

REVIEWS

Fr. Charmot undertakes to provide such a work, in his own words "midway between theology and piety," an "essay in religious psychology." And as such his book will not suffice. There are many statements in it hardly tolerable for their looseness in poetry, much less where theological exactitude is professed. For example:

"Mary is the sole spouse (*épouse unique*) of God and the only elect (*seule élue*)." (p. 17.)

"(Mary) contains in her perfection all the Church and all humanity (*toute l'Eglise et toute l'humanité*)." (p. 17.)

"... the Virgin was veritably creatrix (*créatrice*) with God of a new humanity." (p. 34.)

"In Mary the Church bears the stigmata. (*En Marie l'Eglise est une stigmatisée*)." (p. 68.)

"There are therefore in the Church two aspects: that of life and that of fecundity of life. The life is Christ. The fecundity of life is the Mother of Christ or Christ living in his Mother." (p. 84.)

"... The Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles as He descended the first time upon the humanity of Christ by the mediation (*médiation*) of Mary." (p. 81.)

These words as they occur in the book are partially explained by the context. But in general they are such as could only be explained by being explained away. As Theology they are seriously misleading. As Piety they would form an untrue piety. And they are such as would undoubtedly give that scandal to the non-Catholic which we should be so careful to avoid whenever possible. At least one of these charges could be upheld in the individual case of each quotation, and in some cases all of them.

There is much good matter in the book, but because of these grave defects it is not one that could be recommended . . .

Our Lady does not need more than her due praise.

FINBAR SYNNOTT, O.P.

RELIGION AND LIFE. By Aloysius Roche. (Burns Oates; 3s. 6d.)

TALKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE. By Aloysius Roche. (Sands; 3s. 6d.)

RULES OF LIFE. By Rev. Joseph Degen. (Burns Oates; 2s. 6d.)

LETTERS TO BART. By T. J. Sheridan, S.J. (Sands; 3s. 6d.)

All these four books are good. They approach life in a healthy traditionally Christian way. They do not deal with anything abstruse, and for the most part we agree with the way the authors have attempted to meet the exigencies of present-day Catholics in face of present-day work and play, temptations and difficulties. In other words they work out on certain points and to some extent the Catholic theory of life.

BLACKFRIARS

Father Roche has already in different ways shown his aptitude for helping people to meet as Catholics the moral rough and tumble of modern living. He has experience, sympathy, and a fair knowledge of the subjects most quarrelled over and considered to-day. In *Religion and Life* he considers singlemindedly and briefly a number of well-worth subjects in a fresh way—lucidly indicates the same attitude toward them, so that we may know how to think and act in those almost daily moments of personal crisis.

Talks for Young Women will interest more those whose business it be to counsel personally young women; and in fact the book has so much in it of sound advice applicable to all that young men and older persons may gain much from it. There are points in each book and generalisations on which we part from the author, but they are about matters concerning which he has a right to his opinion. We are grateful for both books.

The fine work of Father Degen at Coalville with the young working people of the district is known. *Rules of Life* is a gathering together of those simple but excellent little leaflets which at the end of their Sunday evening dances he distributed to these young persons. Nothing hard, nothing sentimental, no watered down Catholic Spirituality here; it drew those simple souls and it will continue to draw through the ages souls, simple, and not so simple, who have a taste for what is great.

In Father Sheridan's *Letters to Bart* we have something different. What a very easy, almost racy, style the author has, and how cleverly steeped he is in the traditions—talk, work and thought—of the Daggett milieu! These letters are artificial but one would never have guessed it from reading them. They are a very admirable piece of literary artifice and though we have one piece of what appears valid adverse criticism the author has really achieved something, created almost at the same time an apologetic and a work of art. The chief fault seems to be this that Daggett senior (the neo-convert who writes to his son in Hong Kong on home and Church matters) idealises the Roman Fisheries Industry in a way that is not often true to life, and on that account precisely Fr. Sheridan may defeat his own purpose in these letters. For these letters are to show the prejudiced middle and upper classes, what the Church really is, what kind of men her priests really are, what is her true method of fishing for souls, especially those classes of souls, and the rest. Mr. Daggett, happy man, found only the most ideal type of priest in his searchings for true religion. However, a most enjoyable book.

PETER PAUL FEENY, O.P.