

REVIEWS

clergy and people alike fulfilled together the duty of public prayer and praise. Only by slow degrees did the celebration of the Divine Offices by day and by night become the exclusive duty and privilege of the clergy and monastic Orders." The Divine Offices never have become the exclusive duty and privilege of the clergy and monastic Orders! The Breviary is the Prayer Book of the *Church*, and the Office is the *Church's* Prayer, and the participation of all in that prayer even if implicit is none the less real. It is the explicit recitation of that Prayer which is the *duty* of the clergy; it can be the *privilege* of all.

And our task to-day is to make that outward participation once more possible for the faithful. "No doubt the difficulties are great"—no doubt at all; "in fact they are insuperable in the case of the masses"—no difficulties are insuperable if attacked in a spirit of prayer and in the Church's name. The first task is to promote a greater understanding of what the Liturgy means; and that is where such books as this are helpful.

He who wishes to follow the Liturgical Services in the original language, will find the way made smooth for him by A. M. Scarre's *Liturgical Latin*. With moderate application a sufficient understanding of the Missal and the Breviary could be acquired in a very short time. The book is simple, clear, progressive; the student reads as he learns, for all the grammatical illustrations and examples used—and there are plenty of them—are taken from Liturgical Books.

Those already acquainted with Latin, Liturgical or Classical, will find in it a handy book of reference, though it would probably recommend itself the more to these were its vocabulary somewhat larger, the vocabulary given is far too small—the chief defect in an otherwise useful book.

JORDAN PEARSON, O.P.

POLITICS AND SOCIOLOGY

LA DESAGREGATION DE L'EUROPE. Essai sur des Vérités Impopulaires. Par Francesco Nitti, Ancien Président du Conseil des Ministres d'Italie. (Editions Spes; 25 frs.)

An interesting and disturbing book. The author gives a well-documented survey of post-war Europe; his discussion of Versailles is particularly interesting since as Italian Prime Minister he was in close touch with the principal personalities at the time. After an illuminating investigation of the origins and essence of

the dictatorships, Russian, German, Italian, of marxism, bolshevism, racism, nationalism, he passes to a criticism of the democracies. There are few evils which escape his notice. But the whole of this survey is destined to prove two leading contentions: that war is due not to economic causes, to any particular form of production, but to political passions; that any talk of economic planning is futile, whether it be the complete planning of the various forms of dictatorship, or the less sweeping attempts of the type of the *plan de Man*. *L'idée de faire des plans économiques correspond toujours à une ignorance pleine de fatuité*. The corporative idea is dismissed as a useless attempt to return to the past; it is, incidentally, curious and disappointing that Portugal, where the corporative idea seems to have had the best chance of a fair trial, is barely mentioned. The only hope, the author would have us believe, lies in the re-establishment of economic liberty and the open market. Now we may agree that economic nationalism means the impoverishment and perhaps the destruction of Europe; but are we therefore obliged to revert to a policy of completely free competition, to international *laissez-faire*? It is here that Signor Nitti is least satisfying. He is not blind to the evils of *laissez-faire*, to the stranglehold of big money on business, on the press, and so on; and he urges the duty of the State to remedy these evils. But it is not clear how, on his premises, this is to be done. *L'action la plus utile de l'Etat consiste moins à entreprendre qu'à empêcher, moins à gérer des entreprises qu'à les contrôler*. But how is this to be done without introducing that planning which is the author's bugbear? And of what use, ultimately, is national control in the general interest without international control in the general interest? The question of State control as a positive desideratum seems to be but an afterthought in this book; and it does not seem to have been integrated with the author's chief preoccupations, nor itself sufficiently explored. In a book which deals in such detail with every type of programme for the curing of our ills, this is a serious defect; for indeed we are here at the point on which all those who share the author's distrust of those programmes and at the same time are not blinded by the catchwords of economic liberalism must concentrate their attention.

To say that, constructively, this book is disappointing, however, is not to imply a denial of its value in other ways. On the contrary, the mass of evidence is handled with the ease of long and full acquaintance, and the criticism which it makes possible is most valuable.

GERALD VANN, O.P.