

give the laity the impression of lacking the theological virtues. We do not always speak and act and confer the sacraments with that deep sense of faith they expect to find. Where there is too much appeal for money, Fr Michonneau senses a lack of hope or real trust in God. Needless to say, his attitude to money has been much criticised by some of his French fellow-clergy, who think it lacks prudence. But he still maintains that less appeals and less interest in money always bring their own reward, even in the material sphere. The dropping of many fees, collections and appeals at his own church has actually led to a raising of their income.

Another matter that Fr Michonneau earnestly contends for is the introduction or extension of community life among secular priests. He thinks that much of the lack of zeal and interest or knowledge comes from too much isolation. It is fear of this isolation which, so he thinks, is driving more vocations to the religious orders than to the secular priesthood, with the effect of a grave falling-off of secular vocations in France. It is hard to say how far all this applies in our own country. Not so many priests live alone in England as in France. It is, I believe, normal there for parish priest and curate to live apart. The general principle that priests should as far as possible co-operate, working in groups, is obviously a sound one. We might do well to consider whether it is possible to extend this in our own country. There are many works, e.g., courses of sermons, in which a group of priests can co-operate with great effect, if necessary by interchange of pulpits.

This is certainly a book to be read by priests engaged in parish work. If in any matter there is not full agreement, there will always be much spiritual stimulation.

H. FRANCIS DAVIS

**THE RULE OF ST BENEDICT** in Latin and English edited and translated by Abbot Justin McCann, Monk of Ampleforth. (Orchard Books; Burns Oates; 16s.)

The original Orchard Series, which was designed to provide an accessible text, not only of the English spiritual classics and especially of the English mystics, but also of works such as the *Imitation* and the *Introduction to the Devout Life*, which had exercised a deep influence upon English spirituality, contained no edition of the Rule of St Benedict, which had formed so many of our spiritual writers from St Bede and St Anselm and St Aelred to Bishop Hedley and Abbot Butler and Abbot Chapman. The new series of Orchard Books has repaired this omission in generous measure, in this fine piece of scholarship by Abbot Justin McCann. An eighteen-page preface gives a lucid summary of the historical background and textual history of the Rule; the Latin text is given, not in the *textus receptus*, but in a new critical text: where the 'late latinisms' of St Benedict are toned down, the authentic text is

given in a footnote; the translation opposite the Latin text is a fine piece of exact interpretation; and there are forty-four pages of notes, most of them explaining the readings adopted or the translation given, a few dealing with doctrinal or historical matters. Some may be disposed to wonder whether so technical a piece of scholarship, so valuable to the student of the Rule, is quite what is required for the less specialised reader and the wider spiritual purposes which the Orchard Books are designed to serve. No one could have been better equipped than Abbot McCann to give us in a dozen pages the clue to the life organised by the Rule, and to elucidate in notes the evolution of Benedictine practice and observance and the principles of Benedictine spirituality, as Abbot Savaton of Wisques has done with such succinct wisdom in the notes to his French translation of the Rule. But, as Abbot McCann writes, 'the Rule needs little commendation and is best left to speak for itself'. It could hardly do so more lucidly and more objectively than in this edition.

ÆLRED SILLEM, O.S.B.

**THIS IS CHRISTIANITY.** By Robert Nash, S.J. (Gill, Dublin; 9s. 6d.)

The main criticism of this book is its title. A series of short essays that appeared originally in Dublin's *Sunday Press* and which deal with more or less apologetic aspects of the Church should not claim such a title. The essays are pleasing but explanatory and defensive of what is demanded of Catholics today. Holy Communion is a 'prescription from the divine Physician'—yes, indeed, but surely *that* is not Christianity.

C.P.

**THE CHURCH IN THE NEW SOCIAL ORDER.** By Emil Brunner. (S.C.M. Press; 3s. 6d.)

**SOCIAL AND CULTURAL FACTORS IN CHURCH DIVISION.** By C. H. Dodd, G. R. Cragg, Jacques Ellul. (S.C.M. Press; 2s. 6d.)

Dr Brunner's paper covers familiar ground. He maintains that the primary task of the Church is the Kingdom of God and not social reform. None the less it is the duty of the Church to resist the modern tendency to depersonalisation, and to do this Christians must work out the theology of the community. Dr Brunner commits himself to the extraordinary statement that 'the Ekklesia is in no way an institution, an order' which, unless the words 'institute' and 'order' are mere terms of abuse, does not harmonise with what he says about group and cell. Emphasis on the dynamic and indefinable can lead to quite as much distortion as exclusive preoccupation with the static.

The small booklet on non-theological factors in Church division has no great intrinsic interest for the Catholic and will be of use only to those who have a special interest in the problems of Protestant divisions.

IAN HISLOP, O.P.