

REVIEWS

Catholic Church abounds, and ignorance begets misrepresentation and prejudice," but is sadly aware that "the ignorance of some Catholics is little less than tragic." He urges upon Catholics the necessity of knowing their religion, for the sake of others as well as themselves. "As you read, so you will think. . . . Everything we read makes us better or worse. . . . St. Augustine says: "When we pray we speak to God. When we read a good book, God speaks to us." In short, there is much that we Western Catholics of the Christian tradition might learn from the informed zeal of this Eastern Neophyte, newborn from the age-old cult of Brahminism.

HILARY J. CARPENTER, O.P.

NOUVELLES CROISADES DE JEUNES TRAVAILLEURS. By l'Abbé Felix Klein. (Editions Spes, Paris; 7.50 frs.)

The J.O.C. is as unquestionably the most interesting as it is the most vigorous of the many Catholic organisations which have sprung into being since the War. It might have been started in response to the Pope's cry, "The first and immediate apostles of working men must themselves be working men," but we know that it was already taking shape in the mind of a young Belgian boy nearly fifty years ago when he told his parents that he wanted to become a priest in order to improve the lot of the working-people among whom he was born.

This summer the Jocistes of Belgium are going to celebrate the first decade of achievement. All who are interested will be greatly indebted to the Abbé Klein for his brief and precise description of its manifestation in France. It was only introduced there in 1927 yet it numbers close upon a hundred thousand members and is likely to play a prominent part in the reorganization of Society which is so much hoped for in that country. An association for the promotion of the moral and spiritual as well as material welfare of its members, it enjoys high esteem at Geneva as well as the Vatican. A few weeks ago the Secretary of the I.L.O. paid a visit to the Headquarters in Brussels; this might be profitably followed by all who visit Belgium this year. Those who go to France will find a number of useful addresses to guide their search at the end of this book.

They will find young men—none over twenty-five—running establishments themselves, under the watchful eye of a few devoted chaplains, it is true, but using their own methods and competing with the forces of evil on their own ground. Thus there are special sections for workmen, farmers, sailors, etc—while the latest development is a parallel service for girls. No one who has seen their bright newspapers, their club rooms and their church-parades can fail to admire the result of a few short years' work. The result is a spiritual flowering which, for all its

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dependence on faith, gives a vigorous and mature quality to enterprises which have a negative value elsewhere. Instead of being preventive or curative this movement forms "whole men" and as such augurs well for the rising generations of workers. This "comradeship in Christ" should go a long way towards realizing the social order advocated in *Quadragesimo Anno* and the writer looks impatiently for the first fruits of the English experiment.

HERBERT KILDANY.

HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY

A HISTORY OF EUROPE. By the Rt. Hon. H. A. L. Fisher. Vol. I, Ancient and Medieval. (Eyre & Spottiswoode; 18/-.)

In these days when historical writing consists almost entirely of either detailed monographs for the specialist or fictional biography for the general public, it is with a pleasant sense of surprise that one welcomes a book meant for the intelligent reader as well as for the professional historian. Mr. Fisher's history of Europe, the first volume of which has just appeared, succeeds in making useful reading for members of these two classes and as such it constitutes a remarkable achievement. Its starting point is the ice age, and, as the author informs us in his introduction, its third volume will reach our own times. Volume I goes as far as the fifteenth century, thus embracing the whole of the ancient and medieval world. In it, Chapters ii to v give us a clear bird's-eye view of the rise, decline and fall of Greek civilization. Though it seems to be at any rate open to doubt that the Greeks were so uninfluenced by older civilizations, the account of Greek history doubtlessly constitutes one of the best parts of the work. Very good too is the part dedicated to the history of Rome, which shows uncommon knowledge of the latest contributions to Roman history. The very high standard of the chapters dedicated to the history of the ancient world is maintained in the part of the work dedicated to the middle ages. In this part, the chapter on the Norsemen is perhaps the best, just as the one on the Catholic mind is the most stimulating and controversial. Those strange passages in this last chapter dealing with the theories of the "laborious friar," show how in spite of the recent revival in Thomistic studies the doctrines of the Angelic Doctor still remain obscure to the layman. But then one can perhaps say of St. Thomas what Voltaire said of Dante, "Everyone talks of him, no one reads him." While a perhaps excessive importance is attached to Siger of Brabant, we find only a scanty mention of Scotism, which played such an important rôle in the history of medieval thought. It is disappointing to see that the old-