

Blackfriars

away the phenomena. Dismissing such as deny the fact *a priori* on the ground that a suspension of the law of gravity is impossible, he considers in turn the naturalistic and supernaturalistic theories, without, however, committing himself definitely to any one theory. Reading between the lines, however, we think the author agrees with the Catholic tradition that levitation, where it occurs to saints or holy persons, is supernatural. As for the levitations of mediums, or the authenticated levitations of pagan, but non-mediumistic, individuals, explanation is more difficult.

We know so little really of gravitation that one may ask whether the psychophysical states of the individual, at the time of the trance, does not in some way or other unknown to us disturb the ordinary gravitational relation to the earth. However this may be, we must say that no natural explanation is as yet forthcoming, and that of the fact itself there can be no reasonable doubt.

A good bibliographical register and index completes a very interesting and unique study of this subject.

G.A.E.

THE DAWN OF CATHOLICISM IN AUSTRALIA. By the Rev. Eris O'Brien. (Sydney, 1928; 2 vols.)

All sincere students of history will feel grateful to Fr. Eris O'Brien for his most interesting volumes on *The Dawn of Catholicism in Australia*. They were published, as the Assistant Secretary of the Sydney Eucharistic Congress says in a prefatory note, 'to prepare Congressists with the true atmosphere of Australian Church History.' The reader must do his best to bear this in mind, for to a superficial observer they would seem to contain little more than a very minute and detailed account of the life and adventures of the Rev. Jeremiah O'Flynn.

In a series of extremely interesting chapters and vivid word-pictures, with a wealth of detail and a crowd of historical digressions so minute as at times to seem needless and out of place, the author shows us how this commonplace priest, quarrelsome, tiresome, tactless, and irritating, nevertheless 'achieved greatness by failure.' That the Catholic Church at the present moment is what it is in Australia seems, humanly speaking, due to the fact that this man went there to lay its foundation stones, and after a brief residence of about six months succeeded in getting himself deported.

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Of his priestly zeal and apostolic efforts during that period there seems to be little doubt, but all the explanation in the world, and all the subsequent enthusiastic oratory to which the incident has given rise, can never justify in the minds of most readers, his astounding conduct in leaving the Blessed Sacrament behind him, and adding to his offence by saying nothing about it. That God could and did bring good out of evil is only what we might expect, and perhaps it is as well that the evil should be lost sight of in the abundance of good of which it seems to have been the seed.

The author justifies his claim to be an historian by his obvious painstaking endeavours to get at the truth and be fair to all—endeavours all the more noticeable when other authorities, such as Cardinal Moran and Grattan Flood, have to be cited, and in almost every citation reveal their pitiful lack of the historical sense in the bitterness of their national bias.

H. R. M.

A KING OF SHADOWS. By Margaret Yeo. (Sheed & Ward; 7/6.)

The King of Shadows is the 'Old Pretender,' and Mrs. Yeo makes him a Catholic hero, entirely charming, charmingly regal. With his devoted friend, the Prince of Este, and Margaret Ogilvie, he shares in a quick succession of adventures that hold our interest, although many of them are too easily arranged and brought to a happy conclusion. Mrs. Yeo has dealt freely with her historical authorities, and offers us a lively romance rather than a Jacobin apologia. Her characters—diverse as they are—and her colouring are sure and pleasing. She tells her tale with a light raciness, and the love intrigue is brightened by a subtle touch of originality. Her technique is exceptionally good, for the most part, and she could undoubtedly achieve far greater success with a stronger plot and a fuller theme.

R. R.

LIFE OF THE VEN. FR. JOSEPH PASSERAT. By Henri Girouille, C.S.S.R. Translated from the French by John Carr, C.S.S.R. (Sands & Co., 1928; 12/6.)

This is the life story of a priest whose claim to holiness has already been officially recognised, for his Cause was introduced at Rome in 1901, and the acts relating to it were declared valid in 1913. As for the greatness of his work, its extent and durability are attested to by the flourishing condition of