

hundred similar ones. They give the true flavour of the whole feast of practical wisdom.

The volume is produced with the taste and care that one has come to associate with Sheed & Ward. The illustrations are aptly chosen, and include, as a Frontispiece, the admirable pencil portrait of the Cardinal which appeared in the *Sunday Express*, as well as the now famous cartoons by Giles (of the *Daily Express*) and Vicky (of the *News Chronicle*). The period covered is from 1944 to 1948. Since the latter date His Eminence has provided ample material for another volume of the same sort, notwithstanding his deeply regretted period of illhealth, and we look forward to its early appearance.

HILARY J. CARPENTER, O.P.

THE FAMILY AT BETHANY. By Alfred O'Rahilly. (Cork University Press: B. H. Blackwell; 12s.6d.)

This particularly welcome publication is best described as a *gospel study*, the first of a series of gospel studies which, we are glad to hear, are nearly ready. Would that more and more—layfolk and clergy alike—would read this work of a layman, take to such studies, and ceaselessly foster richly profitable commentaries on the Sacred Text. These studies are certainly devotional in the sense of well-informed, enlightened devotion; in reading them we are well away from the plaint of those who assert that in biblical commentaries they find hardly anything to raise their minds to God, nourish their souls, and foster their interior life, and therefore maintain that recourse should be had to a spiritual and so-called mystical interpretation.' (*Divino Afflante*, C.T.S. Edition, § 30.)

The method followed is: first, a literal translation of the passage chosen for study, then 'Notes on the text', calculated to bring out the full force of the literal rendering; then the 'study' in various sections, sometimes bringing out an apologetic aspect, or developments in topography (as with the tomb of Lazarus), or representations in early Christian art. The least satisfactory side of this book is the apologetic. There is an excessive preoccupation with effete situations; we do not live in an age that dotes on Renan's vagaries. More successful are developments on the Martha and Mary theme and piquant remarks on the failure of modern English law to recognise the place of contemplative life in society. Careful examination of the evidence leads to the conclusion that the Sinful Woman, Mary the sister of Martha, and Mary Magdalen are, in all probability, one and the same woman. It is clear that the author has put immense, and loving, labour into these 'studies'; and it is pleasing to see the wide range of his reading, his use e.g. of Matthew Black's *Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* or Donatus Baldi's *Enchiridion Locorum Sanctorum*. And the whole result reads passing well, were it not for some arresting idiosyncrasies of language, e.g. 'how could the Heart of Jesus resist this love-sped missive?' (p. 36); and sometimes a strange 'raciness',

e.g. 'Martha . . . having an active, extrovert mind, being a good caterer . . . naturally thought that this service was the best expression of her devotion. . . .' (p. 22). And few would care for the form 'Jair's daughter'. However, despite such limitations, we would welcome these and similar studies which can do so much to make us appreciate and love the 'very Word of God given to men under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost'.

ROLAND POTTER, O.F.

LA REGLE DU CARMEL ET SON ESPRIT, by François de Sainte Marie, O.C.D. (Editions du Seuil; n.p.)

In a certain sense it can be said that St Teresa and St John of the Cross tend to overshadow the Order to which they belonged; strange as it is, many study the works of these two great saints and know little or nothing of the rock from which they were hewn. That is a pity, because their teaching, though of wider application, is the product of the Carmelite way of life, and a knowledge of the basic elements of this life is from one point of view a useful introduction to the teaching of its giants. Père François has produced a handy little book of the Carmelite Rule; its eighteen short chapters occupy ten pages at the beginning. The rest of the book contains an excellent commentary which brings out clearly the spirit and authentic interpretation of this Rule.

It is called the primitive Rule because it is the first known Carmelite Rule given to the hermits of Mount Carmel by Albert Avogardo, Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, about the year 1209, approved by Honorius III in 1226 (1622 on p. 10 is an obvious misprint), touched up by the two Dominican revisers in 1247 and finally approved at Lyons in 1274. After various mitigations granted by Eugenius IV in 1431, blessed John Soreth strove for better observance, but it was left to St Teresa and St John of the Cross to effect a return to the primitive Rule though it caused the division of the Order into two autonomous branches—Calced and Discalced. The Discalced still follow the primitive Rule. Perusal of the Rule and this commentary bring out very clearly the contemplative and eremitical nature of Carmelite life, and its traditional medieval largeness of spirit. That is a point which requires stressing because Discalced (all but synonymous with 'reformed') has much of a post-Tridentine flavour about it, and to identify Carmelite life in its most authentic interpretation—that of the primitive Rule—with all the manifestations of the counter-reformation religious reform is to misunderstand it radically. Père François is to be congratulated on this book, a useful and even necessary companion to his earlier and no less admirable *Les plus vieux textes du Carmel*, which appeared in this same series (*La Vigne du Carmel*) in 1945.

LANCELOT SHEPPARD.