

Blackfriars

the supervision of the prison should be given to nuns, Thérèse Chupin left St. Lazare and went to live in a tiny flat in the Rue de Vaugirard. There one dark night two discharged prisoners knocked at her door. They were homeless and alone, and in their need had sought the only friend they knew. There was but little room, little furniture, and only six francs fifty of capital—borrowed, at that—but Thérèse opened her door and her arms to the outcasts, and thus began St. Anne's Refuge, later to develop into the Congregation of Our Lady of Grace.

The history of this development now published is a timely tribute to the memory of one who would have rejoiced at the recent amalgamation of the Congregations of Dominican Sisters whose English Congregation, sprung from her own foundation of Our Lady of Grace at Châtillon, loses its identity 'for the greater good of the Order and its work.' This, in her sublime humility, was ever the ambition of her who was known to all by the simple but eloquent title of 'Bonnie Mère.'

The translator seems to have had some little difficulty with the preface, but the rest of the book is well done.

M.D.

THE INWARD VISION. By R. H. J. Steuart, S.J. (Longmans, Green & Co.; 5/-.)

Having been asked to review this book I have read it and re-read it and dallied over it and enjoyed it—and quite by the way, of course, severely tried the editorial patience. I must admit that I am not the person who should review it. Don't let us discuss the question of competence or incompetence. That is the Editor's affair. I can only say that the book has the same effect upon me as those books which are called mystical. Now, I am not a mystical person. I've never even wanted to have a vision. No nonsense about me—that is my secret boast, though I suppose to the eyes of others I have as much nonsense about me as any other average Tom or Dick. But when I read the Psalms, or *The Cloud of Unknowing* or Richard Rolle, I am afraid I get thoroughly out of my depth. I have a vague impression that I am not always understanding the full meaning of what I read, yet I go on reading, gripped and as it were haunted and possessed by the words before me. Father Steuart explains that one may hold a truth yet without inwardly possessing it. It is the reality beneath all the verbal wrappings that matters: it is not the formula or the symbol or the glass through which you see darkly that should concern us so much as the

shining truth which is reached with the mind's eye. Now I dare to ask : is it not possible for one to reach some knowledge of the truth without any very clear understanding of the formula or without consciously attending to the glass through which we peer darkly? I am not setting store by the inner light or by intuitions or immediate illuminations of the intellect. Perhaps I am only asserting Father Steuart's Inward Vision which comes from God-given faith. *Nisi credideritis, non intelligetis*. I should describe Father Steuart's book in many of its parts as the beautiful expression of the inexpressible. The theologian will perhaps complain here and there of the particular word or symbol or formula, but there are truths, as Fr. Steuart points out, which it is impossible to express in language which does not lay itself open to misconstruction. When, for instance, there is question of the divine nature, 'words can never be more than wavering shadows of the reality which they would suggest.'

O world invisible, we view thee,
O world intangible, we touch thee,
O world unknowable, we know thee,
Inapprehensible, we clutch thee,

is the poet's account of this conflict between symbol and the reality for which the symbol stands. Father Steuart has the seeing eye and in *The Inward Vision* he suggests with freshness and originality the great realities which he has the gift of making real to his readers.

C.N.L.

THE LITTLE FLOWERS OF SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA. Culled from Old Manuscripts by Innocenzo Taurisano of the Order of Preachers. Translated from the Italian by Charlotte Dease. (Harding & More, Ltd., The Ambrosden Press, London, W.C.1; 3/6 net.)

This is a little work of manifold value. It will be an excellent introduction to St. Catherine, inciting the reader to study larger works on the saint, while to her lovers of long standing it will be a discovery and fresh delight. Particularly interesting are the *Miracles*, recorded by an anonymous writer during the saint's lifetime, and the hitherto unpublished deposition of Fra Simone da Cortona in the Castellano Process, where he shows Catherine's patient and tender indulgence towards his morbidly sensitive nature. We are pleased, too, to have details from that solemn and consequential worthy, Ser Christofano di Gano,