barbet has extensively exploited the markings of the Shroud to reconstruct the Passion of Christ.

As a surgeon the author had been asked to make measurements on the Shroud in an effort to determine its authenticity. Although mildly skeptical at first, continued observation has led him toward accepting it as genuine. That it was formed by a natural process he has no doubt. That it is the shroud in which Christ was laid he thinks most probable. History proclaims only one crucified man who was also crowned with thorns, and such was the man contained in this Shroud.

After giving a history of the Shroud, in the chapters "Crucifixion and Archaeology" and "Causes of Rapid Death," Dr. Barbet gives the background information necessary for developing a clear picture of Christ's passion. Then follow chapters detailing the preliminary sufferings of Christ, the wounds in the hands, the feet and the heart, the descent from the Cross and the Burial. The findings of archeology, exegesis, philology, medicine and special experiments duplicating the processes suggested by the Shroud are all co-ordinated to give as complete and well-grounded a picture as possible.

To many readers these details will be too technical. But the use of so many branches of knowledge fosters the conviction of the all-importance of the subject. The author himself warns that these things are too important to be studied lightly. The concluding chapter is a summary and meditative description of the corporal Passion of Jesus Christ.

The book has two appendices. The twelve plates on the Shroud and related matters are necessary for an understanding of what the author is attempting. Markings of 'right' and 'left' on the plates would be a help to those studying them for the first time.

Whether Christ carried the whole cross or just the transverse bar, whether He died of asphyxia or circulatory collapse is still to be debated. But this indecisiveness on certain details will not hinder the reader from gaining a deeper insight into how completely Christ laid down His life. *A Doctor at Calvary* is highly recommended.

L.T.

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**The Week With Christ**, Liturgy for the Apostolate. By Emeric A. Lawrence, O.S.B. Collegeville, Minn., The Liturgical Press, 1953. Cloth, \$2.50; paper, \$1.50.

This little book, called "a handmaid to the Missal" by its author, is the outgrowth of brief explanations of the proper of the Sunday Masses and feasts of precept. Written originally for students at St. John's University, it was later used in the armed forces. Although intended to inspire lay apostles to more vigorous action, its usefulness is not limited to the laity. Simple and brief, it is still deep and practical. It is not a manual of meditation strictly speaking, for it is not written in the form of meditations, with reflections, acts of the will, etc. But the work provides good material for those who already know how to meditate and who like liturgical meditations. A natural pattern of meditation is followed: exposition of the doctrine contained in the proper of the Mass, followed by practical, moral applications of this teaching. Another useful feature of the book is the selection of short texts from the Mass of the day which are appended to each explanation. Called "Food for the Way," these quotations can easily be memorized and used as a means of recollection and of unifying and centering the whole week around the Mass for Sunday.

L.W.

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**Star of Jacob**. By Helen Walker Homan. New York, David McKay Co., Inc., 1953. pp. ix, 329. \$3.75.

The wholesome and ever-increasing interest in the lives of saintly men and women of the Catholic Church during the past several centuries is notable in itself. But the way in which their lives, sometimes so intricate and mysterious to comprehend, have been handled by modern Catholic authors, is both notable and encouraging. With *good writing* gracing the pages of so many *bad stories* today, we need a proportionate level of competition within the circle of Catholic authors. *Star of Jacob* is one such example of high quality in both prose and plot.

The drama of the life of Jacob Libermann is centered upon that age-old struggle between the Cross and the Star, between the New Law and the Old. It finds its enactment in the realm of exaggerated fear as experienced by a five-year-old when he is suddenly confronted by a funeral procession led by a priest with 'their fearful sign of the cross'; it is later continued in the intellectual realm where the Torah and the New Testament are pitted one against the other. And always

in the midst of these and other conflicts stands the trophy, the victim—Jacob Libermann.

It was an almost constantly painful exodus that led Jacob Libermann out of the land of his spiritual birth. There was the inner struggle that waged a furious and almost demoniac assault upon the man himself. And there were the tragic overtones as reflected in the lives of others. For the marvel of the conversion of Jacob Libermann is that physical, emotional and intellectual forces all combined to make his life a veritable raging inferno of doubts, dismay and near-despair. All of this is forcefully and vividly felt by the reader.

One interesting facet in the study of Libermann lies in the special psychological aspects of the man. Perhaps even more appropriately we might call it the physical crucifixion of this 'other Christ'. From early childhood he had suffered a recurring malady of severe headaches. After his conversion and during the years of his studies at Saint-Sulpice, the headaches developed into what doctors termed epilepsy. Striking him a few short months before ordination, it left him a veritable exile in the House of God. And so he remained for many years, years that saw him shuttled from one religious group to another; years that also witnessed his formulation of the plan that eventually led to the foundation of the Congregation of the Holy Ghost and of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Today that same congregation numbers in its professed membership over five thousand and cares for over twenty-five million souls.

Francis Libermann attained to the priesthood late in his life and died soon after the establishment of his congregation. But despite the fact that tragedy laid its heavy hand upon him in many instances, it could not deny him that one great triumph which was born in the moment when this son of a Rabbi turned from the Star of Jacob and fastened his gaze forever upon the Star in the East.

The art of reviving the personality and people of the past is a task that faces every author intent upon writing a biography. Helen Homan, in her introduction, states quite plainly that her method of achieving this objective resolved itself in a careful blending of fact and fiction. Fortunately the blend is smooth, sacrificing neither historical accuracy nor artistic balance. And this combination alone, rates a sincere recommendation and a special reader interest.

R.E.B.

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**Credo.** A Practical Guide to the Catholic Faith. By Martin Harrison, O.P. Chicago, Henry Regnery Co., 1954. pp. vii, 369. \$4.50.

The sub-title of this excellent work is an accurate and fitting

description of the scope and purpose of *Credo*. The book is a collection of brief and to the point meditations on the principal truths and practices of the Catholic religion. It does not pretend to be a manual of Theology in the technical sense. It is rather a handy reference to be used by the layman striving to practice his religion well. The ordinary Catholic will appreciate the author's eminent practicality in treating of problems not usually found in books of this type. Fr. Harrison makes some of the 'obscure' virtues take on an entirely new meaning by very precise applications to everyday life.

*Credo* deserves wide acceptance, both by the Catholic layman, and the professional theologian. There is a remarkably complete coverage of Catholic doctrine and truths necessary for salvation. The matter is presented with a clarity and brevity which will tend to make the reader wish to become better acquainted with the doctrines treated. Throughout the work there is ample evidence that the meditations were written by one who himself practices what he advises others to do. If it is true that Theology is food and drink because it nourishes and quickens the soul, then *Credo* is a must for the Catholic reader because of the delightful way in which it whets the appetite for the things of God. Fr. Harrison has followed St. Thomas faithfully throughout the book, applying Thomistic principles to twentieth century life. Perhaps the highest praise we can give this work is to say that Thomas would be most pleased with *Credo*. T.K.

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**An Introduction to the Metaphysics of St. Thomas Aquinas.** Texts selected and translated by James F. Anderson. Chicago, Henry Regnery Co., 1953. pp. xiv, 117 (Notes, 118-137). \$2.50.

"It is often said, and not without considerable truth, that . . . newcomers to philosophy cannot really read St. Thomas. But as every experienced teacher of St. Thomas knows, such persons are often in no better case as regards works about St. Thomas." Herein lies the tremendous value of this book. It "is designed to initiate the college student . . . into the so-called general metaphysical, rather than the natural-theological, part of St. Thomas' integral philosophy of being." and "is put forth with the not immoderate claim . . . of representing the minimum requirements for a course or plan of study whose object is a rather direct and intimate appreciation of the metaphysical thought of St. Thomas Aquinas."

Mr. Anderson well recognizes the accompanying difficulties in such a work. Fr. DeAndrea, O.P., points out the chief difficulty in his excellent work, *Praelectiones Metaphysicae* (Rome, Angelicum,



1951, p. 111,) where he refers to St. Thomas' *Commentary on the De Trinitate of Boethius*, Q. VI, art. 1 (this passage incidentally is among those given by Mr. Anderson, p. 109). To quote Fr. DeAndrea: "Although St. Thomas expressly sets down . . . that the analytic and synthetic method is to be employed in metaphysical investigation, yet he himself . . . almost always uses the synthetic method in the solution of metaphysical problems, i.e., starting his investigation from the notions of the existence, nature and attributes of God, Who, according to the natural order of scientific development, constitutes the ultimate term of the metaphysical inquiry in the "way of invention" or analysis. The reason for this is that St. Thomas considers the subject of metaphysics, which is "ens commune," from the viewpoint of the theologian, i.e., as it is . . . related to God—as created by God, subject to God, and ordered to God as to its final end." Thus the difficulty with regard to studying the metaphysics of St. Thomas is that a choice must be made between his metaphysical method and his own texts. He pointed out what the true procedure is, but he himself usually treated of metaphysics only as a theologian, using it for the solution of a theological problem. Both modes of procedure are valuable. Fr. DeAndrea follows the method of St. Thomas; Mr. Anderson here gives the texts themselves of St. Thomas. For the full understanding of St. Thomas' metaphysics, both must be used. To rely solely on the texts would be to chance great confusion in the minds of the students with regard to the distinction between philosophy and Theology. The text given by Mr. Anderson on pp. 101 ff. should help to obviate this difficulty.

Indicative of the inescapable difficulties in using the texts of St. Thomas is the section on the real distinction, for St. Thomas' main proofs of this begin with God, whereas in *Metaphysics* the proof of the existence of God is consequent to the proof of the real distinction. It might also be noted that the sections on potency and act and on the real distinction precede those on the transcendentals, which is the inversion of the order given by Fr. DeAndrea in his elaboration of the true metaphysical method according to St. Thomas.

The texts have been excellently chosen, carefully arranged, and well translated. This *Introduction* is then a major contribution to the field of textbooks in metaphysics; it can be used to great advantage, as long as the teacher points out the difference between the procedure of St. Thomas in these texts, and the true metaphysical procedure of St. Thomas. The great advantage for teacher and students alike is that they will be sitting at the feet of the master. D.K.

**Weeping Cross.** By Henry Longan Stuart. Chicago, Henry Regnery Co., 1954. pp. x, 372. \$4.00.

Henry Longan Stuart's *Weeping Cross* is "a powerful though neglected novel" on trial for a third time before the American reading public. First published in 1908, and then again in 1933, this book failed to receive its due attention from readers and critics. The reason for *Weeping Cross*' failure, thus far, to capture its rightful place in the field of American literature may be attributed to the fact that it was born prematurely in a society puzzled and repelled by a story dealing with *sin*. This third edition is the result of the devoted efforts of a small group of admirers who hope and feel that the present day American reader, initiated by the novels of Mauriac, Undset, Greene and Bernanos, is now prepared to give a wider appreciation and recognition to the "high mood of spiritual realism" which is the distinguishing mark of *Weeping Cross*.

From the moment Richard Fitzsimon, Irish royalist, Cavalier, and later in life Jesuit priest, lands at Boston on the 26th of February, 1652, as an indentured servant, we are ushered into the sacrosanct enclosure of a man's soul, unburdening itself in an autobiographical chronicle of sin during a short period of ten months. The emotional violence done to this soul through its fall from grace is depicted with awesome artistic skill and precision.

The outstanding feature of this soul-searching novel is the authentic realism portrayed in all of the characters. Henry Longan Stuart, it has been noted, took an unusual interest in the characterization of his heroine, Agnes Bartlett, to whom the novel is dedicated. She is a strong, able, middle aged widow devoted to her unorthodox Puritan father, Captain Fleming. She can be gentle and tender or witheringly ironic as she clearly sees through the fanciful and wishful thinking of Richard, her lover and indentured servant. The minor characters, Captain Fleming, Old Calamy and Captain Gideon, are impressively individual and real. Even the passing historical personages who walk through several pages of the story are woven with fine dexterity into the design of the plot.

As a novel, *Weeping Cross*, has been criticized for two surface flaws. The first is the almost hysterical pitch sustained over the hero's repentant soul-searching. And the second, is the failure to disclose certain events to the reader earlier in the story. The last pages of this eminently worth reading novel are somewhat marred by the mystery story unraveling of certain facts which could have been revealed sooner without detriment to the narrative.

Contrary to the opinion expressed in the Foreword, this reviewer believes that the unusual style of the book will contribute in no small measure to restricting the circle of readers of *Weeping Cross*. Nevertheless, though the book may prove somewhat difficult to read in places, we heartily recommend it to all those who enjoy a book with a stirring plot.

B.M.M.

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**The Last Things.** By Romano Guardini. Translated by Charlotte E. Forsyth and Grace B. Branham. New York, Pantheon Books, Inc., 1954. pp. 118. \$2.75.

This book is a study of the "Last things" and of what Christianity teaches concerning the end and that which pertains to it, namely, death, resurrection, purification after death, the Last Judgment, and eternal life. The interpretation of Sacred Scripture is somewhat restricted to the author's own purposes. There is also a Platonic tone underlying the explanation of human nature. Except for these two defects, the author does establish a relationship between the teaching of revelation and present day spiritual and intellectual conditions. This treatise is not intended to be an exhaustive survey, but is rather an outline focused upon those points which are apt to cause difficulty and are often misinterpreted. The author has a clear, definite, and intelligible style which has been highlighted by an excellent translation. The book makes worthwhile reading.

R.L.E.

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**Fortitude and Temperance.** By Josef Pieper. Translated by Daniel F. Coogan. New York, Pantheon Books, Inc., 1954. pp. 128. \$2.75.

The purpose of this treatise is to disclose the Christian conception of these two virtues as based upon the principles set forth by St. Thomas in the *Summa Theologiae*. The author has successfully achieved his goal. The doctrine of St. Thomas is expressed with clarity, simplicity, and precision.

The "enlightened liberal's" misinterpretation of the objective reality of man has led inevitably to a distorted notion of virtue. All the cardinal virtues have been misconceived, but the true significance of fortitude and temperance has suffered most. The author, while making no claim to originality, has made a definite contribution by demonstrating that traditional principles can be applied to these current problems. Many of the present day objections raised against the virtues are substantially the same as those answered by St. Thomas. These modern errors are skillfully refuted and popular misconceptions are deftly dispelled by Mr. Pieper. This reviewer was particu-

larly impressed by the explanation of the Thomistic concept of "reason" and "order of reason" (pp. 56-61).

The simplification of technical language achieved by the author will enable readers to readily grasp the arguments presented. *Fortitude and Temperance* is recommended to priest, religious, and layman.

R.L.E.

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**The Philosophy of Being.** By Rt. Rev. Louis de Raeymaeker. Translated by Rev. E. H. Ziegelmeyer, S.J. St. Louis, Mo., Herder Book Co., 1954. pp. 360. \$4.95.

Louvain University has been a leader in the revival of Thomism. Since the days of Leo XIII, its school of Philosophy has pioneered with notable success the application of St. Thomas' doctrines to modern problems. *The Philosophy of Being* is an attempt to present his Metaphysics to an audience of readers secure in their study of phenomena, but weak in the basis of such science.

The book opens with a challenge to self-knowledge and experience. This is in keeping with the traditions of Louvain, although such a procedure leaves much to be desired, for it reflects the belief that *Critica* is more important than the essence of being itself. However, considering the nature of the work, this is only a minor objection.

Then proceeding from the study of being, its nature and attributes, the author ends with a discussion of causality and the Supreme Being. Convenient historical summaries are found where the question at hand is particularly disputed. These are exceptional in interest and value for handy reference. The style is fresh, freely employing modern terminology together with traditional expressions. All in all, *The Philosophy of Being* is an orderly and attractive presentation of a difficult science.

G.E.B.

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**Fabulous Ancestor.** By Donald Demarest. Philadelphia and New York, J. B. Lippincott Co., 1954. pp. 288. \$3.50.

At the outset, Mr. Demarest refers to his book as falling into no set category of literature. According to the author himself, it might best be described as a legend. The reader, then, will have to evaluate the merits of the work in conjunction with the peculiar nature of the legend. Mr. Webster's dictionary defines a legend as "any story coming down from the past, especially one popularly taken as historical though not verifiable." And in close complement to legendary, Mr. Webster lists the word 'fabulous'.

Hence an appraisal of *Fabulous Ancestor* is not an easy task.



In any legend the figures, places, and circumstances under discussion are both real and yet mist-covered portraits of something else. As described by Mr. Demarest, the substance of his book is reflected through the eyes of a ten-year old boy. At the very outset a key to the legend is furnished by stating quite simply: "To a boy, the ways of the old are the ways of another world." Out of this principle flows the creation of another era and another approach to life—the life of the Old South.

Fabulous Ancestor is a first novel of a former editor of the New American Library and of Pelligrini and Cudahy. The story that Mr. Demarest has woven out of the dreams, fancies, and realities of a ten-year old in that magical city of New Orleans are populated by an unconventional array of characters. But out of the welter of characters that grace the pages of the book the figure of Granny, the Fabulous Ancestor, stands out as a woman who "intends to get what she wants in this world, and the next, knowing the rules of both." There have been, no doubt, better tales of New Orleans and its peculiar atmosphere and glamour, but none quite so evident for its joy and unabashed honesty. We are sure that New Orleans is well-loved by Mr. Demarest, and after reading his book, we are quite willing to share in that same affection.

R.E.B.

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**Sanctity Through Trust.** By Joseph Schrijvers, C.S.S.R. Cork, The Mercier Press, 1953. pp. 164.

The purpose of this work, in the words of the author, is "to enlighten souls," "to warn them . . . of the dangers and illusions to be avoided . . . in the way of spiritual childhood" and "to encourage those sincere souls . . . desirous of perfect union with the divine Master." Perfection consists not in greatness, nobility, or splendour of works, but in the loving fidelity with which a soul accomplishes its tasks. To do this requires a complete trust that God will grant the graces necessary. What this trust embraces can be seen in the topics considered by the author: prayer, humility, renunciation, knowledge, love and imitation of Jesus Christ; the gifts and the fruits of the Holy Ghost.

Father Schrijvers frequently refers to the Blessed Mother and explains her role as patroness and model of the wayfaring soul in its journey to perfect trust in God. One can also detect intimations of St. Therese of Lisieux's "little way" of perfection, which consists essentially in an extraordinary performance of the ordinary duties of everyday life. The book is copiously documented with texts of Sacred Scripture and quotations from the works of St. Thomas Aquinas and

St. Alphonsus Liguori. The last three chapters are based largely on the *Cursus Theologicus* of John of St. Thomas.

Most of the sections end with a short prayer on the matter just treated. These prayers offer convenient summaries of doctrine as well as matter for fruitful meditation. This book will be of special value to spiritual directors of seminaries and of religious communities.

G.G.C.

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**The Theology of the Apostolate.** By Msgr. L. J. Suenens. Cork, The Mercier Press, 1953. pp. xviii, 159.

The keystone of the Legion of Mary and its apostolate is found in the following words: *Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto ex Maria Virgine*. The Legion desires to form Christ in the souls of Christians through the love of Mary. Doctrinally it claims no greater originality than fidelity to one's state in life.

This book is a commentary on the pledge made by the legionary on the day of his consecration. It is designed to give him a fuller appreciation and understanding of his promise, to enable him to penetrate more deeply the meaning of its words. The promise taken point by point reveals the wealth of spirituality which underlies it. The doctrine is based principally upon that set forth by St. Louis de Montfort in the *True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin*, and that of Saint Pius X in the encyclical *Mary Mediatrix*.

Msgr. Suenens, auxiliary bishop of Molines and national director of the society in Belgium, has written more than a guidebook for members of the Legion of Mary. He offers in this small volume a sound doctrinal presentation of fundamental Marian theology. It is worth reading by all lovers of Mary.

R.L.E.

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**Preaching**—A Symposium. Edited by John M. Feehan. Cork, The Mercier Press, 1953. pp. 70.

Here is a little book directed to priests from a few members of the Sunday listening audience. The contributors are educated laymen who have been asked to express, in writing, their observations and opinions on present day preaching. Knowing full well the sensitivity of the subject matter, they have, however, responded eagerly to this request, bringing to the surface their many comments and remarks, so long repressed. This symposium gives the clergy the opportunity to hear from those who have listened quietly and patiently to sermons and to discover what some of the people in the pews think of them.

The book is centered about an article which appeared a few

years ago in "Nouvelle Revue Theologique" under the pen name 'Silens'. The remaining four articles are commentaries written by Professor Alfred O'Rahilly, Count Michael de la Bedoyere, Hilda C. Graef and Malachy Gerard Carroll. The editor has also added a brief summary.

These few pages contain words of sympathy, understanding and praise as well as charitable comments and criticism. The effort to aid the preacher is evident and because of this spirit, the articles will be of use to anyone who is interested in the art of effective preaching.  
B.St.G.

**Personal Religion Among The Greeks.** By Andre-Jean Festugiere, O.P.  
Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1954. pp. viii, 186.  
\$3.75.

Has mankind always believed in a god. Has it given him or her more than lip service? If so, to what extent and among what people? Fr. Festugiere endeavors to show that the Greeks prior to 400 B.C. had a personal form of devotion to the gods and goddesses of Greek culture.

This devotion was of two types: popular and reflective. Both were accepted modes of personal piety. Popular devotion consisted in the immediate contact with a god remote from the world of sense; reflective devotion turned to the world of sense to reflect upon the god who was the principle of all things.

The author cites various literary works of the Greeks to illustrate their concept of popular devotion. The play *Hippolytes* by Euripides presents us with a good example. Hippolytes expresses his personal devotion to the goddess Artemis and spends his time in leisurely pursuit of the object of all his devotion. He is content in his earthly surroundings: his devotion in no way implies a disgust with life. In the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius, Lucius retires to the temple of Isis remaining constantly in the presence of this goddess. The *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius and the *Discourses* of Dio Chrysostom confirm this necessity of retirement as a condition for popular devotion.

To exemplify reflective devotion, Fr. Festugiere examines the philosophies of various Greek writers. Thus, Heraclitus' mode was to view Strife, Order, Harmony and Measure as taking place in the universe under an eternal Plan: Zeus. Suffering, too, a result of this Order and Disorder, was designed to lead us to an understanding of this Plan.

The author has carefully listed an index of ancient writers whom

he has quoted; he also provides the reader with many notes to the main text. The work is a fine contribution to the history of religion and will be of great assistance and value to the interested student.

T.H.

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**The Way.** By Joseph Mary Escriva. Cork, Ireland, Mercier Press Limited. 1953. pp. xii, 194.

Monsignor Escriva realized that the layman's daily schedule leaves him little time for spiritual reading. He saw, too, that profound treatises on the spiritual life sometimes tend to discourage spiritual reading, making it burdensome, rather than a source of comfort and peace. Msgr. treats of things very dear to every Catholic—the Mass, Our Lady, the Church, the Communion of Saints. He deals also with those things with which we daily come in contact—scruples, lukewarmness, tribulations, discretion, little things. Each of these topics and many others are treated in short chapters (two or three pages each) containing many worth-while, encouraging, spiritual thoughts.

The book is by no means an exhaustive exposition of the spiritual life. Rather it is a book of practical suggestions designed to help us to attain peace and happiness in this life and to keep us on the road to eternal happiness. The manner of expression is the most striking characteristic of this book. The various thoughts are phrased in sharp, short sentences which almost force us to meditate.

This brief work will certainly be read with pleasure. Having started to read it, one desires to return to it as to a refreshing fountain. Each paragraph and sometimes even one sentence affords us ample food for thought. *The Way* is the answer to those who wish to do spiritual reading but cannot find the time. A book which impels such self-reflection cannot be read without great profit to the soul. Those seeking respite from the things of the world and enjoyment in spiritual reading will welcome this work.

A.McK.

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**Praying the Gospels.** By Rev. Lawrence G. Lovasik, S.V.D. New York, Macmillan Co., 1953. pp. 333. \$4.00.

You may be acquainted with the Gospels or not but the fact is that familiarity with them is necessary for good Christian living. To be a good Christian means to know Christ. "Ignorance of the Bible," wrote St. Jerome, "means ignorance of Christ." Father Lovasik was not only aware of this but has done something about it in his latest work.



His aim is obvious: to help the reader "learn to know Christ through the Gospels"; not by merely reading the Gospels but by praying them. Nor is this an alien notion—for the Saints did it. They made the Gospels part of themselves. That is why, in their speech or writings, they were able to freely quote verses of the inspired text from memory.

The author divides the life of Christ into various settings, grouping appropriate passages under each heading. A meditative prayer, written in the first person singular, follows each section. These prayers are notably doctrinal in character consistently stressing those mysteries which especially pertain to the Savior's divinity and humanity.

Fr. Lovasik believes that many do not read the Gospels regularly because they have not profited enough from the little reading which they have done. The answer lies in praying the Gospels. Hence, this present work which is a masterful attempt, expressed in vivid style, to portray the beauty and practical wisdom contained in the four Gospels.

J.F.

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#### BRIEF REVIEWS

In the pamphlet, *Are We Really Teaching Religion?* F. J. Sheed examines the nature of religious instruction, the qualities requisite in the teacher who is to impart it, and concludes with a short commentary on some of the key doctrines to be taught.

The author insists that religion cannot be just another subject in the curriculum, but rather it must be something which permeates the entire life of the student. "Catholics coming out of our schools should emerge with a tremendous devotion to Christ, with an awareness of Him, a considerable knowledge of His Life and Personality, and a desire to increase that knowledge." The religion class must be made as interesting and enjoyable as possible and should never leave any memory of harshness to stain the student's devotion to this subject. Those whose office it is to teach religion, should instruct by both word and action. A thorough knowledge of both the New Testament and the Dogmas of the Church must be combined with the desire and ability to communicate this knowledge to others. Religion properly taught, becomes something vital in the life of the student by which he is able to judge all things in their proper relation to God.

Mr. Sheed's answer to the question, "Are we really teaching religion?" could be read and studied with profit by all those upon whom falls the obligation to instruct others in the knowledge of God. (New York, Sheed and Ward, 1953, pp. 35)

To mark the centenary of their foundation in the United States in 1953, the Dominican Sisters of the Congregation of the Holy Cross of the Diocese of Brooklyn have published a second volume of *The Daughters of Dominic on Long Island*, bringing their history up to date since the publication of the first volume in 1937. These have been eventful years of marvelous expansion and growth for the Amityville Dominicans, now one of the largest communities of sisters in the country. Skillfully written by Rev. Eugene J. Crawford, spiritual director of the community, the book is much more than just a chronicle of events or a centennial souvenir. It is a thoroughly impressive and eloquent historical account, attractively presented, and documented with a valuable series of appendices—a splendid monument to a glorious past and a vivid presage of a flourishing future! (New York, Benziger Brothers, 1953. pp. 361.)

*The Triumph of Mercy* is a small book with a great message—God's loving mercy for sinful mankind. The author illustrates this great truth by episodes, many of which are taken from the Gospel and from the lives of saints. The work is free from technical terminology and is aimed at convincing the ordinary Christian that God is a loving father, ready to forgive our faults if we but approach Him with the right dispositions. The book is marred here and there by a few minor defects, such as quoting a proverb which is true only with distinctions and using less precise terms at times. (*The Triumph of Mercy* by L'Abbe A. L'Hermitte, S.D.B., Adapted from the original french by Peter de C. Stacey. Patterson, New Jersey, Salesiana Publishers, 1953. pp. 115. \$2.50.)

*Our Faith in Pharmacy.* This thirty-page pamphlet with a foreword by Bishop William T. Mulloy contains four articles on the history, aims, procedures and Constitutions and By-Laws of the Guild. Should be called to the attention of as many people as possible having responsibility for the quality of drug store merchandize. (Druggist's Guild of St. James, Covington, Ky. \$0.25.)

*Catholic Shrines in the United States and Canada.* A shrine, Father Thornton tells us in his Preface, is a place of special devotion. They are those particular places and buildings that have a note of the extraordinary about them in the sense that they touch the heart and move it to fervent devotion and confidence. Since earliest Christian times, such shrines have ever been means by which the faithful showed their thanks to God, and expressed their need for His further Guidance and Love. The U.S. and Canada, although children in comparison to their parent countries in the Old World, have not been lax in producing such signs of devotion and confidence. Many of these

shrines flow from a particular national devotion, or have been developed under the patronage of a particular race. Nevertheless the unity of the people in our country is exemplified by the unity of their love of God.

Through the pages and numerous photographs of this book we come to know the heart of America; we come to know where thousands, even millions, of Americans turn in time of difficulty and distress, joy and thanksgiving. The editor sums up his work as 'a tribute to the riches of the faith and beauty that have touched our culture and our lives'. An excellent summation, for his work is a tribute; an outstanding and fitting tribute to the Faith of American Catholics. (Edited by Francis Beauchesne Thornton, New York, Wilfred Funk, Inc., 1954. pp. 340. \$4.75.)

*Holy Mass* explains the central act of Catholic worship in a manner which is direct, brief, and, above all easily understood. Father Roguet presents a commentary on and an explanation of the Mass, "not from its origins and theories but *from its ritual acts*." His presentation is based on the principle that a Sacrament is a sign and therefore should be intelligible. Consequently, he writes about the simple and concrete realities of the Sacrifice of the Mass.

In his preface he emphasizes the "Mass as a 'mystery of religious worship' into which one enters by celebrating it or by giving one's attention to it." This emphasis is steadily maintained throughout the sixteen chapters which comprise this book. *Holy Mass* is a well-ordered presentation of approaches to the mystery of the Mass, and is heartily recommended. Father Roguet has done an excellent job, and the translators, the Carisbrooke Dominicans, are to be duly commended for their labors. (By A. M. Roguet, O.P. Translated by Carisbrooke Dominicans. The Liturgical Press, St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minn., 1953. pp. 120. Paper \$.90, cloth \$1.75.)

*A History of Philosophy, Vol. III, Ockham to Suarez*. Father Copleston treats the interesting, and relatively unknown period from Ockham to Suarez in the third book of his four volume series on the History of Philosophy. About one fourth of the work is devoted to the two philosophers who form the extremes of this study. The rest of the book covers the various conflicting philosophical currents, and discusses at some length the philosophy of the Renaissance. The book is well written, and shows the authors extensive knowledge of this field. (By Frederick Copleston, S.J. Newman Press, Westminster, Md., 1953. pp. 479. \$5.00.)

Since the declaration of the beatification of Blessed Pius X the market has been literally flooded with literature concerning this holy

man. Father Cevetello's *From Peasant to Pope* is a brochure that might serve as an outline to the more extensive and intensive works already written. To those who have already perused one of the larger works, this booklet will serve as a refresher; to those who have not yet read a life of Blessed Pius, it will but whet the appetite. Father Cevetello has accomplished this: he has given an introduction to one of the most outstanding men of recent times, and surely no one would be content with a mere introduction to such a fascinating and charming saint. If the author intended to make his audience interested in learning more about the blessed Pope, his object has been achieved. (By Rev. Joseph F. X. Cevetello, Staten Island, N.Y., Society of St. Paul, pp. 72. \$.35.)

*Sacred Art in the XXth Century?* discusses the various trends, works of art, and doctrines which have developed during the past thirty years into what is euphemistically called the modern renaissance of sacred art. The author has attempted to analyse first of all what goes into the making of a truly *sacred* art. He inquires into the exigencies of the sacred, and the demands of art. He then discusses how these elements are translated into the sacred art of our century. The volume contains an Appendix on the *Instruction of the Holy Office on Sacred Art*; and the *Directives of the Episcopale Commission for the Pastoral Office, the Liturgy, and Sacred Art* (for France.) The work has an Index of Proper Names and the principal subjects discussed, along with an Analytical Table of Contents. (By P. R. Régamey, O.P. Paris, editions du Cerf, 1952. pp. 483.)

### BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS RECEIVED

- THE EXECUTION OF PRIVATE SLOVAK. By William Bradford Huie. New York. New American Library of World Literature, Inc., 1954. pp. 152. \$.25.
- FOLLOW CHRIST. St. Meinrad, Indiana. Grail Publication, 1954. pp. 96. \$.25.
- LETTER TO A PRIEST. By Simone Weil. New York. G. B. Putnam's Sons, 1954. pp. 85. \$.250.
- THE MANNER IS ORDINARY. By John LaFarge, S.J. New York. Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1954. pp. viii, 408. \$4.75.
- MARRIAGE. Chicago, Ill. Fides Publishers, 1951. pp. 31. \$.25.
- THE MASS. Chicago, Ill. Fides Publishers, 1954. pp. 31. \$.25.
- MISSION FOR MARGARET. By Mary Fabyan Windeatt. St. Meinrad, Ind. Grail Publication, 1953. pp. 230. \$3.00.
- THE SECOND CONQUEST. By Louis de Wohl. New York. J. B. Lippincott Co., 1954. pp. 239. \$3.00.
- SHORT STORIES FOR THE FAMILY. Edited by John F. Fink. Huntington, Ind. Our Sunday Visitor Press, 1953. pp. 159. \$1.00.