

OUR FRIENDS THE JEWS. By Arthur Day, S.J. (Burns and Oates; 3s. 6d.)

As the author admits, this little book is not designed to subtend a deep study of the Jewish people, but rather provides a 'hotch-potch' (to use the author's own description) of his personal encounters with, and observations of, various aspects of Jewish life culled over a period of more than sixty years.

The variety of subjects, upon which Father Day touches, ranges from Jewish proselytism in the days of the early Church, and the composition of the Talmud, to synagogue observances and an easy method of acquiring the rudiments of Hebrew. Some of these superficial accounts may help the sympathetic though ignorant reader to gain a wider introduction to the everyday character and traditions of the modern Jew than would have been derived from profounder studies.

Unfortunately, blemishes mar the book. Many of the anecdotes, apparently extracted from a diary of past adventures, display that lack of general interest characteristic of highly personal reminiscence. It would have been helpful, moreover, had references to the explanatory notes at the end of the book been indicated by small numbers in the text. And the appended criticism of Asch's *My Personal Faith* (p. 61) appears to have been omitted.

But, most important, the general tone of the book is lowered, and its apparent purpose, as evidenced in the title and preface, contradicted, by the unnecessary raising of petty Judæo-Christian controversies. Thus, the chapter on 'The Jewish Press,' far from attempting an objective survey of Jewish journalism, consists almost entirely of an eclectic account of press-attacks upon Christianity and, particularly, upon the author. The relatively important chapter on 'Theology and Theologians' is pointlessly interrupted with selections of anti-Christian writings, including two by the present Chief Rabbi. Other needless comments on Jewish failings, and subtly anti-Jewish interspersions, cannot but offend Jewish susceptibilities. Surely, in these days when the kinsmen of Our Lord are suffering torment unparalleled in history, petty controversy, particularly of so personal a type, might have been dispensed with in acknowledgement of the alliance of all believers in God in the common struggle for religious truth and toleration?

SEYMOUR SPENCER.

NATIONS AND PERSONS.

THE STORY OF WALES. By Rhys Davies.

THE STORY OF IRELAND. By Sean O'Faolain. (Collins; 4s. 6d. each.)

The Celtic name, above all others, inclines one most to be a nominalist. The Celtic twilight has spread far beyond Innisfree: