

her care; yet, I did bring the book into a London old people's home, and left it around to see what would happen. The charm of the book brought its own delights, in spite of the illogicality of expecting a group of people who had worked hard all their lives, to sit and read: 'I have no excuse for failure in tolerance for I have sufficient intelligence to understand that my neighbours may have greater temptations and fewer consolations than I imagine. If I can modify my mental judgment through use of my commonsense, I will go a long way towards a more charitable approach.' For, within its pages there is the life of a soul, and the human being seeking after God, to love and adore him, and to give him everything, through the simplicity of love within the reach of all, rich and poor, and one is reminded that, after all, in speaking of pure contemplation, a high point of loving God was reached by the old peasant who, when asked what he did in church, expressed himself by saying that he just knelt and looked at God and God looked at him.

The book, written as a diary for the year, should have a good sale in this country, and there should be more than one copy of it available in our libraries.

K. J. BARTLETT

SAINT DOMINIQUE DE CALERUEGA D'APRÈS LES DOCUMENTS DU XIII^e SIÈCLE. Par M.-H. Vicaire, O.P. (Paris. Editions du Cerf, 1955.)

LIVES OF THE BRETHREN OF THE ORDER OF PREACHERS. Translated by Placid Conway, O.P. (London. Blackfriars Publications; 16s.)

In 1921 the well-known historian Père Mandonnet published a small book of 183 pages, called *Saint Dominique: L'idée, l'homme et l'oeuvre*. Small in volume it was rich with the accumulated historical knowledge and wisdom of many years' teaching at the University of Fribourg. This work, which set out to show what manner of man St Dominic was and how the foundation of the Friars Preachers came about, contained no notes. In 1937, Père Vicaire, a disciple of Mandonnet and, like him, professor at Fribourg, republished the book, adding numerous notes to justify the various statements of the original work, various other of Mandonnet's articles bearing on the subject, and a number of critical studies on important points, such as the chronology of the Saint's labours in Southern France up till the time of the confirmation of the Order in 1216, the exact nature of those labours, their background in the pietist movement then in full development, and the history of the Rule of St Augustine, etc. The small book had become a work in two volumes. Among the other critical studies added by Vicaire was an important one on the primitive legislation of the Order, showing that large parts of it were the work of St Dominic

himself, that other parts dated at least from his lifetime, to which was added a reconstruction of part of the original Constitutions.

Père Vicaire's new work supplements this previous book. His aim is to let the original documents speak for themselves, so that the portrait of St Dominic stands out, not only from what was written about his life, but from those parts of the Constitutions for which he was personally responsible. These documents are printed in a French translation and are prefaced by critical introductions by the author. The book is divided into three parts, dealing with the life and work of St Dominic, the primitive legislation, and the holiness and cultus of the Saint respectively. As the basis for the life of the Saint, the biography by his immediate successor as General of the Order, Blessed Jordan of Saxony, has been chosen; where necessary passages from other reliable sources supplement this life, and the various incidents are as far as possible dated.

The second part gives us a translation of the primitive constitutions. These fall into three groups. The first dating from 1215-16 is that which was formerly known as the First Distinction, and regulates the monastic life of the Brethren; it was partly drawn from the Customs of the Premonstratensians, and was partly the original work of St Dominic; the sources are indicated for each chapter. The second dates from 1220, being chapters 17-37 of the Second Distinction, and dealing with the life of study and preaching, this part was also due to the Saint. The third dates from 1221-1227, chapters 1-16 of the Second Distinction, and is a juridical text regulating Chapters and elections. To the constitutions are added various documents concerning the approbation and confirmation of the Order. The third part of the book deals, as we have said, with the holiness and cultus of St Dominic. Here we find the sworn depositions of the witnesses, many of them eye-witnesses, called at the process for the Saint's canonization, both at Bologna and Toulouse, and other contemporary documents bearing on the holiness of the Saint. The work is enriched with five indexes, which make consultation easy, particularly useful being that which brings together all the references to the different characteristics which go to the making of a complete and faithful portrait. To those who know the accuracy of Père Vicaire's scholarship, it will be evident at once that this is a work of great importance. He has put all students of the middle ages in his debt, but especially the sons of St Dominic, whose devotion to and love of the holy Founder cannot but be increased by this faithful picture of what he was and what he did.

The present edition of the *Vitae Fratrum* only differs in one respect from the edition which appeared in the Orchard Book series in 1924; what is called the Legend of St Dominic, by Sister Cecilia, who was

clothed by the Saint, has been added. The *Vitae Fratrum* is a compilation made about fifty years after the death of St Dominic by order of a General Chapter. The materials collected from all over the Order were edited by Friar Gerard de Frachet, who himself was clothed only four years after the Saint's death. The work deals with various incidents in the lives of St Dominic and his successor Blessed Jordan of Saxony, and with the foundation and growth of the Order. This is a useful reprint; but when one considers the amount of work that has been done in the last thirty years on the matters treated of, not least by Père Vicaire, it seems a pity that some attempt was not made to bring Fr Bede Jarret's notes up to date. We are puzzled by the letters O.S.B. after the name of Blessed Cecilia (p. vi and p. 69).

A.F.

ST THÉRÈSE AND HER MISSION. By Abbé A. Combes. (Gill; 16s.)

This is a very irritating book. It sets out to convince the reader that St Teresa of Lisieux has discovered an entirely new approach to the spiritual life, and that this achievement places her above practically all the saints that have gone before, since the author asserts that 'she releases all who listen to her, she releases them *for ever* from spiritual error, from foolish fear and faint-heartedness' (p. 56)—which certainly is more than anyone else has ever achieved. His presentation of her doctrine is strange, to say the least. Teresa tells us that God's love reaches out to the greatest sinners (something that is surely a Christian commonplace), which is so, the author continues, 'because of the very nature of God. If God had none but faithful children . . . his love would be hindered, as it were, in its natural dynamism' (p. 54). This, surely, can only mean that sin is necessary for the full flowering of God's love. Since Teresa's doctrine has been fully approved by the Church, we can only conclude that the author in trying to make her original has interpreted her in an unorthodox sense.

This craze for making her say things that have never been said before leads Abbé Combes to the most amazing statements. For example, he breaks out into transports of admiration (the book is written in superlatives that sound simply ridiculous in English) because the young girl of twenty is feeling herself unequal to the task of helping in the formation of novices—a fact which he thinks is 'in the highest degree remarkable'. When she writes, on this occasion, that one must try to guide souls 'by the special way which Jesus has traced out for them . . . not . . . according to one's own way', this, the Abbé tells us, is 'among the most profound of all the discerning intuitions of Thérèse' (p. 59)—but surely this is something that has been known to every guide of souls worthy of the name for the last 1,800 years or so. When Teresa continues: 'I saw that the one thing necessary was that I more and more