

BLACKFRIARS

sense of supernatural'), for which the author's habit of enclosing phrases in inverted commas does not compensate.

For one thing one may be sincerely grateful: the book is a happy antidote to the spirit of Whiggism in history whether secular or religious; and Mr. McKerrow's main thesis is well worth studying if only for its challenge to the tendency to sink too somnolently into traditional ruts.

L.S.G.V.

PRECIS DE PATROLOGIE ET D'HISTOIRE DE LA THEOLOGIE. By F. Cayrée. Two vols. (Desclée, Tournai; 12.60 Belgas.)

These two volumes may be said without exaggeration to form the best manual for Catholic students. The first three sections culminate in St. John Damascene, St. Theodore the Studite, and the Iconoclastic controversy. The last section which is much briefer in treatment deals with the period between the 12th and 16th centuries. The value of the book lies in its attempt to be integral: the fathers are not treated as individuals who produced tiresome lists of works, but as men with a doctrine and a spiritual life. The bibliographies are sufficient although the author would have gained considerably if he had consulted more English Patrologists. There are certain lacunae—*e.g.*, the doctrine of St. Ignatius of Antioch on the Mystical Body and the doctrine of St. Irenaeus on the Eucharist are scarcely mentioned and we suspect that the author is too preoccupied by his own mystical doctrine—valuable though it is. On the whole, however, the book is a success, and the student who uses it carefully and follows out its references will provide himself with an admirable background for this most important locus in the study of theology.

A.M.

NOTRE-DAME A NAZARETH. (Editions du Cerf, Juvisy).

Three well-known writers contribute to this—the third—fascicule of *Les Cahiers de la Vierge*, 'une série de fascicules consacrés à la gloire de la Vierge Marie.' In the first fifty pages M. Maurice Brillant endeavours to help us to form a more exact idea of the village of Jesus and Mary and of the daily life lived there. It is, as he remarks, the office of the great painters to translate, so to say, this theme into song, but there is also need for a prose treatment of the subject (in other words, for a little archaeology and knowledge of the locality) if we are to learn more thoroughly the lesson enforced by the mystery of Nazareth. 'God chose what was weak and mean in the world,' but, in M. Brillant's excellent phrase, 'nous "embourgeoisons" la Rédemption, nous souhaiterions volontiers une Rédemption

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un peu plus décorative.' To English readers M. Brillant's 'prose' treatment will seem somewhat lyrical, but he has drawn on the best authorities for his facts, and his account should prove helpful. After him Père Lagrange, in ten very suggestive pages, emphasises another aspect of the same truth from the *Magnificat*, in which, as he says, Our Lady's mind 'dwells on just those attributes of God which revelation proclaims and history manifests.' Finally, in forty pages packed with thought, Père R. Bernard considers, as a theologian, 'la vie chrétienne de Marie à Nazareth,' that is, the life Mary lived in Christ, or, rather, that Christ lived in her. Altogether a very attractive and helpful little volume. It is illustrated with fourteen photographs of Nazareth and six reproductions of old masters.

L.W.

SUR LE DEVOIR D'IMPRÉVOYANCE. By Isabelle Rivière. (Editions du Cerf; 15 francs.)

That the much-extolled virtue of thrift easily degenerates into a spiritual vice is the theme of Isabelle Rivière's book. In the French peasant proprietor and *petit rentier* the piling up of savings year by year, the practice through life of a cautious prudence, becomes a veritable passion. Madame Rivière, widow of the brilliant critic and author of *A la Trace de Dieu*, has no difficulty in showing how this attitude of mind invades the spiritual sphere and results in a narrow and self-centred religion far indeed removed from a generous spending of self for the love of our Lord. Her exposition is closely worked out on the evangelical precepts, and gives proof of a devout and cultivated mind. The book might, however, be cut down with advantage. Needless to say, her lesson is not much needed for our spendthrift nation.

V.M.C.

EN LISANT LES PERES. By G. Bardy. (Bloud and Gay.)

This is a new and augmented edition of a classical work by an eminent Patristic scholar. Its aim is to give a general view of Christian life during the first centuries of the Church. In a preliminary chapter Canon Bardy defines the characteristics of the Fathers and shows how their spirituality is the norm for Christian piety. He then shows the content of the word Catholic as used for the primitive Church—Tertullian, Gnosticism, St. Cyprian: *Mater Ecclesia*. In the two following chapters he gives an account of the dogma of the Trinity and of Christology both in the life of the faithful and as they were worked out in contact with heresies. Then a valuable chapter on the Eucharist