

myself with the ideas of M. de Rancé and I shall remind myself that a religious must be an angel, a martyr, an apostle.'

In Nîmes in 1830 Dr d'Alzon served his apprenticeship. Religion was at its lowest ebb; nuns were a thing of the past; cholera and corruption had become the masters of the people and had done their worst. How strange it must have been for this young priest to have been made an honorary Vicar General straightaway, and to find himself the apostle who had come to revive and to save! How soon the mark of sanctity became obvious in that city; this young zealous priest ready to give away his clothes, to run to the confessional and go to the sick, to love the poor and to preach with a brilliant intellect which touched the hearts and minds of the rich. Through him God, the Sower, gave life to the country. In Chapter VI we see another d'Alzon—the Founder. The foundation of the Fathers of the Assumption comes first, and then, perhaps his life's greatest work, the foundation of the Oblates of the Assumption.

Perhaps through him the challenge of perfection may sound in the ears of many, in England as elsewhere, who sit and muse too long, wondering what God requires of them. 'What is a Founder?' he asks; and he gives the reply: 'When God wills to mould and shape a Founder he takes a man and he fashions him after the manner of the patriarchs . . . the special and extraordinary missions confided to the Founders of Orders are continued by their disciples, always within the Church, always under the authority of the Supreme Pastor. . . .' So through him came the life which flowed into the Congregation he founded, and this life continues today.

Especially interesting to women is the second part of the book devoted to the Oblates. It is fascinating reading, watching d'Alzon fail and fail again, tasting deeply of disappointment, until he found the right woman into whose soul he could inculcate his own desires for the service of God, a woman whom he admired and to whom he gave unstinting loving training and friendship. Who amongst women who waver would not be drawn to dedicate herself to God and cast in her lot with him, reading of the heroic labours of these first Oblates in the Near East and the Balkan States and even in Russia?

A well-written, workmanlike presentation, though occasionally tedious, the book at 12s. 6d. is very successfully produced and is further evidence of the way in which the Mercier Press establishes itself as an 'apostolic press' bringing within the reach of all good material at a reasonable cost.

K. J. BARTLETT

THE EXTERNALS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. A Handbook of Catholic

Usage and Liturgy (School Edition). By John F. Sullivan. (Longmans; 6s. 9d.)

This is a revision for the English public of a work long standard in America. It makes an excellent guide to the outlines of Catholic organization, liturgy, devotions, terminology, etc. A number of points have been noticed where improvement would be possible, e.g.: the text might in several cases be more carefully adapted to explain all the points signalized in the clear and useful diagrammatic illustrations; an occasional Latin word could well be substituted by an English one, e.g. *gremiale*; 'the deacon wears a chasuble at Lenten Masses instead of a dalmatic folded up in front' (p. 231) does not give the intended sense; the *Glorias* in the Rosary are a customary adjunct rather than an essential part; it is not prescribed in the Roman Ritual that the candles used at Extreme Unction be blessed; Fr Sebastian Bullough (p. 307) is not a Passionist but a Dominican. In a generally good account of devotion to the Sacred Heart, no mention or explanation is made of the 'great promise'. The reviewer personally finds the constant playing-down of traditional stories rather over-done, e.g. the description of a story on page 275 as 'beautiful but rather fanciful'. But in general this is a useful and pleasing book.

IVO THOMAS, O.P.

THREE WHITE VEILS FOR ALESSANDRA. By Lucy Prario. (Longmans, Green and Co.; 18s.)

The hopes of a dead Cardinal Archbishop of Paris were realized in 1928 when, from Paray-le-Monial, a Carmel was founded on the north side of Montmartre under the shadow of the great white church that dominates the city. 'I shall not regard the Basilica as complete', Cardinal Amette had said, 'until the day comes when in the shadow of our national shrine there arises a centre of prayer, a contemplative monastery.' The Foundress was Mother Mary of Jesus, Alessandra of the three veils, the subject of this unusual biography. Unusual, because at first it seems an ordinary story of a spoiled child becoming a society beauty and making a brilliant marriage.

There were, however, to be three white veils in the life of Alessandra di Rudini, the daughter of a wealthy marchese, an important politician in the new Italy after 1870. The first white veil Alessandra wore at her First Communion; the second white veil she wore at her wedding. The third veil was that of the Carmelite novice. Much happened to Alessandra between the first and second veils; most serious of all, she had ceased to be a practising Catholic. Between the second and third there came motherhood, widowhood and a romantic interlude with d'Annunzio.

A young widow with two adolescent sons, a woman whose defiance