

of nature. Here you may read of how Detective Vaszary was tricked by a bandbox containing a human hand wrapped in tissue-paper and cotton-wool: of how Paulus, the cream of the Paris camelots, worked up popular enthusiasm for Boulanger, sometimes making up as an ill-used urchin to be petted and kissed and comforted in public by that gallant warrior and so move the crowd to tears; always ready at a moment's notice to organize a group at a few francs a head to create a spontaneous manifestation crying *vive* this or *à bas* that. Roguishness, this, rather than roguery; certainly more high-spirited and human than some of the activities of the modern press-agent.

N.W.T.G.

LIFE OF THE VENERABLE ANNE OF JESUS, COMPANION OF ST. TERESA OF AVILA. By a Sister of Notre Dame de Namur. With a Preface by Father Benedict Zimmermann, O.D.C. (London: Sands & Co.; 12/6).

Anne of Jesus, whom St. John of the Cross called 'a seraph in love and prayer,' was for twelve years St. Teresa's right hand, and after the saint's death carried the Carmelite reform into France and Flanders. Bañes, the famous Dominican theologian and St. Teresa's devoted friend, declared that Anne of Jesus equalled her in holiness and surpassed her in talent; and when Anne, at the age of twenty-four, asked admission to the Carmelite Order, the saint herself, contrary to all approved methods of dealing with postulants, answered that she accepted her 'not as novice and subject, but as my own companion and coadjutrix.'

Anne, like Teresa and so many other saints, combined the deepest mysticism with extraordinary practical capacity. It is a great mistake to think that they possessed one in spite of the other. On the contrary, the supernatural and the natural gifts are, for several reasons, mutually helpful, and the practically-minded mystics can handle work-a-day affairs undistracted by the laborious application demanded of minds which being more purely speculative are usually thought better fitted for contemplation. Like other great mystics, too, Anne was comfortably human even when most marvellous: a letter full of thirst for suffering is followed a few weeks later from a new foundation attended with many trials by a long grumble, and the admission that Don John (the priest in charge of the community, elsewhere referred to as 'our John') 'puts me in a bad temper'—possibly the longed-for humiliation.

## *Blackfriars*

It is not in the young nun rapt in ecstasy or in the prophet and miracle-worker, the counsellor of saints and theologians, bishops and princes, that we find the full flower of Anne's sanctity, but during the last six years of her long life, in the paralytic, utterly helpless, unable to lie down, tortured in soul and body. 'They take me to Holy Communion every day, but I approach the Holy Table almost like a brute beast,' she says in a dictated letter. The devil, too, tormented her, but to the end it was she who consoled others in their lesser sufferings.

It is refreshing to find a biographer who abstains from lengthy comments and leaves her subject to speak for itself. The only notable faults in the book are a lack of synthesis and of discernment in the choice of material. The unnecessary wealth of names, dates and unimportant details interwoven with foundations, miracles, mystical graces following in thick and fast succession give us the impression of being hurried through an interesting wood that can hardly be seen for the trees. On the other hand, although the author has done well to spare us a long account of the ecclesiastical quarrels waged round the Teresian reform, anything that throws added light on Anne of Jesus and her work surely belongs to the necessary minimum, and we are told nothing of the origin of the two versions of St. Teresa's rule still followed by the two branches of Carmelite nuns in this country—one descended from the French, the other from the Flemish foundation.

The book is illustrated with photographs and old prints, and is well documented, though the author has not been able, apparently, to consult Spanish sources.

M.B.

MARIA TERESA COUNTESS LEDOCHOWSKA, FOUNDESS OF THE SODALITY OF ST. PETER CLAVER. By Valeria Bielak. Translated from the Italian. (Published by the Sodality of St. Peter Claver.)

The life of Countess Ledochowska is an illustration of the romance of vocation. Nothing indicated the future foundress of a unique missionary institute in the self-willed, pleasure-loving child with a precocious talent for writing drama, nor in the very efficient—though always virtuous—lady-in-waiting at the grand-ducal court of Tuscany. She herself declared that as a child she never heard foreign missions mentioned in her home, devoutly Catholic though it was. The seemingly chance reading of an appeal by Cardinal Lavignerie to the women of Europe on behalf of Africa was the key to her vocation. Her