

them. They are the type of experiences handed down to us; the things the worker culturally remembers. They are not entirely gone, as can be seen, for instance, in personal experiences found sometimes in *New Life*, the review of the Y.C.W.

The inevitable loneliness of the Christian leader in such a context, the perplexity involved in judging what is right in a criss-cross of conflicting forces of employers, unions, political forces, etc., when alliance with any one group is liable to be wrong or wrongly interpreted, is well portrayed.

What, though, of young Peter Mardyck in such conditions? In the first part of the novel he is ready to admit his faults and incapacities in the face of such immense difficulties. But his Christian perception of the situation grows: he becomes good. We can be very happy that he has become good, but could we not have been left to guess it for ourselves from the portrayal of his character without him telling us so himself? It is true that he attributes his goodness to Christ. In the last chapter we are told that his Christian ideals have given him strength and made a man of him. He is not hardened, seared or narrowed. Need he have told us this so explicitly? All he expects from life is struggles, betrayal, loneliness, hypocrisy, etc. Surely there are other aspects to his life, too: he is a happily married man.

The edificational and anagogical elements seem to be too bluntly put into the mouth of the main character. Perhaps it is necessary for the ideal to be so sharply put for youth to understand it. The founder of Scouting seemed to find it necessary to make a sharp distinction between his characters: the boy who smoked and the boy who did not smoke, etc.

Nevertheless, Peter Mardyck's ideals are true ideals and ones which must be captured. They were applicable in the thirties and they are applicable today. Any criticism of one aspect of the book cannot obscure the fact that what the back cover says is true. This is a story told with realism and intensity: it involves the reader in the struggle for justice and humanity. It is a moving and very readable book.

F.J.F.

WEDDING SERMONS. By M. A. Couturier, O.P. (Blackfriars; 5s. 6d.)

Originally published in French by Les Editions du Cerf under the title *Discours de Mariage*, this book looks expensive at first glance—sixty pages for 5s. 6d., and only paper covers—but it is a treasure and worth any amount of money. Père Couturier speaks to ten couples, real ones, and speaks from his head as well as his heart. In a variety of ways he tells them much the same thing, essentially, each time. It is a thing worth saying—that love is the only worth-while reality and that love's blindness is a blinding light. He does not use those exact words,

but that is the drift and it is interesting to see how variously he says it. It is applicable, after all, to more occasions than weddings. He is not sentimental. He both appreciates human love and helps his audiences of two to see how much more lovely is the love of God.

THE INSIGHT OF THE CURÉ D'ARS. By the Abbé Francis Trochu. (Burns and Oates; 9s. 6d.)

The word 'insight' here means more than the power of seeing between the lines, of inspired guessing, of clairvoyance. It is light from heaven, one of the proofs of the Curé's sanctity. There are fifty examples, in the form of true stories, of his supernatural knowledge of what was going on in other people's minds and hearts and souls, and some of the facts relate to past and future events which he could not have known by natural means. Told in simple, rather Victorian English (a translation of course), they retain the atmosphere of the time. But this is a time-defying book of charming true stories about wonderful but homely incidents. It is calculated to help any sincere soul but perhaps especially those who are tempted to intellectual pride. G. M. CORR, O.S.M.

INSIDE THE ARK AND OTHER STORIES. By Caryll Houselander. (Sheed and Ward; 8s. 6d.)

This is a book of what might be called 'holy fairy-tales'. They all belong to the wishes-come-true category, but the power is not that of magic and fairies, but of grace and the angels. A delightful book for the Catholic child of seven to nine years old, for without having the flavour of the 'moral tale for the young', each story makes some very valuable point. Each is told with gaiety and humour, and yet with an acceptance of supernatural intervention which is child-like in its perfect simplicity.

ROSEMARY HEDDON

COMPLINE ACCORDING TO THE DOMINICAN RITE IN LATIN AND ENGLISH. (Blackfriars; 5s.)

Those who have the good fortune to be able to attend Compline in Dominican churches will welcome the re-publication of this book, whilst others may welcome, for private use, this complete text of the changing psalms and hymns of the Church's official night-prayers. The print is clear and pleasant to read, with the Latin text on one page, and the English translation facing it.

ROSEMARY HEDDON

THE MAKING OF CHURCH VESTMENTS. By Graham Jenkins. (Challoner; 4s. 6d.)

At first sight it would seem almost impossible that within the thirty-two pages of this small book so much could be compressed. But the author has found space to give not only clear, concise, and eminently practical instructions on the making of simple vestments,