

THE LITTLE FLOWERS OF ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI. (Burns Oates; The Orchard Books; 12s. 6d.)

The *Fioretti* (not altogether happily, but now inescapably, rendered 'the Little Flowers'), best known of Franciscan texts, is an Italian translation of most of a Latin book of 'Deeds of St Francis and his companions'. Both original and translation date from the fourteenth century and enshrine, in Fr Cuthbert's words, 'oral traditions of the first or second generation': stories of St Francis treasured in the Marches of Ancona, where the influence of those most devoted to the early days and ways was strong. At its best—and it often is at its best—the book gives an irresistible feeling that here St Francis is brought as close as words can bring him. There must be few readers of it who have not yielded to its charm.

It is difficult to remember that so familiar a book was not translated into English until about a hundred years ago. The translation, by three ladies, was of uneven merit, and was revised, as to text and rendering, by Dom Roger Hudleston for the old series of *Orchard Books*. It is now reprinted in the publishers' new series under the same name, with a new preface by Fr Paulinus Lavery, O.F.M. The new binding, paper and print are all better than the old, and the volume is pleasant to read from. But there was something to be said for the old pocket size, which has gone. Gone, too, has the old price, and this it is idle to lament, for as things are, the present price is very reasonable.

A.E.H.S.

HUMANISME SCIENTIFIQUE ET RAISON CHRETIENNE. By D. Dubarle. (Desclée de Brouwer, Paris; n.p.)

This collection of essays and addresses by a priest well informed in the scientific outlook does not pretend to go at length or very deeply into the problems of modern science or of mankind generally. Delicate allusion and cautious suggestion rather than dogmatic statement are the method pursued whether in remarking on the victories or on the limitations of science. Where the argument seeks to show that humanity requires more than scientific progress alone can give it, the most original part indicates the liability of science to be as sinful as so many other features of human life. The book should help both professionals and amateurs of science to order their thoughts in a Christian way.

I.T.