

## BLACKFRIARS

**OUR LADY OF LOURDES.** Meditations on the Salve Regina. By Fr. Bede Jarrett, O.P. (Burns Oates and Washbourne; 2/6.)

This is a reprint of a little book published in New York in February of this year less than a month before Fr. Bede Jarrett's death. It contains a series of conferences or meditations given during a Novena in honour of Our Lady of Lourdes and taken down as he delivered them. We have in them the spoken word informal and personal and thus, happily, they recall much of the beautiful and simple style of that eloquent preacher. But Fr. Bede was not merely an eloquent and popular preacher. He was a sound theologian. He had that rare gift of being able to expound accurately the deepest truths of the faith in a simple direct manner that appealed to almost every type of person. The interest of this book lies not only in its recalling so clearly the vivid personality of the preacher, but even more in showing certain characteristics which appeared in everything he said or did. It is, for example, characteristic of his method of preaching. Fr. Bede had a remarkable memory, and made full use of everything that he had ever read or seen. Whatever he learnt, and he seemed always so boyishly eager to learn something new, he was able to incorporate into his writing or preaching. A church once seen, a lovely landscape, a picture, some poem read at an odd moment, an interesting invention, there was nothing which could not be grist to his mill. There are many examples of this in this book; one can quote as typical the beautiful way in which he makes use of his memories of South Leigh church to develop his theme (p. 49). His love of nature, of the country, and in particular of the English country-side, was notorious. And that love is reflected over and over again in these pages. 'To see the beauty of the sunset and to cherish it in your memory is to have unceasing joy. To see a wide stretch of country and to enjoy gazing at it and to let it haunt your memory, that is blessedness!' Again, this book is characteristic of his thought. The presence of God in us and around us, the love of this world because it was God's world, His providential guidance, these were themes constantly recurring in his sermons. And yet withal the growing sense of detachment and even of loneliness. 'There is something strangely, unbelievably attractive in the free wild world, in life in that world. The Arab, with the desert around him, feels the freedom of it. Men of civilized cities are caught by the attraction of the desert, its absolute freedom, its width, its openness, its far horizon. In it they feel free. Well, spiritually, that is where we should be; we can be so by remembering that we are travellers' (p. 67). And yet this loneliness is a transient thing, 'the growing con-

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sciousness that you are being slowly driven into a corner, but knowing too that the corner is God' (p. 56). One could quote many more passages to illustrate his characteristics of thought and method, for here is not merely beauty in word, clarity in thought, sympathy in understanding, but a philosophy of life. To Fr. Bede religion is meant to help man appreciate all life, and not just a part of it; to value life in all its richness, to miss nothing. 'Faith teaches me about God, and because now I know God I can find all life lit with splendour.' It is a philosophy of the present. The past, that is finished; the future, that is in God's hands; the present, that is ours.

KENNETH WYKEHAM-GEORGE, O.P.

**THE CHALLENGE OF CHRIST.** Father James, O.M.Cap. (Burns, Oates: 5/-.)

All Father James' works make valuable reading, and this is no exception. The contents were originally delivered as a series of conferences, which accounts for what appears in cold print as occasional over-painting. However, even when the style does not suit the present medium, the matter treated is of great importance. Christ's challenge seems to be echoing ever more clearly through the world of to-day, as is evidenced by the constant flow of literature on His person and character. The value of Father James' contribution to this stream lies in his pointing out the particular applications of Christ's living personality to modern life. His treatment of some of these aspects is very practical. In this respect such subjects should be noted as the position gained for women by Christ, the affective knowledge of Himself that Christ demands of His true followers, Christ's claims against Communism, and the indwelling of the Holy Trinity in the soul through Christ's mediation. With a light touch the author manages to drive home some profound doctrines, as well as to give us among other things a short sketch of the whole theology of the Immaculate Conception.

CONRAD PEPLER, O.P.

**THE MASS OF THE WESTERN RITES.** By the Rt. Rev. Abbot Cabrol, O.S.B. Translated by C. M. Antony. (Sands; 5/-.)

This is the English translation of Abbot Cabrol's *La Messe en Occident*, which was published in 1932. One might be tempted to ask the purpose of yet another book on the archaeology of the Mass when several very good ones already exist. Such a question is forestalled in the preface. The books already in existence treat mainly of the Roman Mass, while the present book is concerned with the rites of the whole Western Church. The study of the Mass of the various Western rites has more than