

a book-binder, a wood-worker, a printer, a textile designer and a couple of musical instrument makers. (One could well have spared one embroideress and one calligrapher for a weaver and a tombstone-maker). The most beautiful work and the best expositions of their craft are provided by the two potters, Bernard Leach and Dora Billington; and by Carl Dolmetsch and Leslie Ward, whose prime object in making their exquisite musical instruments is to recapture music for the family and bring back 'an age when people made their own music and their own entertainment.' On this happy and Catholic note one may take reluctant leave of one of the most exhilarating comments on art and society uttered since the days of Morris.

H.P.E.

THE MEANING OF BEAUTY. By Eric Newton. (Longmans; 15s.)

MASTERS OF PAINTING SERIES. Gainsborough; Chardin, Eugene Delacroix; Jan Vermeer. Edited by Eric Newton. (Longmans; 10s. 6d. each.)

Mr Newton, in two minds about Beauty, should be read with two minds or not at all. Forget the title, leave philosophy to philosophers (as the author for all his rough handling of St Thomas really prefers) and there is much to be enjoyably learnt from his lively commentary on the development of taste, history of art, and pictures old and new.

Yet the two minds must come together as Mr Newton strips down the 'Mystical Marriage of St Catherine' by Veronese layer by layer like an onion. (He has a novel and illuminating analysis of picture-making in terms of an onion.) Alas, an onion has a centre, and this chapter fades too easily before we are left with an empty canvas or—Beauty.

Neither thrown out nor introduced, Beauty haunts the book. It is perhaps time Beauty were consulted about Art by someone of Mr Newton's critical knowledge. Most other oracles have been consulted, but she is not much mentioned nowadays. A word forgotten means a lost concept and territory of human knowledge, or that in the fashion of the time, a new world has been coined. Similarly the unaddressed person soon drifts from the company. Here Beauty is not called back, nor her grave shown us, nor, if unrecognised among us, is she pointed out.

Neither can Mr Newton leave philosophy alone, but what is meant as a definition of Beauty turns out to be a definition of the Good or, less excusably, of Truth, or even ethics. He concludes that definition is useless because 'it does not throw light on the object but only isolates it'. Light enough, one feels, in a world in which morality and art are so confused.

In the 'Masters of Painting Series', however, all is well. Here are

Beauty's footprints and one is content to leave Beauty as nebulous as the Abominable Snowman. One does not know the extent of Mr Newton's influence as Editor, but the choice of authors and the whole presentation of the volumes reflect great credit. There is the right choice, from among the artists' work, of familiar and unfamiliar paintings, and the essays on the painters succeed, on the whole, in maintaining a position between the forbidding specialist tone and the over-simplified popular approach.

But as for Beauty, painting is one art and writing another. Whatever painters know about Beauty they paint.

PAUL HARRIS.

ST TERESA OF LISIEUX. Frances Parkinson Keyes. (Eyre and Spottiswoode; 12s. 6d.)

This interpretation of the life of St Teresa is intended, to use the writer's own words, 'for those who, like myself, are only average women'. It was first written and published under the title 'Written in Heaven', before her own reception into the Church, and a long introduction describes the circumstances surrounding the writing of it at the Benedictine Abbey where the saint went to school, the subsequent fate of the nuns, and the reasons for writing this second slightly expanded version. It is very much a woman's book; for, of the three parts into which the narrative is divided, the longest is that devoted to her childhood and schooldays, and this is largely taken up with descriptions of rooms, furniture, dresses, toys, and so on; two pages and a reproduction are spent on the moments of her First Communion. Much of this is unnecessary and uncritical. The same must unfortunately be said of the presentation of the saint's character as a child; no hint is given of any fault, all is told in terms of a fairy-tale perfection, the heroine complete with golden locks. It may be attractive, but the impression it leaves is not of a real person. Luckily, the second part, that devoted to her life in Carmel and her death, is more sober, and the figure presented proportionately more convincing. As might be expected from so successful a novelist, the writing is very competent, and the book very easy to read: it has also been approved by the Carmel of Lisieux.

B.W.