

Blackfriars

mention, so far as we could discover, of the English Benedictine Douai School.

Moreover, in the space allotted to English Catholic items, it seems to us that due proportion has not always been observed. In the notice of Oxford, for instance, there are palpable errors of commission and omission. We may be permitted to note one of the omissions, the absence of any reference to the Dominican Priory. But the whole account seems to us topsy-turvy and calculated to mislead the uninitiated.

Another impression is this, that the articles on theological topics are so brief as to be of little use save for the most casual reference. The average length for such subjects as Indulgences, Infallibility, Predestination, Redemption, is half a column. The work is in fact rigidly concise and condensed, and granted the editors' determination to cover so vast a field in so small a compass, the articles could not be longer. But we believe that room might be found for development in the substantive articles by discarding unnecessary ones, of which we have noted many. The editors wish to include everything of Catholic interest; but we think they cast their net too wide when they include a list of English place-names of a Catholic character. So also the article on 'Penny' described as 'a coin mentioned in the New Testament.' It might be possible, by jettisoning such cargo, to make more room for really important matters.

We have been critical, but we think not censorious. We are far from any desire to depreciate the Dictionary. We hope in fact that it will go to many editions and in each become more satisfactory. We believe it to be eminently fitted to be a work of ready reference for the lay Catholic who does not want to go far into theological questions, and for the busy priest in search of quick information. That description may not tally with the claims made on the title-page, yet it indicates a very useful and valuable compilation. If the reader wishes to have by him a concise dictionary of ready-reference for Catholic subjects, let him buy this book.

J.M.

RETREAT: A STORY OF 1918. By Charles R. Benstead.
(Methuen; 7/6).

This is a war story chiefly about a Church of England chaplain who is posted to an artillery unit and arrives in the war area just in time to be caught in the big retreat of March 1918, which has been described as the biggest massed onslaught in the history of the world. The present reviewer, who served as

a chaplain to the Forces during the memorable Fifth Army retreat of 1918, has read the book with particular interest; and it seems to him that Mr. Benstead has managed to communicate the atmosphere of those unforgettable days with real skill. A recent correspondence in *The Daily Telegraph* informed us that the author has, under the guise of fiction, described characters who made up the personnel of a particular artillery brigade, and that he has reported incidents and conversations which, while they leave no doubt as to the identity of those concerned, are so distorted and exaggerated that those who identify themselves have reason to complain. It is reassuring to hear that the Padre was not the poor, feckless creature who is travestied in this book; and the original of O'Reilly, the M.O., is a Catholic, though Mr. Benstead does not even hint at the fact, but makes the doctor speak of religion in a way that no one calling himself a Catholic would speak. The author nowhere mentions the Catholic chaplain—a French *curé* is brought in, and there are some fatuous comments on the military 'discipline of Rome' on page 228—and one wonders whether Mr. Benstead ever came across a Catholic padre during his army experience. He would have found that the C. of E. padre was at a disadvantage compared with the Catholic priest. The difference was chiefly noticeable to the outsider in their respective flocks. The Catholic soldier normally *wanted* the priest, or anyhow understood the priest's ministrations. The High Church padre, though he might burn with zeal to shrive and anoint, did not always meet with understanding or response, and C. of E. padres generally, High and Low, found themselves *religiously* at a loose end. They were as brave on the whole as any other category in the Army, but, as Mr. Benstead says, it was the man that counted more than his faith or his mission. With the Catholic priest it was not quite the same: his work was greater than himself and personality counted for less. I should strongly recommend Mr. Benstead to read *The Life of Father Doyle*.

MACEDONIAN MEMORIES. By Henry C. Day, S.J., H.C.F., M.C. With a Preface by Field Marshal Sir George F. Milne. (Heath Cranton; 12/6.)

Perhaps Mr. Benstead might be recommended to read this book by another chaplain who certainly stands in marvellous contrast with the tragic padre depicted in *Retreat*. There is nothing sad or tragic or gloomy about Father Day: he is breezy, hail-fellow-well-met and brimful of good spirits and