

to nothing with absolute certainty of the course of his life. There are only two original sources for St Benedict and his work: the Holy Rule, and the *Dialogues* of St Gregory'. Beginning his foreword with these words, the author continues, however, by drawing a vivid picture of the saint, his outstanding personality, his influence on medieval European culture. He does this without overstepping the limits he has recognised from the beginning and the result will stir enthusiasm for this great saint and his work, the Benedictine Order, which flourishes today as with a new spring. G.L.

THE MIRACULOUS PICTURE OF THE MOTHER OF PERPETUAL SUCCOUR. By Daniel Buckley, C.S.S.R. (Mercier Press; 10s.6d.)

Literary output follows much the same trends in the spiritual as in the secular realms. A certain subject is in the boom: everybody rushes something to press to 'cash in' on it—to climb on the 'band-waggon'. So a book on the well-worn if very worthy subject of 'Our Lady of Perpetual Succour' will gain much by catching the boom in Marian stocks for which Fatima in particular is responsible today.

This real resurgence of Marian devotion is one of the most consoling and hopeful signs of the times (otherwise so hopeless). It is too much to hope that we must not pay some penalty for the favours Mary is showering on the modern world, by not one or two but a host of manifestations in our own life-time. One of the normal penalties is this spate of second-class writing on this most sublime of subjects. We must, in the very genuine enthusiasm that is today, thank God, sweeping the world, be all the more careful about rival shrines, rival novenas, and rival books of propaganda. Fr Buckley's book certainly merits this last title.

One cannot but admire the thoroughness with which the Redemptorists have propagated knowledge of and devotion to this particular one of the many miraculous pictures of our Lady, which came so late into their possession. Nevertheless, no one need be carried away by the Cook's Tour with which Fr Buckley ends his book. Having lived or travelled in many of these countries, I have found the picture quite common as the result of Redemptorist Missions, but have certainly found nothing to justify the rather pretentious title of the last chapter, i.e. 'Everyone's Madonna'.

E. S. KLIMECK.

SAINTS WHO MOVED THE WORLD. By René Fülöp-Miller. (Hutchinson; 12s.6d.)

This is an outstanding book. In five chapters the story is told of the lives of five saints, and each chapter contains more than a mere biography. The lives of these four men and one woman (the first lived in the third, and the last in the sixteenth century) are pictured in a vivid background of the times in which they lived, and they stand out not only as vital personalities, but as the embodi-

ment of some faculty or gift, natural perhaps, but supernaturalised by the way these gifts were used in God's service.

St Anthony of Egypt is shown as the saint of Renunciation; St Augustine of Hippo as the saint of the Intellect; St Francis of Assisi as the saint of Love; St Ignatius of Loyola as the saint of Will Power; and St Teresa of Avila as the saint of Ecstasy. The writing in these chapters is so incisive that the story of each saint is utterly engrossing.

Even those whose lives are already familiar to the reader appear in a new light. Their personalities, their holiness is not changed but deepened.

But this book cannot be described—it must be read.

FLORENS ROCH.



EXTRACTS

LA VIE SPIRITUELLE in the eyes of many English readers has suffered of late from the virile development of its quarterly *Supplement* which seems to have drawn off much talent and power from the original review. They have been comparing it unfavourably with the pre-war *Vie Spirituelle*. But the April number will have reassured the regular subscribers for it is back to its old standard with outstanding articles by such well known authorities as Père Congar and Père Heris. The former writes on the Eucharist and the Church of the 'New Alliance'.

In the Eucharist, and very precisely by transubstantiation, the essential point of God's plan is realised: our way towards him all at once finds its end, for this end is given from above. The way was making for this end, but it could not reach it. But now the end itself becomes our route; God, in Jesus, becomes our way and our goal; we will enter into the depths of God for God comes to us. We bring ourselves to return into the bosom of the Father, and to express this movement we make use of these poor offerings of bread and wine. But then these humble signs of our return become by transubstantiation the efficacious signs of that of the beloved Son—the sacrament of our return. . . .

The Church is founded on this 'passage to the Father'—death, resurrection and ascension. The Church herself is the Sacrament of the return, a means to the end. Therefore our daily Masses and Communions are our daily dying, our daily passage to the Father accomplished in the Church.

This article is followed up by a study of the 'Sign of the Table' written by a Breton and the whole is rounded off with one of those