

BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES.

THE PRIEST. A Tale of Modernism in New England. By the author of "Letters to His Holiness Pope Pius X." Boston: Sherman, French, 1911. Pp. 269. Price \$1.25 net.

To one who has been interested in the Modernist's presentation of his cause in his *Letters*, the fact that he has undertaken to deliver his message in the form of fiction comes with something of a shock. The public, surfeited with the sensationalism of yellow journals, jumps to the utterly unfounded conclusion that here the real motive of a disgruntled priest will be laid bare, and at once they cry, *Cherchez la femme*. But whoever takes up the book with the expectation of finding such an excuse for criticism or such an opportunity for the enjoyment of cheap sensation will be disappointed. Two young women play a part in the priest's life. One is a Catholic saint of the medieval type, the other is a strong cultured modern woman with high ideals and efforts for the good of humanity. She is the agent through whom influence is exerted at the last which leads the persecuted priest to turn his back on the punishment meted out to him, though it means banishment from the church he has loved and served. But this influence is really the life and argument of the Unitarian clergyman who has just died as a martyr to blind prejudice, and not the influence of a woman's personality in any sense.

What the author has undertaken to give us is "a chapter of contemporary life that is little known because essentially solitary, and a picture of present-day reality that gives few outward signs because it lies in that province of experience about which men are most sensitive and most reticent."

With regard to his sources and method he says in his preface:

"The author's deepest feeling all through the book is for what may be called, in a large sense, religion rather than art. . . . Having had an opportunity to observe very close at hand many of the interior experiences and some even of the external events herein written down, it has been primary with him to transcribe these experiences and events with what vividness they possess in his own mind, and with what emotion they evoke in his own heart."

The tone of the book is one of sincerity and conviction, and in order to recognize the evils attendant upon the system of Rome it is not necessary to assume that all bishops are as cruel and blind as Bishop Shyrne or all successful priests as revengeful and hypocritical as Dooran. It is well known that the Roman church centuries ago set its seal on dogma and the interpretation of scripture and that all the later developments of archeological and Biblical research can add no further illumination for it. Still we are not quite prepared for the revelation of the Modernist with regard to the positive ignorance of the very heads of Catholic theological schools upon matters pertaining even to the history and dogma of their own church. p

The object of a little book entitled *A Common-Sense View of the Mind Cure* by Laura M. Westall (New York, Funk & Wagnalls, 1908) seems to be to explain the physiological and psychological foundation for the success of mental therapeutics. It not only cannot be considered a contribution to the specific literature of Christian Science but explains its efficacy as due to the exertion of will-power which Christian Scientists strenuously deny. p