

way back from Avignon in 1375, whereas Gardner quite definitely speaks of only one such meeting.

The general reader will find this book admirable as an introduction to one of the most remarkable of women, whose intellect, charity, courage and endurance combined to make her a worthy precursor of St Teresa of Avila, whom she surpasses in human tenderness and—possibly—in political insight. Her tenderness is emphasized by her later biographer who fills out her story with a good deal of exegetic matter regarding saintliness.

Sigrud Undset had lived to end her book with a chapter on the state of the modern world. 'It is not given to us', she writes, 'to know what Christendom's final fate on earth will be . . . In the light of the split atom some subjects become as it were transparent. But who can say how mankind will react to the new discoveries it makes? We sorely need the wisdom of the saints.'

NAOMI ROYDE SMITH

THE ART OF PAUL VALÉRY: A Study in Dramatic Monologue. By Francis Scarfe. (Heinemann; 25s.)

Mr Scarfe's study of Valéry is obviously the fruit of long and loving familiarity with the poet's work and his knowledge of the considerable body of critical work that exists is evident. His book is intended, one imagines, for the reader himself familiar not only with Valéry's work but also with at any rate the more important commentaries. Mr Scarfe does not, except incidentally, give interpretations; for the poems of *Charmes*, for instance, he refers readers to the commentaries of Alain and Mme Noulet, at the same time warning them of their fallibility. While it is clear that such analyses are not within the scope of this book, which is concerned mainly to show the dramatic evolution of Valéry, one may regret their absence and hope that the writer will provide them in another work, for it is obvious that he has much still to say about the poems and equally obvious that what he has to say must be very seriously considered.

What one may call the thesis of the book is ably and plausibly argued, though there may be a tendency towards over-emphasis. While one knew well enough that much of the poetry expressed an interior drama, involving the relationship of potential selves and other metaphysical quandaries, no one before Mr Scarfe has analysed the dramatic elements in such detail or with such technical distinctions. His approach is mainly linguistic, though he does not lose sight of the fact that a poem is an organic whole. In the chapter on *Charmes* his method does indeed seem somewhat arid, as the consideration of the longer poems from a purely dramatic angle necessitates a partial

and piecemeal analysis. Where it is seen at its best is in the chapter on *La Jeune Parque*, by far the best in the book, for Mr Scarfe has such an intimate knowledge of the poem, such high regard for it, that he there holds the reader more intensely than he does elsewhere.

Valéry's death has been followed by the usual literary eclipse. Mr Scarfe, however, has no doubt of the greatness of the poet's stature. His 'philosophy', his probing scepticism, need no more concern us here than it does Mr Scarfe in his book, though in this connection it may be said that so thorough and so perceptive a study as this would hardly have been undertaken if there were only admiration for the poet's art without considerable sympathy with his outlook. None the less, as his subject is the art of Valéry, Mr Scarfe is rightly concerned only with the poetry and not with the attitude to life which it may reveal.

ERNEST BEAUMONT

PIUS X. Translated from the Italian of Fr H. Dal-Gal by Thomas F. Murray, M.A. (Gill, Dublin; 15s.)

In view of the recent canonization of Saint Pius X this publication is a timely one, for this ceremony was one of more than usual interest. The last occasion on which a pope was canonized was in 1712, when Pius V was raised to the altars, and the one previous to that was as far back as 1313 when Celestine V was declared a saint.

Fr Dal-Gal presents Pius X to us in all his gentleness, firmness and sanctity and in a book eminently readable, for the translator has done his work well. The account of Pius X's miracles, given in the tenth chapter, may come as a surprise to many readers, especially because so large a number of them were done in public audiences. Naturally these did not appear during the saint's lifetime, and owing to the rapidity of the introduction of his cause of beatification the relation of all wonders wrought by him were kept secret, being *sub judice*. Little children were taken in his arms and blessed and restored to their parents healed even though crippled from birth, or born blind as in several cases. A man with a paralysed arm begged Pius to heal him in order that he might support his family who were in want; the pope touched him and he was immediately cured. When however the man joyfully called out, the pope motioned him to silence. One story bearing on Pius's gentleness and humour may be told here. A young girl suffering from a diseased foot was in great and constant pain until she was persuaded to pull on a sock belonging to the pope but which had strayed from the Vatican, and the pain immediately left her. Pius laughed heartily when he heard the story and remarked how odd it was that the socks that released others from pain had no effect on his own poor feet which caused him constant suffering.

W.G.