

## *Blackfriars*

life which ended only four years ago. It was a life of prodigious energy and ceaseless activity which has been described as combining the zeal of St. Francis and the love and devotion of St. Bernard with the intellectual qualities of Newman. Theological professor, social worker, bishop and member of Parliament, who only barely evaded being made Prime Minister of Hungary, he yet found time for literary work and has left behind twenty-five published volumes.

A fragment of this generous literary output is presented to us in English in these hundred or so meditations. They cover the liturgical year from Advent to Christmas: they are of the informal kind, original and throbbing with the love and zeal of such an apostle as Bishop Prohászka, who wore himself out in the best cause of all: they will surely inspire many others to labour on in the same cause for the spread of the Kingdom of Christ and of God.

THE REAL DE RANCÉ. By A. J. Luddy, Ord. Cist. (London: Longmans, 1931; 7/6 net.).

It was only to be expected that some member of the Trappist Order would be early in the field with a reply to the brilliant story—*The Thundering Abbot*—of M. Henry Brémond. But this semi-official answer is not altogether satisfactory. To begin with, it is not over-readable, and there are too many colloquialisms and Americanisms and lapses into journalese. And then it attempts too much, it is too complete a white-washing. And the author weakens his case by violent abuse of the plaintiff's attorney. He even calls M. Brémond's work 'a bad book' and 'rubbish,' which it emphatically is not. In our opinion, the real vindication of De Rancé is to be found in the wonderful devotion of his sons, in the permanency and success of his Reform, and above all in the intense and life-long veneration entertained for him by Bossuet. De Rancé's was a strange, tempestuous personality, undoubtedly a genius, but was he a Saint? The Church has not yet said so; and all the Abbé Brémond has done has been to play the 'Devil's Advocate' and to set forth in his own clever way some very forcible reasons why she should hesitate at any time to take De Rancé's cause into consideration. M. Brémond may have gone rather far, his thesis may not be entirely justified by the facts, but he is too astute to be put down by indiscriminate hero-worship and angry recrimination. The last word has certainly not been said in this controversy.

F. R. B.