

## Book Reviews

has pointed out the guiding principles of St. Francis and St. Jane; these are explained at some length in the first part of either book, and in the latter half is set down their application in practice. As far as possible, use is made of the Saints' own words. The summary of St. Francis' teaching is rather 'sketchy'; it is, however, a useful introduction to the 'Treatise on the Love of God.' 'Supernatural lights' (p. 5) should read 'supernatural light' (cf. critical edition, Annecy, 1894). Moreover, the statement (p. 5) that acts promoted by faith-enlightened reason are far lower than 'mystical acts' is not necessarily true; an act's value must be gauged according to the charity that quickens it. St. Jane's mystical teaching is given in much greater fullness; it is shot with the spirit of St. Francis—peace, gentleness, yet unflinching firmness. St. Jane constantly enjoins upon her daughters to live in God's Presence, abandoned wholeheartedly to His good-pleasure. Prayer should be as simple as possible. Though meditation is nearly always necessary in the beginning, normally, prayer should become more and more simple, and meditation tend to disappear. The doctrine of St. Jane again and again recalls that of St. John of the Cross, and of his spiritual daughter, St. Teresa of the Infant Jesus.

A.M.B.

THE TREATY OF THE LATERAN. By Benedict Williamson; pp. 101. (Burns, Oates and Washbourne; 3/6.)

The useful part of this book is in the last four chapters, which contain the articles of the Treaty and Concordat, the ratification, and the speeches of the Holy Father and Signor Mussolini. For, as Cardinal Bourne observes in his foreword, the Roman Question 'is little understood by many Englishmen,' and the acquisition of much necessary knowledge 'will be made easier by the reading of this book.' Father Benedict Williamson's enthusiasm for Fascism is too exuberant to allow an accurate summary of the events that preceded and accompanied the successful Fascist revolution. Between the formation of the Fascist Party in 1919 and the march on Rome in 1922 Mussolini's programme was revolutionary and socialistic; the Partito Popolare was the party of Christian democracy. The latter is not even mentioned by the author. Instead we are told that 'three years of fierce struggle against the Socialists and Communists ended in the famous march on Rome,' and thus the old fable is repeated that Fascism in 1922 saved Italy from Bolshe-

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vism. As a corrective to Father Williamson's summary the reader will find more useful knowledge in *Italy and Fascism*, the work of an Italian Priest—Don Luigi Sturzo. J.C.

DEUTSCHE MYSTIKERTEXTE DES MITTELALTERS. Zusammengesammelt und bearbeitet von Dr. phil. Joseph Quint, Privatdozent an der Universität Bonn. Pages, 63. (Peter Hanstein, Bonn; Marks 2.80.)

The first number of a collection of texts illustrating the medieval German mystics. This fascicule contains extracts from Mechtild of Magdeburg's *Flowing Light of the Godhead*, one of the *Visions* of the heretical Flemish mystic, Hadewych of Brussels, and extracts from the sermons of Meister Eckhart. The purpose of the collection is to provide scholars with the most authentic texts possible, and the extracts are therefore given in the oldest available form, whether German or Flemish, with critical notes. If the student has hitherto been content to read these mystics in the various Latin or other versions, it is an undoubted advantage to him to have the *ipsisima verba* of the mystics. And that is what the editor aims at giving him. J.M.

LITTLE LIVES OF GREAT TERTIARIES. By Marian Nesbitt. With a Preface by F. Anselm Keane, O.F.M. (Burns, Oates and Washbourne, Ltd.; 2/6.)

Who can say, after reading these popular sketches, that the development of holiness demands special circumstances? For kings and comb-makers, hermits and housewives, parish priests and penitents, the broad and simple Rule of the Franciscan Third Order has proved a school of heroic perfection. But it should be noted that they took seriously their vocation as tertiaries. They did not expect to go on being just like anybody else after they had joined the Order, but were conspicuously and uncompromisingly not of the world in which they lived, and this, none the less, without shirking any of the duties of their state.

It is a pity the punctuation and construction of sentences in this book is not more careful. And though we do not regret the author's intention to avoid 'copious references to learned authorities,' some mention of fuller existing biographies—at least any in English—would have been useful to those who may well be inspired by the 'Little Lives' to wish for closer acquaintance with the 'Great Tertiaries.' M.B.