

## BIOGRAPHY

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA. By Johannes Jörgensen. (Longmans; 12s. 6d.)

A book of rare beauty and sympathy, qualities it retains in its English dress through the skill of the translator Ingeborg Lund. Jörgensen's work was a labour of love, a love to which he came as he admits very late, achieved in the very place and atmosphere in which Europe's greatest woman-saint dwelt. Yet it would be untrue to suggest that his biography replaces the work published so many years ago by that amazing woman Mother Francis Raphael Drane, who, living in the middle of England in her Dominican Convent at Stone in Staffordshire, far removed from the scenes of Catherine's life, yet managed to grasp so clearly the character of the great saint. To-day one can still see her wonderful collection of Italian works which, together with her own memories of former visits to Siena, gave her this knowledge of background, just as her own religious life gave her the key to Catherine's sanctity. It is pleasing to see the grateful acknowledgement paid to the kindness of the Stone Sisters in Jörgensen's preface for the use of much of this material.

One point which may be controverted is the author's suggestion that Catherine's troubled death-bed was due to her domineering spirit in life which thus revenged itself on her at death. Was it not rather due to the awe she felt on coming so close to the Divine Spouse whose infinite sanctity had been her lifelong contemplation? The sight of this infinite sanctity led her, as it led her holy father Saint Dominic, to tremble at her own sloth in running in the ways of His commandments; and this holy fear thereupon seized her, not as a temptation but as an act of adoration mingled with marvellous contrition.

WALTER GUMBLEY, O.P.

LENIN. By Christopher Hollis. (Longmans; 10s. 6d.)

We still lack the perspective with which to study the Russian revolution that began in 1917. The communist experiment and the quick processes of liquidation were perhaps merely phases in a movement not yet completed, and judged from our present standpoint the figures of its leaders must appear curiously foreshortened. Yet, even while it is still too early to decipher the significance of their individual achievement, they are passing into contrasted mythologies.

Vladimir Ilyich Ulianov was born in the spring of 1870 and