

getics of questionable value, no dehydrated doctrine cut off from life but practically the whole of Christian doctrine set in the vital stream of the Church's life and meant to be taught through and in conjunction with the Church's year. Thus the doctrines of the Incarnation and Redemption, including the whole sweep of Old Testament and New Testament history, are set in the framework of Advent and Christmas, and Lent and Easter. The scheme of the second part, called 'Our Lord's Church and its Life', begins with an excellent revision chapter on the foundation of the Church and includes a brilliant survey or series of snapshots of Church history. This, indeed, one feels is how Church history should be taught. In this section, too, are to be found a brief but intelligent revision-course on the Commandments and valuable suggestions for teaching something worth-while on these seemingly cold subjects, the nature and attributes of God. Other subjects to be found in the book are suggestions for teaching the life of Christ, using St Matthew as a basis; a brief treatment of the Mass and its history (including something about the English martyrs), Confession and a little compendium (doctrinal, liturgical and historical) on the Blessed Sacrament.

We have mentioned 'subjects'. This book is not just another telling the teacher how many *more* subjects she must 'get in'. Apart from its author's flair for essentials and simplicity, the genius of the book is that it is synthetic. Fr Drinkwater sees all things with a single eye, sees all the connections, stream-lines the whole vast *corpus* of Christian knowledge and practice, and shows one how to teach all things in function of life, that is, of the life of the Church. True, the course is meant to be spread over two years but it is so flexible that the good teacher will be able to adapt it to her own purposes. We hope many will use the book and thus convey something of the manifold riches of God's treasure to boys and girls on the threshold of life.

J. D. C.

A ROSARY CHAIN. By Sister Mary Dominic, O.P. Introduction by the Very Rev. Fr Aelwin Tindal-Atkinson, O.P. (Blackfriars Publications; 5s. 6d.)

The Rosary has inspired a very considerable literature. Truly of the writing of books in its praise there is no end. Writers, poets and artists have been moved by the eternal themes suggested by the Mysteries. New lips will sing the old words to fresh tunes endlessly: our ear can be ceaselessly thrilled by the familiar truths and our eyes awakened to new visions of wonder under the spell of this devotion, ever ancient ever new. 'Vain repetition' is the unenlightened jibe: 'Infinite variety' is the reply of the mystic who has learnt the secret of this method of true contemplation.

In *A Rosary Chain* a contemplative nun has gathered her thoughts on the fifteen mysteries and set them to song in a way that will stimulate and deepen our love for our Lady's Rosary. 'What we find here is simple', says Fr Aelwin Tindal-Atkinson in his Preface, 'so

simple that a child will respond to the sweet music of its verse and the deep truth the verse conveys. . . . The verses we read and meditate here come to refresh our devotion: in them we find sacred scripture as their source and fount; in them too we find an authentic quality springing from a mind and heart that gives us the fruit of contemplation'. Each Mystery is given a single stanza, packed with ideas, in a style that suggests the artless quality of Fr Tabb or Michael Field in *Mystic Trees* and *Poems of Devotion*.

The publishers and printers have gone to great pains to give an exquisite setting to these poems in hand-set type on hand-made paper. The result is a superb piece of book-production of pre-war quality. B. D.

THE SEVEN DEADLY VIRTUES. Bernard Basset, S.J. (Douglas Organ; 6s.)

You'll appreciate the significance of this provocative title when you've read about Mrs Whelan, with her beans for the servants' breakfast—'Heavens! what appetites they brought from Ireland'—nice American things for her own (that would make six packets locked up in the cupboard on the stairs, thank God!), her cigarettes from under the counter (the Wood girls were both in the Altar Society), and her leather-bound prayer-book much in evidence in the top, front seat in church. And you'll see the point of it again in the holiday at Torquay—'to get away from everything we had brought everything with us'—though it's the delicious humour of the situation that sticks out here.

This book of short stories should sell like hot cakes. Father Basset has a gimlet eye for the fads and frailties of human nature, and he serves them up with a nice sprinkling of wit and wisdom. All his characters are alive: we have met the dear old Canon, the charming, overwhelming Marjorie, tiresome Mr Brice ('Funny life, isn't it?'), poor Major Wilcock, and lovable Mrs Ponsonby; not forgetting, of course, our old misguided friend, Mrs Whelan. But perhaps 'Our Liturgical Parish' is the pick of the boiling. We seem to recognise Mrs O'Brien, young Atkinson, and Mrs Draycott-Wilson. Thank heavens, though, the Canon knew all the answers—as usual.

So does Father Basset. And let's hope he goes on with his glorious 'debunking'. It's good entertainment—especially for those 'in the know'. E. E.

ABOUT JESUS. By C. J. Woollen. (Sands; 6s.)

A new book for Catholic children is always welcome, and Mr Woollen's book, *About Jesus*, will be especially acceptable to teachers of juniors and infants. Many children may enjoy reading the book for themselves but one feels that the rather small print and long paragraphs may put them off. Young people are much affected by the mere look of a book and for this reason many would have