

Blackfriars

akin to Francis of Assisi, the soldier of Pampeluna to the soldier of Perugia, the convert of Manresa to the convert of the Porziuncula, the leader of Christ's army, to him who called himself "the herald of the King."'

Since nothing mattered but the greater glory of God and the greater good of mankind, the actual training of his men is to St. Ignatius only a secondary matter. 'He asked for the keenest intellects; but when he got them he submitted those intellects to two fallow years, 'wasting their time,' as men might say, sweeping corridors and washing dishes. He would have them go through the finest training the best universities could provide, but when they were trained he would send them back to menial labour, to teach the catechism, and tend the sick. He would make them the keenest instruments our civilisation could produce, and he would send them out to Indian pariahs, or to have their fingers bitten off by Iroquoise babies, or to be confined for years in a Japanese cage, and then to be burnt alive.'

And, after four centuries, the aims of the Society of Jesus remain the same. A human institution, at its best, this Society of Jesus, 'readily acknowledging its limitations, weaknesses, failures,' nevertheless, 'the world is strewn with the bones of her sons and watered with their blood, poured out for God and man with not a hope or desire of reward or recognition.' For love demands the total surrender; and love, to St. Ignatius, was 'a devotion, not a simple joy in which to revel'; and 'an affair of deeds more than of words; a warfare, if warfare were needed, very much more than a crown to be enjoyed.'

J.C.

SOME POEMS. By Rupert Croft-Cooke. (The Galleon Press; 7/6 net.)

Because Mr. Rupert Croft-Cooke is, as the publisher's wrapper informs us, a 'very young man,' it is almost inevitable that his poems should set us thinking of the work of that other young Rupert—Brooke. Both, indeed, possess the passionate and wandering heart of the poet; both are alive with the emotional sense of life; both are utterly spontaneous in the expression of the dreams, desires, and despairs of youth.

But the point where Mr. Croft-Cooke parts company with his Christian namesake is, I am inclined to think, in the matter of simplicity of diction. Brooke's simplicity is only apparent. Whilst it gives the impression of easy fluency, it is in reality the perfect artistry that conceals his art. In his best poems

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we are constantly brought to a halt in our wonder at the inevitable phrase, the unforgettable word. Brooke's genius consisted in the power to create at a touch, at a word, a magic atmosphere that even time fails to dispel.

Mr. Croft-Cooke, although his work is of imagination and observation all compact, has not yet succeeded in arresting our attention by his compelling style, nor has he yet created that lingering atmosphere of thought and emotion which the best poetry seems somehow to evoke. His success lies, I think, in the fact that he has succeeded in saying a lot of things he evidently wanted to say, and that he has found a way of saying them that is satisfactory, if not profoundly impressive. At any rate, it is an achievement in this purely receptive age for a young man to want to say anything, and a greater achievement still to be able to say it gracefully. Whether the thing was worth saying at all is a different matter.

The production of the book is beyond reproach.

E.E.

JOAN OF ARC. By Hilaire Belloc. (Cassell & Co.; 6/- net.)

'Romantic' has become almost too cheap a word to use in describing the story of St. Joan, and if it be felt too obviously platitudinous to refer to the wide appeal this Saint, Peasant, Maid, Soldier has made to all manner of men and women, then we can only offer the feeble excuse of the inadequacy of words to fit the simple and tragic glory of her history. Read Mark Twain, Andrew Lang, Bernard Shaw, Michelet, Anatole France and Gabriel Hanataux if you would understand something of the universal nature of her appeal, and if you would see how she has divided and united such strangely different men.

Mr. Belloc's short life of St. Joan shows that the story will bear re-telling, and we are glad that one so well fitted has undertaken the task. He who combines French sympathies with an understanding of things English, who lives by the Faith which Joan held, who understands the meaning of war and soldiering, who, moreover, excels in his simple, direct, narrative prose seems better equipped for resurrecting St. Joan in book-form than any of the other writers who have attempted the work before him. The book is written in a straightforward, spontaneous style that a child can understand and revel in, and yet it is no child's book in the ordinary sense. Perhaps that is only saying that it is rare literature. Our only regret is that it is limited to a little more than a hundred pages of print.

B.