

Book Reviews

range varies from the thundering of G. K. Chesterton's 'The Towers of Time,' the grand sweep of Alfred Noyes' 'The Burial of a Queen,' and the intensity of Lord Alfred Douglas' sonnet sequence 'In Excelsis,' to the quiet tones of F. W. Harvey's 'Prayer: That I may be taught the Gesture of Heaven' and Canon John Gray's 'The Night Nurse goes Her Round,' the delicacy of Mary Woellwarth's 'Our Lady of Silence,' and the charming fancy of Helen Parry Eden's 'Back from Italy,' and W. R. Childe's 'A Song of the Little City.'

On closing the book the thought remains that had Mr. Leahy cast his net more widely and not confined his choice so exclusively to contemporary poets, the volume might have been considerably enriched. Perhaps we may hope he will some time compile an anthology of Catholic poets which would not exclude those who are recent but not strictly contemporary, as, for instance, Michael Field, whose beautiful poetry is indeed Catholic.

K. M. K.

THE WELL-SPRINGS. By Alphonse Gratra; translated from *Les Sources* by Rev. S. J. Brown, S. J. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne; 5/-.)

At last, thanks to Father Stephen Brown, S. J., we have an English edition of Père Gratra's *Les Sources*. To those who have already come to know the rare spirit of the old nineteenth century Oratorian, this will be very good news. Père Ramière, S. J., spoke of him as: 'A penetrating mind, an ardent soul, a heart brimming over with affection, sympathetic by nature and in character disinterested and generous,' having 'all the qualities that can make a man capable of winning and fascinating others.' A contemporary writer said: 'The good that is in Père Gratra is that he has wings . . . He is a dreamer, but his dreams are of the kind that carry you into a higher world, of the kind that give me a fever of enthusiasm.' And in the Introduction to the English edition, Father Stephen Brown says: 'He speaks to the deepest instincts, *the latent enthusiasms of the soul.*' The italics are the reviewer's, for this phrase is the key to Père Gratra's enchantments. He was an apostle of the mind. He was jealous that his God should be loved with the whole mind, as well as with the whole soul. And he knew well how to rouse in the mind of the smallest and least student, a hunger to find God by the laborious pilgrimage of the reason, as well as on the obedient wings of faith. This was the book that Ollé Lapruné, the two Perrauds, Henri Perrey and many more made their gospel of study. It was the principal inspira-

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tion of *Le Sillon*—and perhaps was the means of grace which guided that movement to sacrifice all its dreams to obedience. It was the book which delighted that brilliant spirit—Giosue Borsi, the Italian convert and writer who fell in the Great War. For those of us who are not scholars or even students, but only those who try not to commit the sin of omission by failing to love God effectually with the powers of our mind, this book may not be of practical use throughout, but it will be of (this word must be qualified with ‘almost’ and ‘curiously’ *angelic* good to us. It will stir us strangely. We must all read it. And to read it will be to make us determine to possess it, even though the shillings have to be saved separately. We owe the publishers our gratitude for keeping the price so moderate.

C.H.

A SAINT IN THE MAKING. By John Oxenham. (Longmans; pp. 208; 5/-.)

This study by an avowed ‘sound and staunch Protestant’ is typical of the mind that can appreciate but cannot believe in Catholicism. ‘We are broad enough in our sympathies and keenly interested in humanity to recognize and rejoice in a unique personality wherever we find one’; the Author thus introduces us to his life of the Curé d’Ars. We suppose that the majority of subjects of biography are sympathetically treated, are human and are to a certain extent, in their several spheres, unique, but hagiography requires something more than mere comprehensiveness and a keen interest in humanity. Enter this field of research with the necessary qualifications and there can be no perplexity when faced by such an anomaly as the learning of Latin grammar by a Pilgrimage to La Louvesc (pp. 29, 30).

By taking certain legitimate liberties Mr. Oxenham has given a clear narrative, from first to last unflagging in its interest. At times it is exciting. Always the theme is handled with reverence and sincerity with no pietistic emotionalism.

G.A.F.

THE SECRET OF THE CURE D’ARS. By Henri Ghéon; translated by F. J. Sheed; with a Note by G. K. Chesterton. (Sheed & Ward; 3/6.)

The same saint is here presented, but by a Catholic and a Frenchman. The result is a little masterpiece of moving simplicity, admirably translated and now re-issued in its fourth impression at a price which leaves no one with the excuse for not having read it. Every priest should possess a copy.