

descriptions. It is regrettable that small boys will probably find this the most interesting part of the book.

To limit the book to child saints is reasonable if it is balanced by the prospect of adult life giving an increased scope to carry out our vocation as apostles whether in a religious order or not. It seems psychologically dangerous and spiritually stultifying to suggest, even by implication, to a child that adult life has nothing further to offer.

MARY BROGAN

RITE AND MAN, by Louis Bouyer; Burns and Oates, 42s.

Fr Bouyer explains the purpose of this book in his first chapter: 'With the help of the modern sciences that deal with man, we intend to examine what might be described as the anthropological antecedents to Christianity. From this study, the human character of Christianity should emerge with a clarity that would otherwise be hardly suspected. But this does not mean that its divinity will be obscured. . . The divine reveals itself in the transformation it effects in what is human. . . the divine restores human nature in elevating it to a supernatural life'. The modern sciences concerned are psychology, and that part of anthropology which throws light on the study of comparative religions; the religious phenomena considered are the uses of word and rite, sacrifice and sacrament, and beliefs and practices relating to sacred space and sacred time. In including modern psychological discoveries, I think Fr Bouyer is casting his net too wide; it is not possible to deal with them satisfactorily in a work of popularisation of this kind, and the chapter which sums them up in fourteen pages is so superficial as to lessen the value of the book. The same seems to me to be true of the chapter on Sacred Time, while the lengthy section on Sacred Space gets bogged down in complicated details about the shapes of synagogue, basilica and cathedral that belong in a different sort of book.

The rest of the book is quite fascinating; there is a most useful 'compare and contrast' type of chapter on Pagan Mysteries and Christian Sacraments, showing how totally opposed the Christian notion of the 'mystery' is to the mysteries of Paganism; the chapter on sacrifice is extremely interesting, and there is a most illuminating analysis of the different positions given to word and ritual in Protestantism and Catholicism. Indeed the most valuable things in the book, to my mind, are the expositions of the Catholic position versus the Protestant, or the Catholic versus the Catholic in our day, with instances of how the great Christological heresies of the past have their modern counterparts in ecclesiology, and explanations of how some of the lopsided positions of the present have come about.

The translator's style is unfortunately rather cumbersome, and occasionally becomes totally baffling, so that the book requires a certain effort to read—but it is by no means an effort wasted.

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