

NOTICES

THE STORY OF MELLIFONT, by Father Colmcille, o.c.s.o., (Gill, 30s.), is a history of the first Cistercian Abbey in Ireland. Father Colmcille describes its foundation, development, prestige, eclipse and then, in recent times, renaissance. Cistercian life depicted against an old Irish background makes a refreshing change from the more familiar, of late, contemporary American Cistercian way of life. It is reassuring to know, as this absorbing history shows, that Irish Cistercian scholarship is very much alive. The illustrations are particularly noteworthy.

FELIX WALKING, by Hilary Ford (Eyre & Spottiswoode, 13s. 6d.), is a lively novel about a maddeningly angry young man, Felix, author of a successful novel, and Sally, a publisher's secretary, the irritated victim of his wiles and adventures, which are often hilariously funny. The opening sentence is eye-catching in an Arlen-esque way. The novel, so breezily introduced, moves along at a cracking rate, satiric, witty, entertaining to the last sentence.

Della Casa's GALATEO (The Penguin Classics, 2s. 6d.) is a Book of Manners first published in Venice in 1588, two years after the author's death. Giovanni della Casa, papal diplomat, archbishop, in this work 'instructs a young pupil on what to do and what not to do in the general company of friends'. Although it is sometimes quaint, it is on the whole remarkably pertinent even in these days, and not only for the 'young pupil'. Mr R. S. Pine-Coffin has made a skilful job of the translation. He also provides a biographical notice of della Casa, and a long note on 'books of Courtesy in England.'

THE SPANISH ROYAL HOUSE, by Sir Charles Petrie (Bles, 30s.), is chiefly concerned with the Spanish Bourbons since 1700. It is a colourful story, and, in this excellent narration by an acknowledged expert, free from tedious complexities. Sir Charles gives a succinct outline of the earlier history of Spain prior to the accession of the Spanish Bourbons in 1700. There are seven portraits, ranging from Philip V to the Infante Juan Carlos.

THE GLORIOUS FOLLY, by Louis de Wohl (Gollancz, 16s.), is described as 'a novel of the time of St Paul'. As his readers know, Mr de Wohl is a master in this type of historico-religious fiction. This latest addition to the long list of his historical novels will certainly enhance his reputation. The corrupt court of imperial Rome, the carryings-on of the Herod family, the stratagems of the noble Cassius Longinus (of Mr de Wohl's *The Spear*), the iniquities of the venal Jewish priests

combine to make an interesting fact-cum-fiction background to the unfolding of the heroic story of Paul of Tarsus.

LIFE IS WORTH LIVING, by Mgr Fulton Sheen (Peter Davies, 16s.), is the fifth in the now well-known series of published television talks. If Mgr Fulton Sheen's recently announced withdrawal from television means the end of this stimulating series, it will be a great loss to a wider public than just his American television audience. This latest volume is, perhaps, the best of the series, though it is rather different from its predecessors. Most, if not all, of Mgr Fulton Sheen's favourite topics are discussed, but this time they are cleverly interwoven into biographies and pointed by true stories from many places.

ENIGMA is Sir Arnold Lunn's title for his study of Moral Re-armament (Longmans, 16s.), which presents, with much evidence, a more favourable judgment of its good intentions than is usual from Catholic critics.

A TRAVELLER IN ROME (Methuen, 25s.) is an admirable example of H. V. Morton's gift for digesting the erudition of others and producing an accurate and readable guide. Twenty illustrations add to the value of a sympathetic account of a city whose variety is brilliantly conveyed.

CROWN OF GLORY is yet another life of Pope Pius XII, by Alden Hatch and Seamus Walshe (Heinemann, 18s.) Here the story of his public career is recalled, and some over-familiar photographs are included. Its worth is weakened by an exuberant style and by such statements as 'He was literally a wraith'.

NEWMAN: HIS LIFE AND SPIRITUALITY, by Louis Bouyer (Burns and Oates; 30s.), was reviewed at length when it first appeared in the original French in *BLACKFRIARS* for October 1952. Our reviewer then gave it as his opinion that no 'book as yet produced has done so much to depict Newman's life in its true proportions. . . . From the point of view of Newman's inner life, Fr Bouyer's book must be the most important that has yet appeared. He is less concerned with Newman's works than with the history of his soul. He steadily removes one after another of the more important misunderstandings. . . . We shall look forward to the English translation'. . . . This wish is now fulfilled in the present elegant and most readable version by Mr Lewis May.

In *THEOLOGY FOR BEGINNERS* (Sheed and Ward; paper 5s., cloth 10s. 6d.), Dr F. J. Sheed again shows his great power of expounding the great dogmas of the Faith for the ordinary Christian and of revealing how by mental assimilation they enrich our lives. This book, which comes midway between *A Map of Life* and *Theology and Sanity*,

begins with a particularly good discussion on 'spirit', and it might be said that this is the keynote of the whole book and of all Dr Sheed's work. Certainly no one in England has laboured so widely to popularize the part that *thought* about the mysteries of our Faith can play, especially in our materialist age, in spiritualizing our lives. Dr Sheed recommends that concurrent reading of the Bible should accompany the study of theology; and a suitable and excellent companion volume to *Theology for Beginners* will be found in *THEY SAW HIS GLORY* (Sheed and Ward; 16s.) where Maisie Ward provides an Introduction to the Gospels and Acts.

Among recent paper-covered books on Lourdes are *THE SPIRIT OF LOURDES*, by J. A. Shields (Gill; 3s. 6d.), *LOURDES*, by J. Beevers (St Paul Publications), and a welcome re-print of B. G. Sandhurst's *WE SAW HER* (Longmans; 6s.), which gives eye-witness accounts of St Bernadette's visions.

THE MOTHER OF THE LITTLE FLOWER (Gill; 6s.) is by Sister Geneviève of the Holy Face, O.C.D., St Thérèse's sister Céline. Céline was only some eight years old when her mother died, but this book—as was *The Story of a Family*—is based on notes collected by the Martin sisters about that time.

After having dealt with Kent, Surrey and Sussex in the new series of Penguin Guides, Mr F. R. Banks now tackles the more exacting problem of the metropolis in *THE PENGUIN GUIDE TO LONDON* (Penguin Books; 6s.). Starting off with him—in imagination—from Charing Cross, 'the hub of London', we are startled to find a certain order emerging from what we once thought a delightful chaos. Londoners whose limbs have been strengthened by the bus strike may be encouraged to set out walking over Mr Bank's thirty-six routes in exploration of their city. But it is also to be hoped that the current outcry against 'scarlet monsters' will not make them forget Mr Gladstone's advice, quoted with approval in this book, that 'the way to see London is from the top of a bus—the top of a bus, gentlemen'. In the course of the four pages devoted to Westminster Cathedral Mr Banks calls Archbishop Godfrey a Cardinal.

Recent additions to the World's Classics Series (Oxford University Press) are *NEW GRUB STREET*, by George Gissing (9s. 6d.), *A HERO OF OUR OWN TIMES*, by M. Y. Lermontov (7s.), and a selection of Hakluyt's *VOYAGES AND DOCUMENTS* by Janet Hampden (8s. 6d.).

THIRTY PSALMS AND TWO CANTICLES (The Grail, 4s. 6d.) is a second selection with words in English from the psalmody of Père Gelineau.