

In Mr Colgrave's translation the life reads easily and pleasantly and a wealth of incidental information about the Fen country and its people in the eighth century can be picked up. For those of more scholarly tastes Mr Colgrave provides an exhaustive historical and literary background and a complete textual apparatus. The original text edited here gives to the curious a nice example of how the Latin language may be tortured and yet survive.

U.F.

ST BERNADETTE. By Leonard von Matt and Francis Trochu. (Longmans; 30s.)

A meditative pause before opening this pictorial biography of St Bernadette is inevitable. The eyes that looked at the Blessed Virgin seem to look at you from the photograph of the saint on the dust-jacket. And inside what a glorious collection of pictures awaits you, and a text, too, that is worthy of the subject. The quality of the photographs, their selection and arrangement are beyond superlatives of praise.

Mr Leonard von Matt has used photographs of the days of Bernadette, but he has done much more than that. The past becomes the present through his ingenious camera-work; the scenes of Bernadette's childhood come alive; we can follow the unfolding of her life from the moment she was singled out by Our Lady until her perpetual rest in death. Present-day peasant girls take her place in localities that she knew, doing such things as she did. We visit houses she lived in; we enter convents where she grew in spiritual stature. We see the grotto as Bernadette knew it and as it later came to be. We can examine the clothes she wore on the momentous occasions. We can study the evidence of her educational progress, of her artistic ability. We can ponder the features of personalities in her life, the family, her parish priest, her formidable novice-mistress, government officials. And, in the end, we can linger over the exquisite loveliness of Bernadette asleep in death.

Mgr Francis Trochu's swiftly-moving commentary, combined with Mr von Matt's photographic skill, results in an original biography and a magnificent tribute to our Lady's little shepherdess.

KIERAN MULVEY, O.P.

A CEDAR OF LEBANON. By Paul Daher, O.L.M., S.T.L., PH.D. Translated by L. E. Whatmore, M.A., F.R.HIST.S. (Browne and Nolan; 15s.)

Charbel Makhoulf (Sharbel Makhluḥ) was a Maronite of the Lebanon who lived from 1828 to 1898. He became a monk, and spent twenty-three years as a hermit, a way of life still provided for in the Maronite

congregations of Antonian religious. From what is known of Father Charbel's life, it was indeed reminiscent of that of the fathers of the Desert. He left a reputation of great holiness, and his tomb at Annaya has been, and is, the scene of well-attested wonders. The growth of pilgrimages to this shrine of recent years is a notable phenomenon in the religious life of the Levant: not only Christians of all the ancient communions but also Moslems and Druzes resort thither. 'I am sure', says Father Voillaume, 'there are as many miracles of conversion as miracles of healing, if not more.' The cause of Father Charbel's beatification was introduced at Rome in 1954.

The book under notice is a translation of Father Paul Daher's account of Charbel Makhlof published in Paris in 1953. To it Father Whatmore has added some useful notes and two chapters of additional information, including particulars of the allegedly miraculous photograph of the hermit. There are some interesting illustrations, and—unusual in books of this kind—a good index. The publication of *A Cedar of Lebanon* is timely: there has been little written in English about Father Charbel, and the book will arouse interest in this modern example of Eastern Catholic holiness.

D.A.

SOUTHERN AFRICA: TODAY AND YESTERDAY. By A. W. Wells. (J. M. Dent; 30s.)

This is an enlarged new edition of the same writer's *South Africa: Planned Tour* which has already had a wide sale. It continues the form of a tour round the chief centres of European interest in South Africa and the Rhodesia-Nyasaland Federation, but has incorporated a large amount of the history of both countries, and pen-sketches of famous persons past and present, in connection with each locality. It is a mine of interesting information, and written in a vivid style that makes it very readable. Unfortunately the author has seen fit to mix what he considers to be of interest to the light reader and casual traveller with explanations of Southern African problems for students of human affairs. His dealing with the racial problem is dangerously superficial. Either it should have been left out altogether, or its gravity suggested. What he does quote is on the journalistic and political level, and it is astonishing to think that such matter could be put in without reference to the people who study the racial situation outside the political and commercial interests of the Europeans: the Afrikaans University institute *Sabra*, the Institute of Race Relations, the African, Coloured and Indian thinkers, the Churches. None of these, I think, would subscribe to his statement that 'only time can solve some of our racial problems'. They would rather hold the opposite, that this has been