

ANNUAL GUIDE TO RELIGIOUS BOOKS

Of the nearly 1,000 religious books published during the past year, SR reviews and describes in the following pages approximately 150 that are especially noteworthy. Another group of religious books will be reviewed in our issue of April 10.



Recommended books for Lenten reading by Catholics, selected by Maria Augusta Trapp, head of the Trapp Family Singers, are listed on the opposite page. Reviews of Catholic books appear on this and the three following pages. (The sketch is of St. Patrick's Cathedral, New York.)



Recommended books for Lenten reading by Protestants, chosen by Dr. Nels F. S. Ferré, professor of systematic theology in the Vanderbilt University School of Religion, are listed on page 44. Reviews of Protestant books appear on that and the following four pages. (The sketch is of Riverside Church, New York.)



Recommended books of Jewish interest, selected by Professor Ludwig Lewisohn of Brandeis University, are listed on page 49, followed by reviews of books in that field. (The sketch is of the Temple Emmanuel, New York.)

A checklist of recent religious books in all fields, compiled by Siegfried Mandel, begins on page 52.

The Corporals of God

"The Manner Is Ordinary," by John LaFarge (Harcourt, Brace. 408 pp. \$4.75), and "Obedient Men," by Denis Meadows (Appleton-Century-Crofts. 308 pp. \$3.50), are the autobiographies of two Roman Catholics, the former an American who has served with distinction in the Society of Jesus, the latter a Briton who was a member of that Order and left.

By Anne Fremantle

THE tragedy of the nineteenth century, Pope Leo XIII averred, was that the workers were lost to the Church. Father John LaFarge's long life has been spent in a tireless attempt to make the twentieth century redeem this tragedy of the nineteenth, at least on this continent. For charity is no substitute for justice withheld, as St. Augustine pointed out fifteen hundred years ago, and Father LaFarge's constant efforts to further the cause of social justice, his devotion to the welfare of the industrial worker, of the Negro, of the underprivileged everywhere, his profound concern for race problems, are an eloquent restatement, in our own day and age, of that truth. Alas, many Christians often forget that the Church considers itself historically as the appointed defender of the rights of man.

Of life in the Society of Jesus its founder remarked that "the manner of living is ordinary." In the case of John LaFarge, a member of that Society, whatever the manner may be, the matter is not. The son of a famous American artist (one of the first to understand and appreciate Japanese and Chinese art in this country), brother, uncle, and cousin of others almost equally famous, John LaFarge includes Benjamin Franklin and Commodore Perry among his forbears. One of nine brothers and sisters, he grew up at Newport, Rhode Island, and had a glorious childhood, swimming, sailing, scrambling over the gorse-gold dunes. He devoured the classics, whether of music, literature, or painting, and was in every sense of the word a very well-nourished boy. Before he was twelve he already felt he wanted to become a priest. In his choice of Harvard as a university, as well as in his voca-

tion, he had the warm support of Theodore Roosevelt and the devoted affection of Henry Adams, two of his parents' closest friends. He is candid enough about how unlikely, humanly speaking, it was that he should be a priest. "The priest must be a man of the people, all things to all men, and personally I was somewhat reserved and fastidious." He was delicate, and the life is demanding physically; he was self-centered, and the life is one of total dedication. "But the conviction grew it was something God wanted of me."

AFTER a stimulating and healthy life as a seminarian in Innsbruck, John LaFarge became first a priest, and then, in America once more, a Jesuit. His assignments have been varied: on Blackwell's Island he assisted over 3,000 dying people to final peace within eight months; for fifteen years, working among rural Negroes and whites, in Southern Maryland, he had to drive miles in a buggy to say mass, snow-whitened in winter, dust-whitened in summer. Here he counted a whippoorwill calling 375 times, and snakes fell from the church roof as he preached. Here he was suspected, by his Protestant colleagues, of making moonshine. Had he not a large bin of corn for his horse, a copper kettle, a baptismal font, a good supply of tubing with which he had unsuccessfully tried to heat the church, and an abundance of soft-drink bottles left over from a recent church festival? As editor of *America* during World War II he hoisted as a "visible sign" the seven-point "pattern for peace," in subscribing to which Catholics, Protestants, and Jews could insist on a minimum of ethics between peoples as between people. Politics *must* be a moral activity, Father LaFarge declared weekly in his editorials, to all who would read.

Father LaFarge founded and organized the Catholic Interracial Councils, where Negroes and whites meet weekly to work together and to try to see their joint problems together. He also helped to get the National Catholic Rural Life Conference started, and was tremendously active in what he calls the "green revolution." He was one of the founders, too, of the Liturgical Arts Society, and the National Liturgical Society, which exist to empha-

size the concreteness of Christian life and the participation of *things* as well as people in the sacramental life.

Father LaFarge's influence has been on a national scale. He is at least in part responsible for the anti-Communist emphasis in the CIO, and for the important participation of Catholics in the labor movement here. Industrial peace, industrial justice, he has always insisted, are the only alternative to Communism, which is inevitable, if the golden rule is not equally practised by employers and employed.

BBREATHE in, breathe out! Breathe in the world's beauty; breathe out justice and mercy. For this was each one of us made. But what it costs to be as successful at being just what one is meant to be, as is Father LaFarge, Denis Meadows, in his autobiographical "Obedient Men," clearly shows. As reticent and British about what goes on inside as Father LaFarge himself, Mr. Meadows at least tells us much about the outside: the discipline, the obedience, the continual petty annoyances that make up the common life; the agony of never being alone, of always giving up one's own will, always, always; the homesickness, the boredom, the cold. For ten years Mr. Meadows was a Jesuit, and left with full permission of his superiors to marry and live happily ever after. His young agony of chilblains from washing in icy water; the endless study, the long long walks in the bitter wind—these were all part of the slow climb towards a supernatural way of life. And the excellent joys, too, the swimming, the friendships, the work, physical and mental; the habits of prayer, the sharpening of awareness, the practice of self-examination, are all shown, not catalogued.

Mr. Meadows, too, has a nice sly humor. He can smile, though not unkindly, at his over-earnest fellow student, who, after a biology class on reproduction, could say with fervor: "I used to think that sort of thing was all evil, but now I cannot think of any more telling argument for the existence of God than the sexual system of the rabbit"; or at his own attempts to practise humility by saying his father was a peasant when he was a publisher. It is as though Mr. Meadows in his book gave the recipe from which Father LaFarge had concocted his most excellent dish. But of the fire that is so necessary to both cook and cuisine, Mr. Meadows gives little hint. Whereas Father LaFarge tells us in every line that we can "only be redeemed by fire from fire."



Maria Augusta Trapp, head of the Trapp Family Singers, has drawn up the following list of suggested reading for Roman Catholics during the Lenten period.

Catholics during the Lenten period.

WITH THE BIBLE THROUGH THE CHURCH YEAR. By Richard Beron, O.S.B. Pantheon Books. \$4.95.

A DOCTOR AT CALVARY. By Pierre Barbet, M.D. P. J. Kenedy & Sons. \$3.

MARY MAGDALENE. By R. L. Bruckberger. Pantheon Books. \$3.

THE CHURCH TODAY. The Collected Writings of Emanuel Cardinal Suhard. Fides Publishers Assn. \$4.75.

A TREASURY OF CATHOLIC THINKING: From St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas to Jacques Maritain and Pius XII. Edited by Ralph L. Woods. Thomas Y. Crowell Co. \$5.

SIGNS OF LIFE. By François Louvel, O.P. and Louis J. Putz, C.S.C. Fides Publishers Assn. \$2.75.

THE GREATEST FAITH EVER KNOWN. By Fulton Oursler and April Oursler Armstrong. Doubleday & Co. \$3.95.

IN THE TRACK OF THE GOSPEL. By Aloysius Roche. P. J. Kenedy & Sons. \$3.

CHRISTIAN ETHICS. By Dietrich von Hildebrand. David McKay Co. \$6.

PSYCHOANALYSIS AND PERSONALITY. By Joseph Nuttin. Sheed & Ward. \$4.

THE INTERIOR CARMEL. By John C. H. Wu. Sheed & Ward. \$3.25.

MARY MAGDALENE'S STORY: Too rarely does a book seem to explode in a reader's hands. But most assuredly this is true of Father Raymond-Léopold Bruckberger's "Mary Magdalene" (Pantheon, \$3). The brilliant French Dominican is almost flippant in the early pages, as when he says of Phryne, the Greek courtesan: "She had style, that girl, great style and a great deal of money."

This breezy approach, accompanied by a deceptive air of informality, soon has the reader racing along, chuckling at such remarks as: "Herod likewise had political reasons; politicians always have political reasons, and those who oppose them are always accused of playing politics."

Reading for Catholics

WE AND THE HOLY SPIRIT. By Leonce de Grandmaison. Fides Publishers Assn. \$3.75.

PRAYING THE GOSPELS. By Rev. Lawrence G. Lovasik, S.V.D. The Macmillan Co. \$4.

MY FRIENDS THE SENSES. By Charles-Damian Boulogne. P. J. Kenedy & Sons. \$3.

I WANT TO SEE GOD. By Pater Marie-Eugène, O.C.D. Fides Publishers Assn. \$5.75.

LITTLE BOOK OF ETERNAL WISDOM AND LITTLE BOOK OF TRUTH. By Henry Suso. Translated by James M. Clarke. Harper & Bros. \$3.

TERESA OF AVILA. By Marcelle Auclair. Pantheon Books. \$4.95.

SAINTS AND OURSELVES. Edited by Philip Caraman, S. J. P. J. Kenedy & Sons. \$2.50.

LAMBS IN WOLFSKINS. By Eddie Doherty. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$3.25.

THE AMERICAN MARTYRS. By John A. O'Brien. Appleton-Century-Crofts. \$3.50.

TO SEE PETER. By Richard Baumann. David McKay Co. \$3.

STAR OF JACOB. By Helen Walker Homan. David McKay Co. \$3.75.

SET ALL AFIRE. By Louis De Wohl. J. B. Lippincott Co. \$3.

BARBE ACARIE. By Lancelot C. Sheppard. David McKay Co. \$3.50.

PAUL, THE APOSTLE. By Guiseppe Ricciotti. Translated by Alba Zizzamia. The Bruce Publishing Co. \$7.50.

SAINT BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX. By Watkin Williams. The Newman Press. \$7.

But subtly the tone changes and, as we find Mary Magdalene totally dedicated to the life of Christ, the ominous future arises: "Mary Magdalene loved Christ with all the ardor of her great soul, but now she saw him only in the shadow of the Cross." The great drama draws to its climax, with Magdalene's love always close to Christ. "More than any other saint," says the author, "the Virgin Mary apart, she was associated with Christ's natural and supernatural destiny."

"Mary Magdalene" is the freshest, most stirring study of a saint—and, more extraordinary, of a saint who seemed already overemphasized—that has appeared in recent times. Father Bruckberger combines the artist's in-