

THE WOMAN WHO COULD NOT DIE. By Julia de Beausobre. (Gollancz; 12s. 6d.)

There could be no more timely reprint than this. Not merely as an indictment against the iniquity of Soviet totalitarianism: the evidence for that is ample and available. Madame de Beausobre's account of her sufferings in the prisons and labour-camps of the G.P.U. has a deeper meaning. She reveals the perennial Christian answer to all anguish and pain, whatever its shape and inspiration. Whether in solitary confinement or herded amongst thieves and prostitutes, under the whip of all-night interrogation or on the run from her pursuers, she retains a serenity that comes from within, from a knowledge of suffering as redemptive and even beautiful. She can indeed discern the ravages of human kindness under the fanatic cruelty of her torturers. She gives, in fact, a most moving commentary on what Calvary may mean today.

I.E.

THE LOST ANT. By Miriam Blanco-Fombona. (Allen and Unwin; 7s. 6d.)

This tale of a Latin American peon who becomes a millionaire and a diplomat in London is out of the run of ordinary English novels, not only because of its fresh theme but, too, because of its unaustere appearance—printed in Sweden and suggesting a world apart from 'the authorised standards'. It is pleasantly told, makes no claim to importance, and evokes the varying worlds of an Andes village, an English convent school and Paris in 1940 with consistent completeness and charm.

I.E.

WARRIOR BARD. By Edward and Stephani Godwin. (Harrap; 8s. 6d.)

It would need a formidable bore to make the life of William Morris unreadable, and, whatever other defects it may have, *Warrior Bard* is certainly not tedious. Its authors have notable advantages. They are the present tenants of Kelmscott Manor: Mary Morris was their friend: they are themselves artists and admirers of Morris's work. Yet one can only marvel at the opportunities they have lost, for *Warrior Bard* soon degenerates into a patchy collection of trivia: of patently invented conversations and chatty ecstasies. A brief biography of Morris is admittedly a difficult task to achieve. His character is far from easy to assess: his achievements were so various that any quick summary of them must be inadequate: his relationships with his friends were complicated, and a serious analysis of them must be demanded of any biographer. Unfortunately Mr and Mrs Godwin have by-passed these radical matters in the interests of a superficial portrait. It is a portrait, but it is scarcely Morris.

I.E.