

## *Blackfriars*

forward honesty of mind and purpose. All this exaggeration defeats the very purposes and ideals Mr. Leys has at heart. It is a great pity that he indulges in so much exaggeration for, up to a point, there is a great deal of truth in his criticisms of the general system and policy of local Governments. Things move rapidly in new countries and many quite unexpected things happen. This book suffers from being destructive in nearly every paragraph and constructive in few or none. Mr. Leys blames the authorities (and says they are being egged on by the settlers) for withholding from the natives opportunities for their own systems of home life and native government. Again he criticises Sir Donald Cameron for giving the native councils so much independent power that sundry chiefs are able to impose their own wills upon the tribes they rule.

The natives are daily becoming more conscious of the inferiority of their position in the body politic and economic. They are rapidly learning—or imitating—many lessons from the white man. That is an inevitable change and calls for guidance—firm guidance—not mere weakness such as that of an inefficient governess in a schoolroom of children who would like to boss their own teachers.

**SAINT AUGUSTINE.** By Heinrich Hubert Lesaar; translated by T. Pope Arkell. (Pp. xii, 280. Burns, Oates & Washbourne; 6/-.)

Any attempt at making the great Bishop of Hippo better known must be welcomed and Mr. Pope Arkell has presented us with a readable translation of Lesaar's volume. But the author himself disarms criticism by saying in his *Preface* that as he proceeded in his task he realised more and more his own incompetence; he insinuates—he does not say so explicitly—that he felt he had not a sufficiently intimate acquaintance with St. Augustine's works. He has certainly left us with the impression that had he read more assiduously he would have written somewhat differently. For though interesting, this *Life of St. Augustine* contains many unguarded statements. For example: that Africa was converted by Roman missionaries (p. 4); that Augustine was the eldest son (p. 7)—is there any proof of this? that Monica wanted to have him baptized (p. 13); that his father became a catechumen 'probably for political reasons' (p. 20). The tendency to read between the lines and make the narrative more lively betrays itself repeatedly, e.g., pp. 14, 39, 44, 48, etc. Did Monica actually forbid Augustine to eat at her table? She thought of doing so, it is true. Was

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Augustine ensnared by Faustus or simply by his reputation (p. 59)? The Donatists are identified with the Circumcellions (p. 171) and an explanation of Megalius' hesitation to consecrate Augustine is given which it would be hard to substantiate (p. 176). No one knows what his difficulty was. The translation of the Latin is often questionable: 'Graecam grammaticam' does not mean 'the Greek language' (p. 17), nor were the 'Eversores' 'destroyers' (p. 28), 'rowdies' would be more apt; 'fantastical' is not the meaning of 'phantasma' as applied to Christ's body (p. 51). It is in no carping spirit that we point out these blemishes but in the hope that if a second edition is called for they may be corrected.

H.P.

L'EVANGILE DE JESUS-CHRIST, par P. M.-J. Lagrange. (Special edition in two volumes quarto, 1,000 francs. L'Imprimerie Vaucanson, 2 & 4 Rue Calliet, Lyon.)

Père Lagrange's *L'Évangile de Jésus-Christ* first appeared towards the end of 1928, and is now in its fourteenth thousand. No one who has read it will be surprised at the welcome it has received. Among works that may be classed under the label 'Lives of Christ' it is unique. Its author disclaims any intention of writing a Life of Christ after the usual model. For him the Gospels are the only Life of Christ that can be written, and it simply remains for us to understand them as well as we can. He professes to give us no more than a running commentary on the text of the Gospels arranged as far as possible in chronological order. The result is that, whereas Lives of Christ generally end by taking the place of the Gospels, with Père Lagrange's work we are impelled to read the Gospels at the same time, and it is with them that we end. And what insight we have gained in the meantime! It is an imperfect comparison, but there is one reader who, after consulting *L'Évangile de Jésus-Christ* on a Gospel passage, is always reminded of the solidity the photograph acquires under the properly focussed stereoscope.

The ordinary edition is in one volume and is published by Gabalda, of Paris. There has recently appeared a special edition 'à l'intention des bibliophiles' in two very fine quarto volumes, printed on 'vélín teinté de Montgolfier' and illustrated with twenty-three wood engravings by Ph. Burnot, and limited to six hundred copies. This edition is to be obtained from the Imprimerie Vaucanson of Lyons.

L.W.