

In conclusion Dr. Allers tells us that it was not his intention 'to explain all the problems of character-formation and training with the help of recent advances in psychology, and that it cannot be maintained that the supernatural element can be excluded. On the contrary, we think we have demonstrated the *limitations of natural means*; and we maintain that a purely naturalistic psychology, however complete and well founded, must eventually break down unless it be co-ordinated with religious knowledge and principles.'

We cannot take leave of this fascinating volume without a reference to the excellence of the translation, which makes it appear as an original work in English rather than the translation of what in its original form is a very difficult book.

We hope that this book will find its way not only to all places where the education of children is the principal concern, but to all those who have the task of education and of character formation confided to them.

G.A.E.

SAINT TERESA IN HER WRITINGS. By R. Hoornaert, D-ès-L.
Translated by Rev. J. Leonard, C.M. (Sheed & Ward; 15/-.)

More brilliant works on St. Teresa might have been chosen for translation into English, but few that are more readable. Yet the Abbé Hoornaert's long work does drag heavily at times, and despite its general high level of excellence it leaves the impression behind that something is missing. It is hard to lay down definitely where the book falls short of its theme, for the fault lies not with the book or the author, whose erudition and admiration for his subject could scarcely be greater, but with the very greatness of St. Teresa herself and of her works, which makes a perfectly satisfactory study of her a thing practically impossible to achieve.

The original title of the work is *Ste. Thérèse écrivain, son milieu, ses facultés, son œuvre*, and this shows a proper grasp of the subject, for no study of St. Teresa as a writer could be complete without a study of her period. Unfortunately this is the very part in which the work fails. Fr. Hoornaert reveals an excellent knowledge of Spanish history and literature, but also, to my mind, a lack of judgment and appreciation of what really constitutes the greatness of sixteenth century Spain. This is clear in a number of relatively unimportant statements, such as: 'In Avila all things remained grimly attached to the Middle Ages' (p. 48), a remark which shows a complete misunderstanding of the transition in Spain from the mediaeval to the

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Renaissance period. Philip II is not understood at all, and yet he should form the whole background of the chapter on 'The Political Horizon.' Fr. Hoornaert maintains that for him the interests of religion were only bound up with politics. This view, though still generally held, is surely a travesty of fact; whoever holds it should read the opening chapter of Ludwig Pfandl's great work, *Spanische Nationalliteratur in ihrer Blütezeit*. His first chapter should be read instead of F. Hoornaert's Part I, and St. Teresa will then be seen in her proper place and her true greatness made quite clear. Philip's relation to St. Teresa is passed over almost in silence, yet in 1578 she wrote to Fr. Gracián: 'The King listens to everybody,' and on another occasion she recommended her nuns to turn to him in any difficulty: 'For he will be as a father to you in everything.' It was entirely due to Philip's intervention in the disputes, his disregard of the Nuncio and his obtaining the Brief of 1580 from Rome that St. Teresa's life work was crowned. This fact should have been brought out fully.

Fr. Hoornaert's early chapters will be irritating to any student of Spanish culture, for they present a scrappy and incoordinated series of facts and impressions which can only present a one-sided and inconclusive picture to those who are unable to fill in the gaps. In the chapter on 'Social Setting' he does not seem to appreciate the way in which religion for the Spaniards of the time was essentially belligerent; it was not religion serving politics, but the contrary. The chapter headed 'The Intellectual Atmosphere' is better, but it would appear as if the Illuminists and the other short-lived sects had a greater vogue and influence than was actually the case. The account of Spanish neo-Platonism could well be better, and far more stress should be laid on the Scholastic Revival, and its main development clearly traced and explained. The next chapter, on 'Contemporary Spanish Literature,' has been considerably abridged, and as it now stands it is the poorest part of the book, incomplete, rambling, and inconclusive, and the account of secular literature is totally inadequate. This may have only an 'academic' interest, it is true, but a really satisfactory study of the side by side development of religious and secular literature is surely of importance for the proper study of St. Teresa's place amongst the writers of her time. There are many judgments which are hard to bear: thus Góngora is completely misunderstood (p. 76), (his art was not 'caused' by neo-Platonic aestheticism! p. 51); the *Celestina* remains a closed book to Fr. Hoornaert, whose false criticisms of it (pp. 62, 77) entirely miss its greatness. There are also not a few inaccuracies: thus the

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Amadis did not 'appear' about 1492 (p. 64), but about a hundred and fifty years earlier—he must mean 'printed.' Later in the book (p. 272) there is another glaring inaccuracy of this kind. St. Teresa's *Foundations* did not precede the *Lasarillo*, but followed it by some twenty years. This robs the author of his point, namely that St. Teresa anticipated the spirit and realistic art of that famous little work.

This first part is, however, but a small portion of the work. The remaining three hundred pages can be turned to with delight, for here the author is on surer ground, though, as I have already said, he leaves a slight disappointment in the too hopeful and exacting reader. The second part, on St. Teresa's literary faculties, makes very good reading, in which the numerous extracts from her works and letters shine forth as incomparable gems. This is the author's greatest achievement. He has a profound knowledge of all her writings and knows how to lay his finger on any part of them that will perfectly illustrate his point. There are again minor points that one can quarrel with; such a statement as this: 'Her orthography is therefore a valuable witness to Castilian pronunciation in the sixteenth century' (p. 189), is not strictly true, and together with note 4 on p. 395 betrays an ignorance of Spanish philology. Again, I do not think it right to say that she created her own language (p. 303) to convey her 'psychical aestheticism' (an unfortunate phrase). She merely applied the language of everyday speech to a subject not hitherto treated of in the vernacular, at least to the same extent. The result is a triumph, but it is no 'new language.' Half the book is taken up by Part III, which is a detailed study of her works and their literary qualities, and is excellent. St. Teresa was so great, not only as a saint and mystic, but also as a woman, that her works, being such a perfect mirror of the wonderful human and feminine qualities of her mind, are so full of an indescribable charm and an exquisite humour that any attempt to analyse these qualities is extremely difficult. Fr. Hoornaert has acquitted himself extraordinarily well.

The translation reads well, but I hope I am not being unjust when I say that the translator seems to know no Spanish. Nothing else could explain the countless misprints and misspellings of Spanish names and words which abound all through the book in a most unfortunate and regrettable manner. A great many of these are due to his having kept the French forms, in which language great liberties are often taken with the accentuation of Spanish words to make them conform to its own peculiar phonetic laws. Taken out of their French context such forms as: Léon, Vivès, Valdès, Alcantará, Cortès,

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Tormès, Lopé, Yepès, Manzanarès, Moralès, etc., etc., make one shudder or laugh. But this excuse cannot be found for other mistakes. On the first page we find *reconquistad*, on the second *communeros*, and so on throughout the work we find such forms as Sepulved for Sepúlveda, Satana for Satanás, Sotomajor, *canconiero*, *panadeera*, *triumfo*; *di* occurs a few times (e.g., Maria di Salzar for María de Salazar, p. 31), and on p. 383 we find such an impossible form as *quísa*. Accents when needed are totally ignored, when not needed those are used which do not exist in Spanish. There are other misprints which are more serious: Tosada (p. 32), should be El Tostado, Juan de Medo (p. 51) should be Juan de Mena, Gutteriez (p. 221) should be Gutiérrez, and the date 1650 (p. 147) should be 1560. This is indeed lamentable, and unpleasantly mars a production of which the translators and publishers could otherwise well be proud.

A.A.P.

IN DEFENCE OF PURITY. An Analysis of the Catholic Ideals of Purity and Virginity. By Dietrich von Hildebrand. Professor of Philosophy in the University of Munich. (Sheed and Ward; 1931. 6/-.)

This is a translation of a German work called *Reinheit und Jungfraulichkeit*—'Purity and Virginity.' The title of the translation (and this is our only serious quarrel with the anonymous translator) is misleading, and perhaps a little vulgar. It implies a polemic aim which is quite alien to the spirit and content of the book and is expressly disclaimed by the author. The book is, in fact, a straightforward philosophy and theology of purity and virginity, and it should prove invaluable to all for whom sex is a 'problem' for the head rather than purely the will. It should do much to correct the sad misunderstandings of the Catholic attitude to the subject. Those who regard that attitude as a mere code of inexplicable prohibitions will find much enlightenment, and those who are inclined to confuse the Catholic and the puritan standpoints will find that they are in fact utterly and irreconcilably opposed. The puritan, consciously or otherwise, assumes some intrinsic evil in sex, and argues that you will be defiled if you touch pitch. The Catholic believes in the dignity and holiness of sex, and argues that you will defile the sacred thing if you use it amiss, and disgrace yourself, in more senses than one, in the doing.

The author wisely starts from the facts of experience with some reflections on the unique character of sex as distinguished from our other appetites. Sex, we find, is essentially 'deep.'