

## Book Reviews

Meldrum. It is mostly for the children; there is only an occasional paragraph specially for the others. Lord Dunsany has shown himself most ingenious in finding rhymes for 'Geneva' in a tale, told in limerick form, of the 'old girl' of that place. (No, it does not even hint at the League.) All the rest of the volume is definitely for the children, and good. The last item, Compton Mackenzie's 'Enchanted Blanket' is possibly the best of all. Number Seven is evidently a Royal Palace of sorts, seeing how many kings and nobles appear in it, but look at it as you will it is a splendid six-shillingsworth. H.C.

**SERMONS ON ST. THERESE OF THE CHILD JESUS.** By Fr. Francis Xavier of St. Teresa, O.D.C. Translated from the Italian by a Religious of the Society of the Holy Child Jesus. (Burns, Oates and Washbourne, Ltd; price 3/-.)

**OF THE JOY OF LOVING GOD.** According to the Spirit of Saint Teresa of the Child Jesus. By R. P. Mortier, of the Friars Preachers. Translated from the French by the Dominican Sisters of Portobello Road, London. (Burns, Oates and Washbourne, Ltd.; price 2/6.)

**NOVISSIMA VERBA.** The last conversations of St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus, May-September, 1897. With a Foreword by His Eminence Cardinal Bourne. (Burns, Oates and Washbourne, Ltd.; price 2/-.)

It would be of interest to know on what occasions these six sermons were preached, but no indications of any kind are given. Their purpose would seem mainly to dispel the usual current illusions with regard to St. Thérèse, and to show forth what Père Petitot has so well done in his book on the Saint—the true force of her character, her supreme mastery over her soul, and the real meaning of her simple child-like way to God, which is so often misunderstood.

One detail is surprising, however; namely the Father's insistence on St. Thérèse's great culture, especially in the arts of music and painting. This seems scarcely to tally with the facts as hitherto known.

The translation is excellent from every point of view.

Père Mortier has joined the ranks of St. Theresa's many Dominican admirers, and like them he, too, does her service in knightly fashion. Of this book we may say that the voice is indeed the voice of St. Theresa, but the hands are the hands of Père Mortier. The learned Dominican historian and the little Carmelite Saint wander happily together in their heavenly

## *Blackfriars*

Father's meadows, inviting all and sundry to go and help them gather the flowers of joy which abound there even among the briars and nettles. Who would not wish to do so?

The book, rather un-English in both type and style, is perhaps rather obviously a translation, yet not so much as to detract from its power of appealing to many minds.

It is Mère Agnès de Jésus herself who gives these 'Words' to the public. Either to her or in her presence they were all spoken, and so we take it that it is St. Thérèse's wish also that we should know them. Much indeed we had heard before, yet often-times now we feel that we are playing the eavesdropper. We have to remind ourselves that a Saint's words are sacred things, spoken, God permitting, for our help and guidance. Yet this saint is a saint dying by inches, speaking her soul's confidences day by day, in utter intimacy, to the one person on earth by whom she knows herself to be understood. We in reading do not see the expression of her face nor hear the tone of her voice. How can we hope fully to understand? Yet with her help we may do so, for even while speaking she knew that many would hear her words—strange trial for her simplicity, and one perhaps unique in the history of the saints. The translation is curiously uneven—so much is very good, but the perpetually recurring 'My Mother' as a form of address is irritating, and sometimes the saint's simplest remarks are rendered in an English so stilted and strange that an effect of priggishness is produced. Surely this is to be deplored, and may we not hope to see a revised edition in the future? The book is attractively got up and contains excellent photogravures. One alone, taken on little St. Thérèse's sick bed a month before she died, is so appealing that for it alone the book would be worth having.

M.M.

**SAINTE THERESE OF LISIEUX.** A Biography by Lucie Delarue-Mardrus. Translated by Helen Younger Chase. With an Introduction by Michael Williams, Litt.D. (Longmans; 7/6 net.)

This biography of Saint Thérèse is the tribute of an unbeliever who is, like the saint herself, a native of Normandy. Madame Delarue-Mardrus thus explains the purpose of her book: 'My desire is to make this new saint known to a world not yet interested in her, a world indifferent to religion but responsive to art' (p. 29). She is writing, therefore, for those who are not of the 'household of the Faith'; but she knows many believers will read her book, so she writes: 'If in the