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BIBLIOGRAPHY

GAY, Mgr. Jean. *Libermann, Juif selon l'Évangile (1802-1852)*. Preface by André Frossard. Editions Beauchesne (Collection Figures d'hier et d'aujourd'hui). Paris, 1977. 318 pages.

Bishop Gay devoted many years of work to this book and he had the joy of seeing it come off the press before he died on August 27, 1977.

We had no biography of Libermann in French, as all the previous ones have been out of print for a long time. If only for that reason, Bishop Gay's book was most welcome. But there are many other reasons to recommend it highly: the author sought advice from those who know Libermann best and he paid close attention to the suggestions of those whom he asked to check his manuscript. Particularly pleasing are the many quotations from the Founder's letters and other writings which he has given and which, far from making the text heavy, create an impression of Libermann's presence and almost give some chapters the character of an autobiography.

We also have here a great number of clarifications concerning events, people and places which it would be hard to find in any other one place. The last two chapters give a splendid evaluation of Libermann's dual role as master of spiritual life and founder of a missionary congregation.

The whole book provides a deep insight into Libermann's interior life, an aspect which Bishop Gay had carefully studied for many years. It is an astounding story in which the action of the Holy Spirit is very evident. André Frossard, also a convert and a writer well known to French readers, speaks in his preface of "Bishop Gay's awe-struck but painstaking account." Personally, I concur in his judgment and I must say that I read the book – and certainly the content was not altogether new to me – with great joy and respect. I hope the same will be true of many other readers, but especially of all Libermann's sons.

Kohler, Girard, C.S.Sp., "The Apostolate to the Masai", an article in the *Bulletin* of INTERNATIONAL FIDES SERVICE, No. 2,818 of the English edition (August 20, 1977) and No. 2,840 of the French edition (October 1977).

Burke, Christopher V., C.S.Sp., *The Development of a Doctrine and Method of Evangelization in the Life and Works of Francis Libermann (1802-1852)*. Doctoral thesis in Theology presented to the Academia Alfonsiana in Rome, 1977. 287 typed pages.

Father Burke's thesis is an attempt to describe Libermann's missionary doctrine and the practical methods he proposed for spreading the Gospel in the Missions confided to his Congregation (p. iv). The author insists upon the need of following a chronological method rather than a logical or systematic one (p. v), because Libermann's thought evolved as a result of the first mission experiences. This is all the more necessary because the principal source of our knowledge of his teaching is his correspondence, since he did not write "any systematic study of missiology" (p. vi). This position which Father Burke takes up at the very beginning may have led him to minimize the importance of writings like "Instructions to Missionaries" and the treatise on the Episcopate. As he says in a note on page 265, he finds these works practically unreadable and does not quote from them. This would seem to be a regrettable lack in Father Burke's work. It is not true that these writings, dating as they do from Libermann's later years, have no importance for understanding his missionary teaching. Even if they are sometimes hard to read, they nevertheless give a good synthesis of the biblical sources and spiritual principles which the Founder constantly presupposes when he speaks of the vocation and work of missionaries. In Libermann we can never separate the missionary teaching from the spirituality which animates it.

This comment is in no way intended to diminish the merit of Father Burke's thesis, - merit fully recognized by the examining jury. Particularly fine is the work of synthesis, in the Second Part, of the great problems facing missionary effort at that time: the need to esteem and love the people to whom the Gospel was being preached (Chap. IV), the spirit of respectful service to people without any hint of paternalism (Chap. VII), the importance of founding as soon as possible local Churches capable of looking after their own needs, especially in the matter of native clergy (Chap. VIII), relationship between evangelization and civilization (Chap. IX). There is a veritable mine of information and of quotations in this book, all of which will be very useful. We hope that Father Burke will continue his research along these lines and that other young students will follow his example.

