

## NOTICES

while Mr. George Wray as Satyr, droll and pathetic, and Mr. Owen Reed as Sullen Shepherd, tortured and restrained, were both as they should be. The Commonwealth Theatre is not committed to one school or period of drama, and proposes to follow with *Love's Labour Lost*, a Living Punch and Judy for children, possibly a comedy by Goldoni. *Prosperè procede.* T.G.

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THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS. By Alban Butler. (*April, August.*) Revised by Herbert Thurston, S.J., Norah Gleeson and Donald Attwater. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne; 7/6 per vol.; pp. 355, 401.)

Fresh volumes of the new edition of Alban Butler's *Lives of the Saints* continue to appear with commendable regularity and with similar defects and merits. Each volume has been of interest as a modern version of one of the classics of English Catholicism, and Fr. Thurston continues to be fortunate in his collaborators. Yet it is still difficult to discover any underlying unity of design beneath strangely contrasted styles and methods. Thus the welcome stringency with which an occasional fable is rejected is combined with a spasmodic loyalty to the hagiographical conventions of the last two hundred years; a quiet homeric persistence in the repetition of epithet and a carelessness of some at least of the *minutiae* of scholarship. Titles are still granted lavishly, and the erratic spelling of proper names provides strange variants from Celtic, Arabic and Armenian roots. But if at times the reader may feel lost in the familiar twilight of hagiography with 'Hoa' and 'Melek Seleh' and 'The King of South Wales,' each biographical sketch gains a permanent value from its bibliography, and though their work is marred by inconsistency the editors and revisors are doing a service to English Catholicism since but for them many of the saints commemorated in these two volumes would have been forgotten or remained unknown. G.M.

MÉDITATIONS sur les Mystères de notre sainte Foi avec la Pratique de l'Oraison Mentale. Par le Vénérable Père Louis du Pont, S.J. Traduites sur le texte espagnol de Valladolid (1605) par le R. P. Pierre Tennesseeux, S.J. Édition revue et argumenté d'une biographie, par le R. P. Ugarte, S.J. (Paris, Desclée de Brouwer et Cie. Six volumes, 60 frs.; each volume, 12 frs.)

This spiritual classic is the most celebrated work of Louis du Pont, de Ponte, or, in its original Spanish, de la Puente. As his

## BLACKFRIARS

biographer remarks, 'celui qui ferait de cet admirable ouvrage son livre de prédilection acquerrait en peu d'années une science sûre du dogme et de la doctrine catholique et établirait l'édifice de sa sanctification sur des fondements certains.' The meditations, as such, are long, but the author is at pains to emphasise the liberty left to the reader to pick and choose, linger or skip at will. Moreover, he gives spiritual reading as the first use for which he intends this work.

A detailed index, and a table distributing the meditations throughout the year in liturgical order with another for the *mois de Marie* completes the whole.

M.B.

ONE HOUR. By Mother Mary Philip, I.B.V.M. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne; pp. 132; 4/-.)

This is an anthology of devotions to the Sacred Heart, and the sources from which it is drawn belong to very different periods and possess unequal value. It contains both prose and verse and readers may be repelled by the phrasing of some of the prayers composed in the last generation. Yet this book serves a real purpose for it is intended to emphasise the relation between Catholic action and the real presence of Christ upon the altar, and all the meditations are centred in the Blessed Sacrament. It is fitting, therefore, that it should have been compiled in such a stronghold of English Catholic tradition as the Bar convent at York.

G.M.

MEDITATIONS ON THE PASSION. By Blessed Claude de la Colombe. Translated by Mother Mary Philip. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne; 3/6).

Although these meditations were delivered in London during the Lents of 1677 and 1678, yet, because they touch upon truth and are well translated, there is nothing old-fashioned about them. They are straightforward and practical meditations, showing how necessary it is for all who seek grace to become fellow victims with Christ. Only this attitude will make it possible to achieve the virtues exhibited by Christ in His Passion. It is claimed that these are the first public discourses to inculcate devotion to the Sacred Heart. Direct reference to the Heart of Jesus appears only twice, but the fundamental principles of the devotion are present throughout, as they are in any true discourse touching the humanity of our Lord.

C.P.