

text, while the text is itself being read like a book; rather than a commentary to be consulted for a particular difficulty. Or the commentary can be read by itself, when the text is sufficiently present in the memory of one who knows it well. In this, it is like Monsignore's translation, which is much more a book to be read than a quarry for quotations.

Yet we shall not be disappointed if we come to Monsignore with our difficulties; we shall usually find an answer, and often one that makes us think again.

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH, O.P.

ST BERNARD ON THE CHRISTIAN YEAR. Translated and edited by A Religious of C.S.M.V. (Mowbray; 10s. 6d.)

Once again we have cause to be grateful to the religious of C.S.M.V. who has already given us *St Bernard on the Song of Songs* and *Lent with St Bernard*, for another 'bucketful from the same well', to quote her own words in the preface to the work under review. This 'well' is St Bernard's oral sermons, which were written down by others and revised by himself before being circulated.

The present selection is divided into two parts covering the Liturgical Year in Part One, and the Saints' Days in Part Two. The selections are well chosen so that the reader is given, in a pleasant translation, some of the best of St Bernard without having to plough his way through the long and often repetitive sermons of the Saint. We can enjoy, without danger of surfeit, some of those delightful metaphors and similes which seem to crowd one on top of the other in the unabridged sermons. The passage of the Bee, for instance, which flew to Nazareth 'and alighted on the Flower fragrant with perpetual maidenhood and settled there and stayed', or the passage in which, commenting on our Lady's compassion for the young couple's embarrassment in the Marriage of Cana, St Bernard says, 'if a man hold an apple for half a day, does not its fragrance stay with him the other half? How deeply, then, was she affected in her inward parts by Pity's power, in whom He rested for nine months!'

One cannot but regret that having been given readings for the Purification and for the Annunciation, we are given nothing for the great feast of the Assumption for which St Bernard provides plenty of material.

A. J. MEIKLE

THE ROSARY IN ACTION. By John S. Johnson. (Herder; 13s. 6d.)

It is not possible to read this book and then say the rosary just as you did before. Something happens. The rosary becomes more of a real piece of the spiritual life. I suppose this is because the book tells,

indirectly for the most part, what the author (a layman) is doing, and has done, about it, himself. He does not theorize merely, or unduly, but tells us how to say the rosary, in words which obviously spring from his own practice—like a good workman showing us how to do a job, by-passing the generalizations. Over and above this it is a book about the rosary, with plenty of information, historical and other, well presented with a little flavour of dry, engaging American humour; and there are many pages of helpful meditations on the mysteries. The foreword is by Fr R. W. Barron, O.P., Provincial Promoter of the Rosary Confraternity in the United States. A most recommendable book for everybody, but quite a necessary book for members of the Rosary Confraternity.

G. M. CORR, O.S.M.

CHRIST AND THE SAILOR. By Peter F. Anson. (Burns Oates; 13s. 6d.)

One sometimes gets the impression from certain technical books on the spiritual life that man's greatest obstacle to progress in his life of prayer is his imagination: that one must rise above the vivid picture-images which keep one at the level of the material, and get to grips with the Godhead against a background of white nothingness. For St Thomas a lively imagination is one of the factors contributing to a better understanding; and if a certain control is needed it is in order the better to use our imagination in the pursuit of knowledge.

*Christ and the Sailor* is certainly a book which nourishes the imagination. Description and detail abound: there are literally dozens of facts which one is glad at last to have learnt. The busy life of our Lord by the sea of Galilee and the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon is made to appear in a startlingly vivid way. There is on occasion a tendency to stretch the text in favour of a seafaring interpretation, but this is understandable in view of the author's intention to write an account of the apostolate of the Church among seafarers. The present work is intended as an introduction to an earlier book on the same theme: *The Church and the Sailor*. But if some are sent out to catch men without first having had the advantage of learning to catch fish (*Introduction*), this is because their mission is to catch *all* men and not merely seamen. Yet, as Archbishop Roberts says in the preface, seamen are 'destined in the nature of their calling, to become neglected', and it is good that we are reminded from time to time of our obligations towards them. The author's hope and prayer are assured: this little work will be of great use not merely to priests and laymen whose lives are dedicated to the sea apostolate, but to all who wish to enter more deeply into the meaning and the message of the Gospels. It is a pity that such a small work may not be read as widely as it deserves because of its price.

MURDOCH SCOTT, O.P.