

THE FRIARS' BOOK-SHELF

Tendencies in Modern American Poetry. By Amy Lowell. Pages 343. Price \$2.50. The MacMillan Co., New York City.

This most recent work of Amy Lowell is to our mind the clearest and most scholarly treatment of contemporaneous American poetry that has as yet been offered to the reading public. The title is well chosen, for the author aims rather at a criticism of a movement than at a history of individual poets. Accordingly, she selects from a wide range, and with excellent judgment, a certain few who in her opinion represent the tendencies which are manifested in the attempt of current thought to break from the artificial methods of the traditional school.

Whether or not Miss Lowell is preoccupied with a theory in her collective treatment of these poets may be questioned; but no one will fail to profit by her splendid analysis and enlightened commentary on each of them in particular. She is fortunate not only in having an extensive knowledge of their literary efforts, but also in being intimately acquainted with their inner lives and aspirations. This enables her to discover in their writings qualities and characteristics hidden from the ordinary reader, which she reveals with freshness and a spirit which makes her work both interesting and instructive.

Even though we did not know that she was of the Imagist school we would be forced to this conclusion from the fact that she is at great pains to elucidate its principles and to justify its methods. For ourselves, we prefer to delay giving our unreserved approval of the standards enunciated until we see whether the narrowness which is recognized in the works of "H. D." and J. G. Gletcher is the direct result of the theory or whether this is due to the personal limitations of the poets. For, surely, neither the scope nor the purpose of poetry has in its entirety been attained by either of them.

—C. McC.

The Right to Work. By J. Elliot Ross, C. S. P. Pages 106. Price \$1.00, \$1.10 postpaid. The Devin-Adair Co., New York City.

This is a thought-provoking exposition of the evils of unemployment—a condition bound to affect seriously our social life in the future as in the past—and a varied scheme of tentative efforts to solve the problem. The merit of this work lies in the fact that

it arouses interest in affairs deserving national attention and that it contains suggestions which will undoubtedly prove helpful in these days of general readjustment. In his thesis Father Ross proves that the state is bound in legal justice to find or furnish work for its unemployed. Each citizen, being a part of the state, is bound to use all his power to bring about corrective legislation. In discussing the means of helping our neglected fellow men he gives the value of employment bureaus, coordination of industries, unemployment insurance, management of public work, and institutions, similar to the Good Shepherd Homes, for the care of fallen men.

—N. F. G.

Innocence and Ignorance. By M. S. Gillett, O. P.; J. Elliot Ross, C. S. P., translator. Pages 190. Price \$1.40 delivered. The Devin-Adair Co., New York City.

Father Gillett has taken up a question of supreme importance to all, but especially to those who have to do with the education of youth—that is, how to form them to pure and chaste lives. Many fantastic theories, almost invariably harmful, have been put forth to resist the rising tide of immorality, but here we have a really common-sense method of instructing youth in the mystery of life, one which makes knowledge not destructive but constructive.

Parents, priests and educators will find this book most valuable because it not only explains and refutes the many dangerous theories of sex-education now current and conveys a warning against their use in schools and home, but also gives explicit instructions for imparting to our growing boys and girls the knowledge of things which they must learn sooner or later and perhaps under circumstances not only dangerous to, but often utterly destructive of the virtue of purity.

—N. F. G.

A Short History of England. By Gilbert K. Chesterton. John Lane Co., New York. \$1.50 net. Pp. 284.

Mr. Chesterton assumes the role of a philosopher of history more than an historian, so-called. A Short History of England might be a series of lectures on the evolution of the English. The language employed is so concise that the inconsistencies of movements and the antitheses of character appear startling till one remembers it is a general practice of historians to embellish their stage. Mr. Chesterton uses no imported embellishments,

in fact, he uses no stage; he uses the country itself as a background for his tremendous subject—the masses. The book presents a wide criticism of English history as it is generally told, illuminates brilliantly many darker places, corrects the errors of the insular historians, who see nothing but thorns in a thistle, and who believe the shamrock grows only to be trodden under foot. Withal the criticism is not harsh for it is the undercurrent of paradox and humor. An admirable volume of compactness and neatness, well adapted to people of a reflective turn of mind. Its problems are manifold, its solutions ingenious, its errors few and pardonable. It is a book with a long life before it, for it is a true exposition of England and the English, and as interesting as a peculiar child.

—A. H.

His Only Son. By Wm. F. Robinson, S. J. Price \$1.25 net. Pp. 203. B. Herder, St. Louis, Mo.

This is a series of apologetic lectures in the style of and in matter relative to the author's recent work, "Christ's Masterpiece," which answers the question, "Why must I be a Catholic?" The present work answers a prior question, "Why must I be a Christian?" After proving the integrity, genuineness and historical value of the Gospel-records he sets forth Christ's claim to divinity, and shows how it is even more forcible by His eminently sane, unblemished and virtuous character. In treating the signs confirming Christ's mission he explains the necessity, possibility, fact, and proving force of miracle and prophecy. The work deserves careful study because of its important matter, and the reader will find it more and more interesting as he proceeds.

—N. F. G.

The Riddles of Hamlet and the Newest Answers. By Simon Augustine Blackmore, S. J., M. A., Litt. D. The Stratford Co., Boston, Mass. \$2.00 net. Pp. 494.

The work of no literary master has received so much scrutiny as that of William Shakespeare, "Prince of Dramatists." Perhaps one of his greatest monuments is the huge mountain of criticism, commentary, theory and controversy that has been produced since his death.

But even all this has left much to be desired. Especially is this true in regard to the "Tragedy of Hamlet." Theories, good and otherwise, have been evolved from it, most of them destroy-

ing the very essence of dramatic art. False systems of philosophy and religion claim the Bard and the "Prince of Denmark" as their exponents and defenders. The light in this darkness, so much longed for by earnest students, has come from the pen of Simon Augustine Blackmore. In this volume he conclusively proves Hamlet to be a high-minded, noble-hearted, Catholic prince, actuated by true Christian principles, and shows us Shakespeare's masterpiece supreme among Christian dramas. He gives us the true meaning of the tragedy and gently but firmly sends many old and pet theories of the critics into oblivion. He backs up his statements by quotations from the play, history, theology and the canons of art, then proceeds to give us a most illuminating commentary on "Hamlet," one in harmony with the best traditions of Shakespearean study. It is a rare pleasure to meet such a book. No student of Shakespeare can afford to miss it. N. E.

The Beginnings of Science. By Edward J. Menge, Ph. D. Pp. 256. Price \$2.00. Richard G. Badger, Boston, Mass.

After extensive reading, and with a thorough grasp of his subject, Professor Menge endeavors to ground his readers on solid first principles that will enable them to understand, appreciate, and estimate the value of any theory in biological and psychological science—something very necessary in these days when a great deal is said and written—much of it trash—on laboratory work, evolution and life. He sums up, too, what he has said before, giving in terse language useful points which enable one to avoid many an error in thought and theory. As an encouragement to further study he gives, after explaining who is and what constitutes an authority on a subject, a very sufficient list of authors, Catholic and non-Catholic, who have written works on philosophy, biology, rational and animal psychology.

In as clear and simple diction as possible he writes to interest professional men and women, parents, and students, showing them just what use they can make of such knowledge. N. F. G.

The Prisoner of Love. By Rev. F. X. Lasance. Pages 517. Price \$1.25, \$1.50, \$1.75, to \$3.50, according to the leather binding. Benziger Bros., New York City.

This beautiful prayer-book of Father Lasance is divided into two parts. The first comments on Devotions to Jesus, Holy Mass, Holy Communion, and Exposition of the Blessed Sacra-

ment. The second part, besides being a general prayer-book, is especially suited for all Eucharistic devotions.

"The Prisoner of Love" would be gratefully received by any one, whether cleric or layman, as a gift at Christmas. L. M. S.

II P. Ottamano, Fu vero Principe? Rev. Daniele M. Callus, O. P., S. T. L. 80 cents. Cooperative Tipografica Manuzio, Rome.

This historical essay establishes almost beyond doubt the long-disputed fact that Fr. Ottoman, O. P., of Malta, was the son of a Sultan of Turkey, and gives an interesting account of his life. Father Ottoman, captured as a boy on a Turkish fleet bound for Mecca, and taken to Malta, was given over to a Catholic family, and entered the Dominican Order. Induced before becoming a priest to claim the Turkish throne from a younger brother and to set up a Christian Empire, he went to Greece to wait in vain for the aid promised by the Christian nations of Europe. He proceeded to Rome where he was ordained priest and made a Master of Theology. He then returned to Malta where at thirty-four years of age he died as Prior of the Convent of Porto Salvo.

—M. D. P.

The Path to Peace. By Vincent C. Donovan, O. P.

Few know what true peace is or how to obtain it. This little book is given to the public with the hope that more may find and walk along the only path—that of Christian perfection—which leads to beatitude, the state of peace, of joy, and of perfect content. "The Path to Peace" ought to do much good for souls. Already it has been sincerely praised both by clerics and by laymen for its beautiful lessons and the clear, forceful arguments it presents.

—N. F. G.

Backgrounds for Social Workers. By E. J. Menge, Ph. D. Pages 214. Price \$1.50. Richard G. Badger, Boston, Mass.

Social Workers will extend a hearty welcome to this excellent book, written by one whose name stands high in the learned world. The author does not burden his readers with new and fantastic theories of how to improve the human race, but gives in the smallest possible space the experience of centuries. Any one mastering the contents of this book will not be swayed by every idea of social betterment regardless of whether or not there is ground for the theory upon which it rests. The subjects of

Marriage and The Family are historically set forth; and such questions as Sex Hygiene, Training of Children, Eugenics, Right and Wrong are ably discussed. The author sets forth in his own clear, convincing way the aims of social science, together with the questions relating to it, from a point of view which every Catholic can safely accept. The book appears at an opportune time and will no doubt meet with a well-deserved success. A. P.

His Luckiest Year. By Father Finn. Pages 258. Price \$1.00 net. Benziger Bros., New York City.

"Lucky Bob" Ryan, during his school-year at St. Xavier's, wins us usual by his very good-nature a host of friends but best of all his long-lost mother. In this story, of interest both to boys and to girls, Father Finn does not fail to make high ideals and purity of life co-exist with all the vivacity of youth. —N. F. G.

The Children of Eve. By I C. Clarke. \$1.35. Pp. 407. Benziger Bros., New York City.

To those who know Isabel C. Clarke from her novels, as "Fine Clay" and "By the Blue River," no other incentive is needed to compel them to read this book of hers. In its pages the author reveals an admirable knowledge of Italian and English life and manners. More than a love story, it is the graphic delineation of characters that stand out real and living as those of our every-day life; "it is," as a critique puts it, "a vivid picture of the combat waged between the forces of evil and the Catholic Church for the soul of man." —G. K.

Alberta: Adventuress. By Pierre L'ermite. \$1.35. Pp. 444. Benziger Bros., New York City.

This popular French author depicts a vivid scene so often enacted in the lives of young men and women who abandon their homes to go in quest of wealth and renown in some large city. The dazzling splendor of the French metropolis blinds a young count to the happy conditions of his home. Dreams of vast wealth in Paris haunt him day and night. After being fleeced by two clever schemers who offered to help him he is forced to return home a prodigal. Seldom has a novel come upon the market that holds the interest of the reader so intensely as this. —A. O'C.