

BOOK REVIEWS

INTO THEIR COMPANY: A BOOK FOR A MODERN GIRL ON LOVE AND MARRIAGE. By a Medical Woman, a Girl and a Wife. With an Introduction by Father Martindale, S.J. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne; 1/6.)

Father Martindale is, I feel, not only to be congratulated but warmly thanked, for having induced three gallant and well equipped Catholic women—a lady doctor, a novelist and a mother—to undertake a small book of discreet and kindly counsel on love and marriage for Catholic girls. Father Martindale's own instructions for young men in *The Difficult Commandment*, have provided a precedent and a model; but, as its author says in his preface to the present book, it takes a woman to remember what it was once like to be a girl. Personally I feel that the girl's adolescent difficulties—sometimes embarrassing to discuss with parents, often too inarticulate for the confessional—have been admirably dealt with here. And not only on the negative side: for, as the authors rightly maintain, those who only know the Catholic 'dons'—prohibitions of bad books, films, divorce, birth-control, and so on—know nothing very exhilarating about Catholic love and marriage. So in the spirit of the Beatitudes rather than the Commandments (though the latter aspect is, of course, not neglected) the trio sets about its task; and very well, on the whole, I think it fulfils it. The result could be put directly into a young girl's hands. It would be equally useful, I think, in the hands of a young girl's natural advisers, parents or Religious. It harmonises with astonishing felicity, considering its previous appearance, with the Encyclical *Casti Connubii*; and might indeed have taken for its text the Holy Father's noble declaration that if the man is the head of the family, the woman is the heart.

One statement only I should like to see modified: the declaration that under the auspices of modern science the danger of childbirth and its preliminary discomforts are very notably minimised. It is fair neither to husband nor wife to underestimate the heroism needed to cope with a Catholic mother's task. All the most enthusiastic writer can do is to insist on the graces that assist it and the glory—both here and hereafter—of its reward.

H.P.E.

HERMIA, AND SOME OTHER POEMS. By W. H. Shewring. (St. Dominic's Press, Ditchling, 1930; 240 copies.)

Saint Dominic's Press hath a devil whose name is legion, it appears, from a scarlet list of Errata in a book of less than forty