

infelicities—and they are numerous—only to urge the prospective reader to go beyond them. For the Archbishop's retreat is a magnificent survey of Catholic doctrine, solid, objective, truly theological. On this sturdy foundation he develops a spirituality which should be of the greatest assistance for the members of religious orders with whom he is primarily concerned. *By Jacob's Well* will be particularly useful for those who have to make a private retreat. It is comparable to the classic work of Bishop Hedley, and should take its place with it in the libraries of all religious houses.

The typography and general format of the publications of Messrs. Burns Oates and Washbourne are now so invariably excellent that one takes them for granted. Nevertheless one is glad to acknowledge this important factor in the presentation of the printed word. Even the most lofty spirituality can be assisted—or hindered—in its effect by the material circumstances of paper, print and design.

I. E.

MONSIEUR PORTAL—PRETRE DE LA MISSION 1885-1926. By H. Hemmer. (Bloud and Gay; n.p.)

The Abbé Portal, with Lord Halifax, was the inspirer and original driving force of the movement which led to the re-examination of Anglican Orders and later to the Malines Conversations. Throughout its course that movement was dominated by the excessive optimism of both men, an optimism which originated in a failure to grasp the real and complex nature of 20th century Anglicanism. Far too great an emphasis was laid on the possibility and the practicability of corporate reunion between the Church of England as such and the Catholic Church, and this led to the breakdown of the movement, after the last of the Malines Conversations, in the form in which they had sponsored it.

Their pioneer work however has not been lost and an eirenic spirit which they generated still persists and grows, though its activity is likely to take a more realistic form in the future. This life of M. Portal will be of value to all who are interested in the development of reunion work on eirenic lines, the more so because it has been edited by, though owing to his death it did not receive its final form from, M. le Chanoine Hippolyte Hemmer, himself one of the participants in the later stages of the Malines Conversations and a devoted friend of M. Portal.

The biography tells of a life of many-sided activity and great devotion but it is instructive in revealing how little knowledge M. Portal had of the Church of England. He treated it always as if it were to be compared with one of the autocephalous Eastern Churches with an unbroken 'Catholic' tradition, so that he felt justified in claiming that individual conversion ought to be consistently discouraged. He told a meeting of Anglo-Catholics in London (p. 80) that as far as sacramental doctrine was concerned there were no

irreconcilable differences between the Anglican formularies and the teaching of the Council of Trent; a half truth which clearly reveals his innocence with regard to the Anglican actuality, an innocence which some Anglo-Catholics, with far less justification are too prone to share. A well known conversation, on the occasion of his first visit to England, with Bishop Mandell Creighton, then of Peterborough, (p. 47) shows again how radical such misunderstandings could be. It is safe I think to say that reunion work will never again be pursued in this country in such an atmosphere of unreality, and M. Portal's life and work have this great value that they show clearly where the mistakes in the movement of which he was leader and inspirer were made.

HENRY STJOHN, O.P.

ODE IN HONOUR OF THE HOLY IMMACULATE MOST BLESSED GLORIOUS LADY MOTHER OF GOD AND EVER VIRGIN MARY. Translated from the original Greek, with a Foreword by Fr Vincent McNabb, O.P., S.T.M. With Notes by D.A. (Oxford, Blackfriars Publications; 3s. 6d.)

Legend connects the composition of this Ode in honour of our Lady with the events of the year 626, when the Patriarch Sergius led his people in interceding with the Mother of God to save Constantinople, the 'New Rome', then threatened by barbarian invasion just as the 'Old' had been two centuries earlier in the time of Pope Leo. Whether or no Sergius himself, or one of his clergy, be in fact the author of this liturgical hymn, found in the Byzantine Horologion, it is certain that it is one of the most beautiful of Marian devotions, and we are grateful to the late Fr Vincent McNabb for having given it to us in this lovely English rendering. May we hope that the *Akathistos* be not reserved solely for the private prayer of Western Catholics? It is eminently suitable for public recitation: priest and people alternating in the salutations of the *Oikoi*, and all joining in: 'Hail! Bride Unbrided'. This edition has been finely printed and set up by the Ditchling Press.

G. D. S.

OUR LADY OF LIGHT. Translated and abridged from the French of Chanoine C. Barthas and Père J. da Fonesca, S.J. (Clonmore and Reynolds, Dublin; 10s. 6d.)

This book is divided into five parts, The Apparitions, The Pilgrimage, The Seers, Miracles, Documentary Part. In my opinion the first and third parts—the Apparitions and the Seers—could well have been combined. The book is readable, useful and stirring.

We need a great deal of literature about Fatima, for the events which took place there are of vital importance. Someone has recently said that it looked as if things were now growing so desperate and men so unthoughtful of God that his Blessed Mother was taking