

## BLACKFRIARS

hope that a better understanding of principles may one day lead to an unhesitating application of them to the conditions which prevail within the borders of our own land.

AMBROSE FARRELL, O.P.

**THE LAY APOSTOLATE.** By Paul Jerome Iyer. (The Catholic Press Agency of the East, 35 Sultan Street, Klang, Federated Malay States.)

This small volume is a source of great satisfaction from more than one point of view. Its author is a convert from Brahminism (as yet a somewhat rare occurrence) and it represents a series of conferences given in English and Tamil to Indian and other Catholics throughout the Malay Peninsula. The conferences themselves were originally delivered with a view to promoting a strong Catholic Action movement amongst audiences of divers nationalities but of a single Faith, and we are convinced, to quote His Excellency the Bishop of Malacca's printed letter of appreciation, "it will diffuse light on this important matter and infuse into many the resolution to do something for the extension of the Kingdom of Christ . . . and may open the way to the organisation of a solid and energetic Catholic Action in the diocese of Malacca." The author's Foreword is admirable in its humility and completely Catholic tone. The Conferences themselves, couched in surprisingly good and forceful English, cover the ground of the Lay Apostolate in a very satisfactory manner. For so recent a convert, his grasp of the meaning of the Kingdom of Christ is profound and his copious use of the New Testament most apt.

He rightly bases the notion of the Lay Apostolate on the Commandment of Fraternal Charity. "Catholics are spiritually rich and their duty is to impart these spiritual riches to those that are poor and neglected. . . . The Samaritan could have said: 'Why should I trouble myself? Is not helping the wounded man the duty of the Priests?'" "According to the Christian conception, the love of our neighbour is based on our love of God. . . . As the love each one should have for himself consists, above all, in praying and working for his own salvation, each one's love for his neighbour should also show itself by prayer and work for the neighbour's salvation. Our love for mankind must not only be mere attitude of mind. . . . It is a common error among the laity to think that the apostolate is the exclusive concern of the clergy. . . . The necessary interdependence of the clergy and the laity can neither be gainsaid nor avoided." In considering the practical ways of this apostolate the author wisely remarks that "personal example goes a longer way than mere precept." He recognizes, however, that "ignorance of the

## REVIEWS

Catholic Church abounds, and ignorance begets misrepresentation and prejudice," but is sadly aware that "the ignorance of some Catholics is little less than tragic." He urges upon Catholics the necessity of knowing their religion, for the sake of others as well as themselves. "As you read, so you will think. . . . Everything we read makes us better or worse. . . . St. Augustine says: "When we pray we speak to God. When we read a good book, God speaks to us." In short, there is much that we Western Catholics of the Christian tradition might learn from the informed zeal of this Eastern Neophyte, newborn from the age-old cult of Brahminism.

HILARY J. CARPENTER, O.P.

NOUVELLES CROISADES DE JEUNES TRAVAILLEURS. By l'Abbé Felix Klein. (Editions Spes, Paris; 7.50 frs.)

The J.O.C. is as unquestionably the most interesting as it is the most vigorous of the many Catholic organisations which have sprung into being since the War. It might have been started in response to the Pope's cry, "The first and immediate apostles of working men must themselves be working men," but we know that it was already taking shape in the mind of a young Belgian boy nearly fifty years ago when he told his parents that he wanted to become a priest in order to improve the lot of the working-people among whom he was born.

This summer the Jocistes of Belgium are going to celebrate the first decade of achievement. All who are interested will be greatly indebted to the Abbé Klein for his brief and precise description of its manifestation in France. It was only introduced there in 1927 yet it numbers close upon a hundred thousand members and is likely to play a prominent part in the reorganization of Society which is so much hoped for in that country. An association for the promotion of the moral and spiritual as well as material welfare of its members, it enjoys high esteem at Geneva as well as the Vatican. A few weeks ago the Secretary of the I.L.O. paid a visit to the Headquarters in Brussels; this might be profitably followed by all who visit Belgium this year. Those who go to France will find a number of useful addresses to guide their search at the end of this book.

They will find young men—none over twenty-five—running establishments themselves, under the watchful eye of a few devoted chaplains, it is true, but using their own methods and competing with the forces of evil on their own ground. Thus there are special sections for workmen, farmers, sailors, etc—while the latest development is a parallel service for girls. No one who has seen their bright newspapers, their club rooms and their church-parades can fail to admire the result of a few short years' work. The result is a spiritual flowering which, for all its