

## *Blackfriars*

DE DIMISSIONE RELIGIOSORUM. By P. Joseph Palombo, C.S.S.R. (Turin: Marietti, 1931. Pp. xvi, 296. Lire 12.)

This book is to be recommended especially to religious superiors. Besides the main subject suggested by the title, the subsidiary matter also is well treated. The historical prologue is perhaps less satisfactory than other parts of the book. Sufficient account has not been paid to the influence exerted on the growth of the law by the constitutions of Gregory XIII, A.D. 1583, 1584, and of Benedict XIV, A.D. 1749, in which persons under simple vows began to be recognised as religious. Likewise the historical conspectus, particularly of the early period, is very inadequate, and it is unfortunate that the one text from Gratian's Decree, which is twice cited within the space of two pages, should have been lifted from St. Jerome's Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians. Besides being of little legal value in themselves, these borrowed words are taken out of the context in which they were placed by Gratian himself. There are in fact in Gratian other passages which illustrate the point much better, one of them being a portion of a letter from Alexander III to the Bishop of London, A.D. 1180. Again it is impossible to make a survey from the historical standpoint without much labour, unless one is led to the primary rather than to the secondary sources. This is particularly true of the 'Decretum' which as a collection never received any authoritative sanction giving it the force of law.

In the first chapter, in a brief but satisfactory study, the reader is made acquainted with the principles underlying the penal law of the Church. Other subsequent sections, such as those concerning officials and their duties, the mode of administering canonical admonitions, the intervention of the Council which is required for the validity of processes, the grounds for rejecting candidates for both first and final profession, all give practical information which is indispensable, and which may well have frequent application. The expositions and commentaries on the existing legislation are most praiseworthy, though on one or two points of interpretation and explanation we may be permitted to differ. Thus in cases of instant dismissal by local authorities, the need of recourse to the Holy See would not appear to be with a view to obtaining a dispensation from the common law, but because the Holy See alone is the competent authority to issue a decree in such cases, which will carry with it a canonical effect. The action to be taken by lesser authorities is only a provisional measure applicable in cases of emergency, which can be revoked or confirmed by the Holy See.

## Book Reviews

Again, granted that reiterated warnings are the test of legal incorrigibility demanded by both positive law, and the practice of the Congregation, it is difficult to understand how it can still be maintained that such warnings are not *per se* required. Further the local superior and not the Provincial would seem to be the only person in a position to judge of the effect produced by canonical admonitions and salutary penances.

The adverse criticisms which we have ventured to offer are in no sense intended to detract from the general worth of the treatise, in which the Canon Law is handled in a masterly way, and which has the merit of never leaving the student in suspense, but a definite and final conclusion is always given which he may apply for himself.

A.F.

MANUALE DE ECCLESJARUM RECTORIBUS. By Laurentius M. Agius, O.E.S.A. (Turin, Marietti, 1931. Pp. 118. Lire 5.)

Although this handbook is mainly concerned with the duties that belong to rectors of churches, it should nevertheless be of practical value also to the clergy as a whole. It is as important to know the limitations of one's own rights, as it is to realise one's own obligations, and this can only be achieved by a knowledge of the rights of others, and the consequent appreciation of their claims in justice on us. Failures to recognise this truth are sometimes the cause of dissensions between Ordinaries, parish priests, and rectors, but acquaintance with the contents of this book should put an end to most of them. In six chapters the reader is introduced to the latest legislation, to be found in the Code of Canon Law and elsewhere, which it is necessary to know for the satisfactory running of a church or chapel to which a parish is not attached, but which normally lies within the boundaries of a parish. It is due to this awkwardness of local situation that apparent overlappings of jurisdiction occasionally occur, and to the detriment of those concerned. Yet there is absolutely no need for the rector to encroach on the parish priest's sphere of activities, nor for the parish priest unduly to control and curtail the ministry of the neighbouring rector, if each knows precisely the limitations of the work allotted to them by the Church, and the extent of their respective powers. Particular emphasis is laid on obligations which may easily be overlooked, such as the need of remote and proximate preparation even before embarking on catechetical instruction, and the duty of explaining the Sunday Gospel, which duty may be enforced by the Ordinary by stringent measures. Other important