

ness of some of the historical passages which is so misleading; we instance the fantastic reference to Lord Curzon at Lausanne; the omission of the question of India in Mr. Churchill's relations to Lord Baldwin; the unconditioned blame of France and, especially, England for the resurgence of aggression in Germany; more blame of the two countries for failing to 'reward' Mussolini after Munich; and complete omission of Marshal Petain's failure to honour the Franco-British treaty in June, 1940 (the footnote on page 288 is an egregious example of statistical manipulation). This is a disappointing book from so distinguished an author.

P.U.F.

POETRY.

SONS OF THE MISTREL. By Roy Campbell. (Faber and Faber; 2s. 6d.)

Mr. Campbell's work has suffered from the praise and dispraise of partisans. In reaction against the Georgians, with their townee verse about the countryside which Mr. Campbell so justifiably satirises, he blows his 'silver trumpet,' as he calls it: the silver trumpet needs careful handling if it is to produce more than sound and fury and not be like the oboe, 'an ill woodwind that nobody blows any good.' The cure for the spiritual anaemia of this generation is not, however, blood-and-thunder verse but robustness of intellect, not sensuous naïvety (although that is an advance on the bourgeois unreality of the week-ender school of versifiers) but complexity in simplicity, the virile nervousness born of a harmony of intellect and emotion. It is easy to put a film of profundity on experiences that are essentially shallow and slick, and so it comes about that novels like *The Power and the Glory* raise a chorus of praise from the tired minds of the Sunday reviewers with their ready-made jargon about 'exquisite workmanship' or 'realistic limning' as per Sir Hugh Walpole, who inherited the Lake District from Wordsworth.

Mr. Campbell, at his best in his shorter lyrics, reminds one of nineteenth century poets such as Francis Thompson and Leconte de Lisle: his is the same bluff aestheticism. The selection is one of the useful Faber Sesame series.

JOHN DURKAN.

THE POEMS OF ALICE MEYNELL. (Burns, Oates, 4s.; and Oxford University Press, 4s.)

Alice Meynell's poetic career began whilst she was still in her teens, and from the first her work showed a remarkable maturity both in thought and in execution. *Renouncement*, for

instance, though it was not printed until 1882, belongs to a quite early period, and is surely one of the great sonnets in the English language. The pang of the conscience-compelled parting which is the subject of that poem was, however, soon assuaged, and it is fortunately her happy married life that forms the background of the greater part of her literary work. She has left us neither many nor long poems, but not even the shortest of them is trivial, for all are the expression of a spirit at once metaphysical and deeply religious. There is, moreover, a strength and a robustness about her lines which surprise us in a woman's work, yet feminine grace and charm are not wanting.

Whether she will be remembered more for her verse or for her prose writings, the future alone will show. It is unlikely, however, that either branch of her work will ever wholly lack admirers, and we have positive proof of the continued appeal at any rate of her poetry in the appearance in these hazardous times of two complete editions of it. To say 'two editions' is perhaps misleading, for while they have different bindings, frontispiece and title-pages, they are otherwise identical. Coming as they do from the University Press, Oxford, they are typographically excellent, and we are grateful to both publishers for giving us at so moderate a price attractive volumes, which contain several hitherto unprinted poems, as well as some now collected for the first time.

A.L'E.

MISCELLANEOUS

THE SPIRIT OF THE SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL. By Charles K. Murphy. (Longmans, Green & Co. ; 5s.)

If a member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul needs something in addition to the Manual of the Society he could have nothing better than this book. Any temptation to personal or corporate pride aroused by the first part will be counteracted by the fourth chapter. What is said there and in succeeding chapters ought to receive the attention of all who are engaged in Catholic Action. The question of corporate humility gives much food for thought; and the statement that 'More young men will be lost to the Society through inactivity than will ever abandon it because of overwork' inclines one to ask whether many of our failures have not arisen from asking too little of our people, especially of the young.

Priests and others who have occasion to speak to the Brothers or to members of other Catholic Societies will find the book a great help.