

explains the relative value of apocryphal writings, and how they are indirect evidences and help us to prize our gospels even more. Finally comes 'Christian Life under the sign of the gospel', or how of all the gospels it could be said 'These things were written in order that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name' (Jn 20, 31).

ROLAND POTTER, O.P.

LES PAROLES D'ADIEUX DU SEIGNEUR. By G.-M. Behler, O.P. (Editions du Cerf; 12 NF.)

The study of themes running in and through the Old and New Testaments has been much favoured in recent years, and it is always profitable. Nothing however can replace a word-for-word contact with the texts themselves as they are in their contexts. And this is the belief of Fr Behler, a German Dominican who has written this commentary of a meditative type on five famous chapters (John 13-17) which have always been looked upon as a source book for the spiritual life. That he should write in French, and Frenchman-like cite Loisy, is intriguing. Fr F.-M. Braun, O.P., in the preface explains that our author has the gift of tongues and is moved by a truly Pentecostal fire. Be that as it may, the author tells us what he meant to do: 'these pages are specially intended for contemplative souls. Oft-repeated experience has convinced us that, for such souls, nothing is more nourishing than the Word of God explained by the self-same Word. The preacher who effaces himself, as it were hiding himself behind the divine word, leads others to prayer and furnishes them with truly spiritual nourishment.'

We can say that Fr Behler has succeeded in this intention. Sentence by sentence, he comments on the whole content of five chapters, pausing to introduce the sequence and quiet flow of ideas, and all the while bringing out the content of the text by frequent references to other passages of scripture, as also to some more helpful comments of Fathers and Doctors. And the writer effaces himself behind the divine word in that he makes little or no show of technicalities or erudite apparatus: yet we know, and sense, that he is a master of these, who simply wants us to hear the voice of St John and our Lord in the gospel.

This is a book which will appeal to prayerful and contemplative folk, and is to be recommended as such.

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