

Carnation and rose,
 The precious beyond all price
 Odour of your passing through the spinney
 And through the cornfields and gardens.

Air-Compressor is a satisfactory litany of nostalgic realism, and the *Sonnet*, on page 10, could be used for meditation.

Alice Meynell declared that 'those who have little to say clamour for much space in which to say it', and the author will have experienced the difficulty of sustaining a semi-dramatic sequence in the free style of some of the modern poets. Father Walker has a great deal to say in his two long pieces; he has a sound word-sense, a happy perception of spiritual values, and can create atmosphere.

But the shorter poems seem to strike a more authentic note, and we hope he will strike it again.

EDWIN ESSEX, O.P.

NOT ONE SPARROW. By E. Roberts. (Douglas Organ; 3s. 6d.)

Dust-cover blurbs can mislead by saying nothing in many words. These short stories do show human insight and literary elegance, but these attributes, being the minimum demanded of narrative prose, can cover many defects. These stories of 'spiritual adventure' (I suppose we are now committed to this use of the word spiritual when we mean supernatural or uncommon) range from telepathy to answered prayers, and they set out to show that there is something beyond the chemical composition that many of us mistake for creation. That is all excellent, and undoubtedly needs saying. All the more reason, therefore, why it should be said not only with literary elegance, whatever that might be, but with power and precision. Like any artist, a writer must respect both his medium and his object. The work of God will speak for itself if we portray it accurately and there should be no need for comment and interpretation. Many of these stories would be improved if the last didactic paragraph were omitted. At the same time, if God's work is to be allowed to speak for itself, it must be set before us in words that live. Otiose epithets ('poor little legs'), clichés ('the cup of her human happiness was fulfilled') and woolly substitutes, even when tempered by inverted commas, are all no more than half alive and dull the light by which we should see the Almighty's hand. These defects are all the more deplorable because of the importance of the subject. Nevertheless this writing is not without merit; it has flashes of life and sting ('We never know when we board a crowded bus that we may not be strap-hanging with a saint'), and with pruning could be good.

G. M.

SANCTITY WILL OUT. By Georges Bernanos; translated by R. Batchelor. (Sheed and Ward; 6s.)

Sanctity, it seems, can be bought at too high a price. Six shillings is certainly excessive for a pamphlet of fifty-odd pages, even when they are by M. Bernanos, and one would gladly sacrifice the deplor-