

THE LAY-BROTHER : A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE AND STATUS OF A DOMINICAN LAY-BROTHER. By Fr. H.-D. Noble, O.P. Translated from the French by A. E. H. Swinstead. (St. Dominic's Press; 32 pp. Editor's Note 4 pp. Machine Paper, 2/-.)

Whether or no Industrialism has been a misfortune to society in general, it remains incontestable that it has had ill effects in the particular society known as a religious Order. From the nature of their calling, the lay-brethren were chiefly affected by the disease. Work, and in particular manual work, having been reduced to an evil, necessary, however, for material prosperity, the idea of a life devoted to such work became alienated from the factory mind. Hence such vocations decreased until circumstances produced the hired servant within the cloister. This little book comes fittingly to revive the lost ideal of the lay-brother, and in particular of the Dominican lay-brother, at a time when there appears a certain movement of unrest against industrialism. Fr. Noble has represented the lay-brotherhood in its perfect and complete state. He shows how, by the three vows and his desire for perfection, the lay-brother is a true religious; is a true Dominican, since his life runs parallel to that of the choir religious; and is a thorough apostle in his material indispensability to the preaching friar and in his prayers and merits heaped up for the salvation of souls. He gives an example of a priory with its full complement of lay brethren, their continual work and prayer, and their mutual assistance towards perfection as true brothers in a family. To this picture of the ideal the Editor has added to the translation a note dealing with the more practical problems. He points out the danger of one limb of the Order languishing—'for any part to fail is a paralysis of the whole.' The lay-brother shares the mobility of the preacher, and is in fact his 'batman.' The choir religious *quâ* Dominican differs only in *function* from the lay brother. The question of 'vocation' is referred to, but it might have been further developed. For many this kind of vocation is only differentiated by education. If the postulant can translate Virgil and speaks with an Oxford accent, he is told that he should be a choir religious, though God may be calling him directly to a life of manual labour and simple prayer. Fr. Noble indicates the value of vocation when he says of Blessed James of Ulm, 'Although he had enough learning and other qualities to have ensured him a place amongst the choir religious, yet he preferred from humility to put on the lay-brothers' habit.' Distinction between lay and choir religious is not a class or educa-

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tional distinction, but in the natural order is a distinction of aptitude and abilities, and in the supernatural of calling. A board-school boy could well be studying philosophy while a graduate of Cambridge sweeps the cloister outside his door. Nor is the lay-brotherhood a high-class workhouse for those who cannot or will not find employment. This has been pointed out both by the author and his editor, and does not lack importance in these days.

The book should be a guide to those outside the cloister and a help to those already within. It is short and simply written, well printed and readable in spite of the departure of St. Dominic's Press from the usual Caslon Old Face Type. It should be purchased before the 'Manual for Dominican Lay-Brothers' published by the same Press, to which it is an excellent introduction.

C.P.

ON THE NIGHTMARE. By Ernest Jones, M.D. (The Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis; pp.374; 21/-)

Dr. Jones divides his subject into three parts, the first entitled 'The Pathology of the Nightmare,' in which he states his theory, and the other two in which he endeavours to prove it by reference to 'certain mediaeval superstitions' and etymology respectively. His theory is, in his own words, that 'an attack of the Nightmare is an expression of a mental conflict over an incestuous desire.' Well, now we know where we are. Poor Oedipus! It seems obvious that a nightmare is an expression of some mental conflict, but the sting in the tail needs careful substantiation. His method displays erudition but ingenuousness: 'Dr. Jones, I dreamt of earwigs last night.' 'But, my boy, surely you know that the latent content of earwig-Träume betrays the most remarkable symbolism of sexual wishes relating to the mother.' 'How do you know, Dr. Jones?' 'Because Mr. Riklin tells me so in his "Wunscherfüllung und Symbolik in Märchen".' But surely this is no proof. If I had a conviction that the moon was made of green cheese, I could not hope to gain supporters by quoting from the works of another eminent savant who had come to a similar conclusion. It would be a comparatively simple matter to prove the most outrageous theory to one's own satisfaction (provided that conviction of its rightness is there), which would at the same time be open to the attacks of everyone who did not possess that conviction. Sex is a dangerous thing to play with; for from having some significance, it is soon seen to have every significance. A self-