

on for another fourteen years; the Spaniards, who had never commanded the Channel, were not blockaded nor were their revenues from the New World cut off, and the English enterprise of Portugal in 1589 ended in failure, almost as disastrous. But it was made clear that the religious unity of Europe was not to be re-established by force. The defeat left two religious ideas side by side—and the Pope not displeased that Spain, after all, was not God's chosen champion for the Church. It engendered a political myth more important than any contingent fact, of the victory of freedom for the weak over tyranny by the strong. A useful myth, if you also have the better ships and the better guns.

THOMAS GILBY, O.P.

THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE. By Morris West. (Heinemann; 16s.)

IRON IN THE VALLEYS. By John Parker. (George Ronald; 15s.)

Priests are familiar character in novels by now, and one suspects that they are sometimes introduced to emphasize a spiritual and moral dilemma which a story could otherwise not sustain. But Mr West's absorbing account of an English monsignor's investigation into the alleged sanctity of a deserter who was killed by the Communists in Calabria is in effect a study of the priestly character, freed by the impact of death (the monsignor is dying of cancer) and a living contact with the people who have been inexorably linked by the man who was killed. It is profound in its understanding of suffering and of the baffling modalities of faith, and at the same time tells us much of the miseries of the *Mezzogiorno*.

Mr Parker says that his book is based on the life of the heroic Father Carroll, parish priest of Merthyr, who built a church and established the Catholic Faith amidst the horrors of the industrialization of South Wales. It is an unpretentious record of simple duty, perhaps too arbitrarily pressed into the pattern of a novel, when biography would have been better.

I.E.

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## NOTICES

THE MASS, a Liturgical Commentary by Canon A. Croegaert, translated by J. Holland Smith (Burns and Oates, 2 volumes, 30s. each), is an admirable guide to the history of the Roman rite. But it is more than a work of antiquarian scholarship, for Canon Croegaert's commentary is always concerned with the Mass as a living reality, and his detailed account of words and actions alike is always alive to that pastoral understanding of the liturgy which animated the great reforms of Pope Pius XII. The whole work is to be warmly recommended to those who wish to make of the Mass the central spiritual reality it is meant to be.

THE MASS THROUGH THE YEAR, by Aemiliana Löhr, translated by I. T. Hale (Longmans, 2 volumes, 30s. each), is a guide to the liturgical year as it is revealed in the text of the Sunday Masses. More meditative than Canon Croegaert's book, it reflects the teaching of the German Benedictine Dom Odo Cassel in its patristic sobriety and in its recapitulation of the great Christian mysteries in terms of their liturgical expression.