

BLACKFRIARS

Abbot Cabrol's intention in *The Year's Liturgy* "is to help the faithful to understand their Missals or Vespersals better by making them familiar with the essential elements of the liturgical cycle." This intention the book fulfils admirably, up to a point. As an exposition of the Liturgical Year it is a valuable, though somewhat inadequate, account.

The author divides the year into its several liturgical parts, treats each part individually, discussing its character and origin, and then devotes his attention to the proper of the Saints whose feasts occur within that part. In this first volume he considers Advent and the proper of the saints within that season, Christmas with its octave, and the saints whose feasts are observed at Christmas-tide, then Septuagesima, Lent, Passiontide, and Pascal Time up to Trinity Sunday and the feasts of Corpus Christi and the Sacred Heart. The section on Passiontide is good, and the one on Corpus Christi excellent. A wealth of historical information is given on the origin of each different season of the liturgical cycle, on the feasts, and on the Stational Churches for each particular day, and this is truly helpful for a deeper understanding of the Mass or Office under consideration. But it is not enough! The author does indeed consider the various parts of the Mass of the day, but far too briefly, and too often his observations on these say no more than can be discovered by anyone reading the Missal or the Breviary intelligently for himself. It is a pity that the work is so summary, and intentionally so—"we wish to reduce the work to two volumes, instead of nine, or fifteen"—for an adequate treatment of the Liturgical Year does not admit of such a brief exposition.

JORDAN PEARSON, O.P.

POUR COMPRENDRE LA MESSE. Par Dom Gasper Lefebure, O.S.B. (Croisade Liturgique, Abbaye de Saint André-lez-Bruges, Belgique; 5 frs.)

The Mass is Catholic Action, and, as the author of this book explains, it is the supreme Catholic act. It is unique in that it traverses several realms of reality. It embraces the Divine and the human, and relates them one to the other in a multitude of modes. There is Adoration, there is supplication, there is retribution. God receives the praise due to His Supreme Majesty, man enhances his own dignity—both by the recognition of his own nature as creature, and by his knowledge of Dogma, which is the priceless possession of Truth, and all is brought to a head in the perfect Sacrificial Act of the Victim, who is the Divine Word.

Now any attempt to explain the Mass must take into account how the great Drama takes place on several planes. This simple

REVIEWS

little book, somewhat in the manner of the mediæval mystery play, teaches the great Truth by means of words and pictures that present simultaneously several realms of reality. In all there are over thirty illustrations by Joseph Speybrouck. Each one depicts some part of the Mass, while the upper portion of the illustrations gives a picture symbolizing the doctrinal or scriptural significance of the particular liturgical act. A small insert on each of these illustrations serves to elucidate such rubrics as the washing of hands, the kissing of the altar, filling the chalice, the fraction, and the various blessings.

The illustrations find a fitting complement in the simple and direct text of Dom Gasper Lefebure, who is already well known in this country as an authority in liturgical matters.

Though this book is simple enough to serve as a child's textbook, it is rich in matter drawn from the Church's treasure-house of knowledge, and the reader, whether young or old, is instructed by the Scriptures, the Councils, and the more general experience of the Church Militant, as exemplified in the Saints. He becomes acquainted with Dogma, Church History, the Fathers and Doctors, together with Liturgical origins and developments. The inner connection between all these factors is ably demonstrated in such a way, that the Liturgy is seen in the light of its true significance in the Divine Plan for the Christian's life.

There is no English book having the same scope. A translation would widen the range of this excellent manual's very good influence.

P. TOWNS.

BIOGRAPHY

BLESSED JULIE BILLIART. By Sister Frances de Chantal, S.N.D.
(Longmans; 7s. 6d.)

An extremely capable biography of the foundress of the Institute of the Sisters of Notre Dame. Julie occupies a very interesting place in history of human sanctity, for rarely has a life of contemplation been a life of such intense action in Catholic apostolate. Her genius can best be measured by the immense and lasting effect of the work she laid down as the task of her institute. Like all great souls she won her success through much tribulation. Suffering of all kind was her lifelong portion. Her happy childhood was turned into one of sorrow by the loss of nearly all worldly goods by the robbery of her father's shop, a robbery which rendered the family almost destitute, so that Julie had to find work in the fields at harvest time, and after that she travelled the district to