

Church, or official pronouncements which may have a bearing on the subject.

Although I have only recently become a student social worker, I have already heard from several people eminent and justly respected in this field that being a 'good friend' to a person in trouble is one of the aims of social casework and until this relationship is achieved one is never likely to gain their full confidence and co-operation. For this reason, as well as a general interest in the Church's teaching on the subject, I would be glad to know more about it than I do at present—and at present I know practically nothing.

Yours

KAY WELLS



REVIEWS

NEGLECTED SAINTS. By E. I. Watkin. (Sheed and Ward; 12s. 6d.)

The neglected saints whose lives are here very ably sketched in 210 pages are St Martin of Tours, St Bruno, St Hugh of Lincoln, Blessed John of Montmirail, Blessed Jordan of Saxony, Blessed Diana D'Andalo, Blessed Osanna of Mantua, St Thomas of Villanueva, Blessed Anthony Grassi. Those of them who are actually canonized are the less neglected, naturally, but the author's portraits of them have a new look, and one cannot help agreeing with him, very largely, that it is the true look: from this point of view they also have been greatly neglected. St Martin of Tours especially comes out a man instead of a piece in a tableau.

The stories are arrestingly told. They grip the attention and hold it. That would be enough, and in these days a distinction. But there is much more to this book. A richly stored mind, a philosopher's flair for the general truth (here, trait of character) behind the particular incident, an eagerness to use single things and words as illustrations of principles, have turned the portrait gallery into a series of lantern lectures, casual, penetrating, very attractive indeed, about holiness, and what a saint really is.

Sometimes one cannot resist the suspicion that an axe is being ground, but then which philosopher, or theologian, does not carry around his little fascis and put his tool on whatever grindstone he finds? That St Martin could conceivably give 'precedence in his mind' to St Agnes over our Lady, is to me incredible, and I don't believe it. The nature of miracles, explained and illustrated, *passim*, leaves one with a question or

two. Conscientious objection (St Martin) may leave some readers wondering. The reflections on the mutual attraction of saints like St Francis de Sales and St Jane de Chantal will, I dare say, be of great help to some readers.

But the notable thing about the book is the system (defended only at the end, which was very wise) on which it is written. It is, briefly, as follows: make up your mind what is meant by really being a saint: exclude everything extraordinary except what you are fairly compelled to believe: admit that real saints have real faults, and don't be afraid to relate them: then look at the evidence and put a fair construction on it. It is historical criticism applied to the soul-life of real persons. Its strength is obvious. Its weakness is the unpredictability of the individual and of God's ways of working. But if there is a correct pattern for such hagiographical work I think Mr Watkin has come very near to drawing it and following it out in this book.

G. M. CORR, O.S.M.

OUR CHILDREN AND THE MASS. By Rev. A. de Sauveboeuf. (Challoner Publications; 4s. 6d.)

At a time when all Catholic teachers are seeking a solution to the problem of the leakage, this welcome handbook of practical suggestions and methods of teaching children to appreciate the Mass will be found an invaluable aid.

While it is obvious to all that the great need is for children, even quite young children, not only to know what is happening at the principal parts of the Mass but also to be able to recognize the action as it is in progress, the value of this little book is that it attempts to solve the problem of ways and means. It is worth while realizing that the main cause of boredom at Mass on the part of children is their inability to follow the movements of the priest. As a result of a questionnaire (and it may be of interest to note that a similar result was obtained in an English school recently), it is clear that the main causes are:

- (a) Not teaching the children at a sufficiently early age how to use a Missal or at least how to follow the principal parts of the Mass in a prayer book.
- (b) The difficulty of sometimes not being able to see the priest, hear what he is saying, or follow his actions.
- (c) The singing of hymns, as distinct from the singing of the Mass, seems to be a cause of distraction to children.

In general, the methods suggested for training children at the various ages are well worth careful study and putting into effect, and certainly children brought up on these lines should leave school with a deeper appreciation of and devotion to the Holy Mass.

SR M. AEMILIA, O.P.