

## Book Reviews

correspondence, propaganda and editorial work on behalf of the missions grew till helpers became necessary. They gathered round her, and the Sodality of St. Peter Claver for the African Missions was formed, having its Mother-House at Rome. The nucleus of the Sodality is an institute of women living in community under a rule founded on that of St. Ignatius and devoting their lives to the service of the African Missions. It has also members, promoters and associates living in the world.

Circumstances led Maria Teresa to travel over Europe lecturing on the missions (in which her gifts as a linguist stood her in good stead), and founding branch offices of the various works connected with the Sodality. She worked without respite for over thirty years in spite of extremely bad health which prevented her taking either food or drink, save in quantities so small that her life seemed miraculous. Her Sodality, which is immediately subject to the Congregation of Propaganda, has had the blessing of four popes. Its statistics are amazing.

Many should read this book, but we cannot help hoping that another will some day be written which will give us more knowledge of the personality of the Countess, to whose intercession many wonders have been attributed since her death in 1922, a book in which her virtues will be shown by her own deeds and words rather than enlarged on by her biographers. We should like, too, to know more of her Institute, its rule and life. The members are referred to as religious, but we are not told whether they take vows.

The book (some 170 pages in stiff paper covers) is well translated, and illustrated by photographs. It may be obtained through the English branch office of the Sodality at the Benedictine Priory, Princethorpe, near Rugby.

M.B.

THE BLISS OF THE WAY: A Bedside Book for the Tramp. By Cecily Hallack. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne; 7/6.)

'All the way to Heaven is Heaven,' said St. Catherine of Siena, 'for He has said, I am the Way.' St Thomas speaks of a certain *Beatitudo viae*, a foregleam of the perfect beatitude which awaits us *in patria*. With this as directing idea Miss Cecily Hallack has gathered together her marvellously diversified collection of thoughts. Her book is not one that can be read straight through in the ordinary way; but it will be read nevertheless and read and read again and again. I have tried it on a sick friend who, though professing to be nothing more than an amateur tramp on that blissful way, has found it

## *Blackfriars*

a good bedside book. Not the least admirably wise thoughts in the book are the italicised commentaries, *videlicet*,

*'Go lean your elbows on the Knees of God,  
Not on your own; on hope, not hopelessness.'*

I should like to make my recommendation unmistakable and emphatic, lest the casual reader should miss the concentrated wisdom of this uncommon 'commonplace book.'

K.

CONSUMMATA (MARIE-ANTOINETTE DE GENSER), *HER LIFE AND LETTERS*. Translated from the French of Raoul Plus, S.J., by George Baker. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne, Ltd.; 7/6.)

Mr. George Baker has been happily inspired to make known to English-speaking readers one of the most charming of modern spiritual personalities.

All who have met 'Consummata' in Père Plus' French Life of her and in her own spiritual notes and letters, are convinced that she has a work to do for souls. She may well prove an inspiration and example to girls especially of her own class. Few girls to-day are satisfied to live at home and fulfil with tact and charm the rôle of 'elder sister,' a rôle which may have almost as potent an influence on the younger children as that of a mother. Consummata devoted her whole-hearted energy and many intellectual gifts to this task, especially when, for reasons of health, she was obliged to renounce finally a call to Carmel. Yet it was by her fidelity to these home duties and by the giving up of her own plans that she developed that passionate love for God's will which so rapidly consumed her, and brought her to a state of union with Him seldom attained even by contemplatives in the cloister. In such seemingly contradictory ways does God work out His Will, and the soul's most cherished and apparently frustrated ideals.

To the present reviewer the translation is unfortunately inadequate both in conveying Consummata's charm and personality. Many passages are clumsy and awkward, even inexact in this English rendering, while the style of writing chosen by Mr. Baker does not accord with his subject and will appeal, we think, only to a few. To hear that 'Jesus is the very stuff of our souls' will surely arouse no one's devotion! Consummata's actual words are 'Jésus! Il est tellement le tout de nos âmes!'

M.M.