

## Book Reviews

glect and with 'the fundamentals of poetry at all times and in all places.' Mr. Crossley justly insists that since 'beauty cannot be courted with the facile flirtation of the dilettante,' contemporary poets are entitled to a measure of attention before their works are appraised; and that the difficulty of certain of them is no way undesirable, since it implies no more than 'that not many people having experienced emotions similar to the poet's, proportionately few can immediately grasp the significance of his meaning.' Rightly, too, does the author stress the fact that the contents of a poem should be imagined by the reader, and emphasize the importance of form as a guide to that emotional content. Finally he takes comfort in the general signs of a new desire for beauty, and accordingly disagrees with Mr. Herbert Read's less optimistic conclusions on the future of poetry. The poem itself is a legend of the contest between Marsyas and Apollo. How much of it is genuinely mythological and how much due to Mr. Crossley, is a question which the consultation of many authorities has not answered for me. This, however, in no way lessens my appreciation of the poem. In the verse, words wear an air of inevitability; rhyme appears or disappears so fittingly that its presence is not an awkward intrusion or its absence a regrettable vacancy; and rhythm quickens or falters according to the mood to be expressed. The author's technique responds admirably to the demands of the finely dramatic movement of the poem. There is the strength and beauty in the poem that comes from the 'power of imaginative experience.'

R.H.

**THE GOLDEN LEGEND OVERSEAS.** (Burns, Oates and Washbourne; 6/-.)

With small trouble we may soon be aware of the expansion of the Church in the missionary continents, with accompanying signs which recall vividly the three first passionate centuries of our history, not to say sometimes the Acts of the Apostles; and to be stirred from the lethargic support we give to that movement, generous though we may think it. Three periodicals, to mention so few (and there are enough to stock a railway book-stall), insignificant externally: African Missions of the White Fathers, African Missions (both of Ore Place, Hastings), Mrs. Thomas's Missionary News Letter (3b Morpeth Terrace, S.W.1) are enough to stimulate us to prayer and sacrifice, teach us what faith may be to those who place no obstacle to its operation and show the vastness of the field and the whiteness of the unreaped harvest.

## *Blackfriars*

The periodicals are more to the purpose than bound books, for they are the work of those who know what they are writing about through closer contact, whose chief object it is to find the funds for want of which missions are hampered. Books are appearing; and they are fortunate as a class that they may be bad in themselves and worse through conforming to the requirements of the trade, and still not damage seriously the entrancing subject. For it is the divine Lord's passion lived again by His lovers of both sexes and every age and condition.

*The Golden Legend Overseas* would be better without its literary ornaments. The original is by a galaxy of authors by whose names—among them Ghéon, Bellessort, Baumann, Schwob, Père Charles, Vallery-Radot—we are quite willing to be dazzled. All our attention however is required by the facts narrated when it is the story of the Uganda martyrs, the account of the first christians of Korea and many an heroic passion of prince or serving-maid. What martyrdom! Nothing else could furnish stories so moving. All the worse for some of the contents, distinguished by book-making affectation, 'real literary merit' as the introduction calls it. Jacobus de Voragine is a poor model for a martyrology.

It is trite to point out that translation must not be too strictly understood; it is more than substituting words of one language for those of another; that capitals need watching—'space' is every bit as good as 'Time.' Revision should go on as long as the press can wait; to save us from a thousand snares, from saying of a person we are trying to defend that 'we have no reason whatever to believe in his invincible ignorance.'

We recommend this book heartily.

J.G.

THE MEMOIRS OF PÈRE LABAT, 1693—1705. Translated and abridged by John Eaden. (London, Constable, 1931; 7/6 net.)

The editor of this book has had the happy thought of extracting from the eight volumes of Père Labat's West Indian Travels, first published in 1722 and several times reprinted, but never produced in English dress, the personal adventures of the great Dominican missionary, and has woven them into a coherent narrative. The result is an entrancing and quite exciting story of life at sea and on land, of pirates and buccaneers, French planters, Spanish settlers, English filibusters, negro slaves and untamed Caribs, fierce war and peaceful colonisation, ceaseless travel under primitive conditions, and the most zealous apostolic work—and all told and described by one of the most