

but also to provide a short account of their historical development. There are some helpful diagrams, and several excellent photographs illustrating the text.

Even those whose knowledge of sewing is comparatively slight should feel encouraged by this book to attempt to make something for their church, whilst those who wish to go more deeply into the subject will find a considerable bibliography appended, though it is unfortunate that so many of the books listed are out of print.

ROSEMARY HEDDON

GOSPEL MEDITATIONS. By Alfred O'Rahilly. (Browne and Nolan; 18s.)

This book is only worth reviewing here because of its foreword. This is quoted extensively on the dust-jacket, and in such a place it could well be a snare, as it is certainly a delusion, though by no less a person than Father Martin D'Arcy. The great scholarship of the author is emphasized, the high quality of his studies in this field are pointed out, he is compared to Lagrange and Guardini. His historical and exegetical scholarship, we are told, makes the Gospel text speak to us. These qualities I would not deny to Professor O'Rahilly, but they do not appear in this book. In the author's own words from the preface, 'This unpretentious volume has no claim to scholarship'. It is the foreword that is pretentious. The hundred incidents dealt with are treated gently and simply. Thoughts for meditation are not forced upon the reader, but are offered him for his attention. These stories from the Gospels are put in a popular idiom; they are just saved from vulgarity by the author's good taste. It is very doubtful whether the way of offering historical background has any value at all. Will it be of any help whatever to the reader for whom this book is intended to be told that Anna (called 'a devout old lady'), had lived through such events as the death of Alexander Jannaeus, of Queen Alexandra, the advent of Herod, etc.? Do not the simple words of the Gospel itself give a far stronger impression of what she must have been? The 'scholarship' shoved in in this way seems very much a case of blinding with science. In places points are brought out very clearly, in others they are forced out rather falsely. It is not at all a bad book, but it is also not at all what Fr D'Arcy would lead us to believe. G.R.H.



NOTICES

A GREAT many books and pamphlets have appeared this year to celebrate the centenary of Lourdes. We list some of them here with comments on their usefulness to our readers.