

## REVIEWS

LE GUIDE DANS L'ANNEE LITURGIQUE. Par Pius Parsch. Traduit de l'allemand par l'Abbé Marcel Gautier. 5 vols. (Vol. I, 20 frs.; Vols. II and III; 18 frs. each; Vols. IV and V in the press. Editions Salvator, Mulhouse, Haut-Rhin.)

The Church formed her liturgy in an annual cycle so that, as the Mystical Body of Christ, she might re-live His life. Under this form she presents her members with the life of Christ as He lived it on earth and as He continues to live it in His saints, in order that each member may become an ever more perfect reflection of Him. Thus the faithful need not, in their spiritual lives, live a hand-to-mouth existence, seeking perfection from day to day in a series of disconnected points; they are provided with a unification of the day, the week, the year, their whole life, unfolding and developing in conformity with Christ their model. Fr. Parsch's treatment of the liturgical year not only brings out the special liturgical note of each day, but shows the inter-relation and unification of the whole year. The work is in a more convenient and popular form than Schuster's *Sacramentary* or Guéranger's *Liturgical Year*, and it will be useful to almost every type of Christian. To the priest it gives a focus-point for his Office and his Mass as well as for his sermons; to the layman who assists at Mass, an excellent preparation; to the layman who is unable to go to Mass, a five-minute daily reading which will keep him in touch with the life and prayer of the Church. These volumes, built up round the two central points of Christmas and Easter, give the main liturgical features of each day both for the Season and for the saints, the life of each saint being a model of conciseness. The week as well as the season has its special preface showing the connection and harmony with the whole cycle. It is indeed a most practical guide to the liturgical year, and the fact that in Germany it has already gone through eleven editions is a proof of its value.

We may perhaps offer one criticism which applies also to the majority of liturgical books. Originally the public worship of the Church was fashioned according to the model of a majestic Christ to whom was due great reverence. It was left to private devotion to penetrate further to closer and more personal relations with Our Lord. To-day, however, this latter aspect has to a large extent entered into the public, if not official, worship of the Church. The author of this Guide has very rightly insisted on the original liturgical figure of Christ, the byzantine *Christus regnans*, but he omits almost entirely the more personal Christ, the friend and lover. The modern liturgical movement however can only hope for success if, instead of being merely a reaction, it contrives to unite these two conceptions, showing the liturgy to be a harmony of worship and love. This work would have been more

## BLACKFRIARS

perfect had it attempted such a synthesis, for it would have guided its readers to a complete Christ-life, and one more adapted to present needs.

CONRAD PEPLER, O.P.

CHRISTIANITY AND RACE. By Dr. Johannes Pinsk. Translated by C. M. R. Bonacina. (Essays in Order, New Series No. 2.) (Sheed & Ward; 2/6.)

How be at once 100 per cent. Roman Catholic Christian and 100 per cent. Nordic Aryan German? This, the overwhelming problem of the race-proud Catholic in the Third Reich, is the subject of Dr. Pinsk's startling essay. Not, it might be thought, a problem of such concern in English-speaking countries as to justify translation. Yet, though we have no Aryan fanatics to reproach us incessantly with the Jewishness of Jesus and the Latinity of Catholicism, the problem of reconciling fidelity to one's own race, blood and culture with fidelity to a Church which, however Catholic, is thoroughly Latin in its outlook, constitution, language and liturgy is one which is felt in one way or another by all non-Latin Catholics.

Dr. Pinsk's main thesis is that "As the body of Christ was that of a Jewish man, so is the bodily manifestation of the Spirit of Christ in the Church that of the Roman-Hellenistic culture." This thesis, though strangely worded, contains much pertinent truth. It is historic fact that the Son of God assumed a particular (and not a universal) human nature of a Jewish Mother, and that His Church has been intimately bound up in the course of her history with Graeco-Roman culture, to which she has given much and from which she has received much. But Dr. Pinsk's approach is as inadmissible as it is fantastic. His Christology comes at times dangerously near to Docetism, Monophysism and Apollinarianism alternately, and he has failed entirely to mark the world of difference between the hypostatic union of human nature to the Son of God and the *unio mystica et accidentalis* which binds the members of the mystical Body. Reviewers in Germany have already drawn attention to these grave defects, and it is to be regretted that they have been allowed to appear unaltered in the translation.

When the author leaves theology to describe the rôle of the Nordic in the Church and the reciprocal function of Catholicism as corrective to the inherent defects of *Germanismus*, he is more instructive. *Deutsch heisst protestantisch*: the charge is not without truth, but the inborn *Eigenmächtigkeit* and "protestantism" of the Germanic character have their own specific and vital contribution to make to the life of the universal Church. The English reader will be inclined to smile—or yawn—at the Herr Doktor's humourless effort to extract the quintessence of the