

The Heart of St. Therese. By Abbe Andre Combes. Translated by a Carmelite Nun. New York, P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 1951. pp. 191. \$2.75.

Among the Saints officially raised to the honors of the altar by Holy Mother the Church during the first half of this century, there seems to be none who surpassed the Little Flower in captivating the hearts of the faithful everywhere. In the United States especially, Therese Martin was adopted as "one of the family." Her formula for sanctity was contained in her simplicity and self-abnegation. Perhaps it was for this very reason that she appealed to American hearts. One of the proudest recollections of the children of Saint Dominic is that their Holy Patriarch never spoke but either to God or of God. So too, by her acts and words St. Therese showed her fellow mortals the correct approach to their Divine Saviour. Let us not try to step too far all at once, lest we overreach; it is better that we progress little by little, first taking upon ourselves the minutiae of life, before attempting the more heroic acts which characterize the lives of the Martyrs of the Church—was the import of her message.

This excellent work from the gifted pen of Abbé Combes will be of great aid to all who seek to imitate Therese in travelling along the road to perfection. It is not an easy task to write the life of a saint; and when a writer undertakes a spiritual analysis of a saint who prided in relating that her secret of success lay in doing the ordinary things of life and not the extraordinary, then he really has a problem on his hands. But Abbé Combes, a foremost diagnostician of Christian spirituality, accomplishes his task with ease. He lays bare, under a skillful scalpel, the workings of God's grace in the soul of His little one.

Some might be disappointed when they read this book. To them the Little Flower has been portrayed as a plaster and paint doll. They do not realize that she too had to face the realities of life, and struggle for her eternal reward. She shows man the way to God, but she does not belittle the very real trials which we mortals must undergo to reach the height of blessedness.

"Some people like to say that Therese brought sanctity within the reach of every soul. But she certainly did not claim that sanctification did not involve a dizzy climb, or that henceforth, those souls, whose model and teacher she was to be, could achieve sanctity without being obliged to rise as high as the invisible summits of the mountains. If anyone really thought she

meant that, he would be making a grave mistake, for he would be attributing to Saint Therese of the Child Jesus a doctrine which she never held or taught. Even more: a doctrine which would be the negation of what she actually experienced and wanted to teach to all the 'little souls' whom it was her mission to lead up to sanctity." W.J.D.B.

Marriage, Morals, and Medical Ethics. By Frederick L. Good, M.D., LL.D., and Rev. Otis F. Kelly, M.D. New York, P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 1951. pp. 202. \$3.50.

Newer Ethical Problems in Medicine and Surgery. By Bernard J. Ficarra, M.D. Westminster, Md., The Newman Press, 1951. pp. xx, 168. \$3.75.

The appearance of these two volumes on the more important principles of ethics which govern the field of medicine is especially welcome in these days when the dignity of human life, the nobility of man's body, and the sanctity of marriage are subject to the damaging blows of unprincipled men. Both of these books—one by a Catholic priest-doctor and a leading Catholic gynecologist, the other by an eminent Catholic surgeon—present a concise summary of current Catholic moral teaching on such matters as abortion, sterilization, contraception, and euthanasia. Though several chapters in both books are concerned with the same material, each volume has its own mode of procedure and is directed by its own particular purpose.

Marriage, Morals, and Medical Ethics is primarily a discussion of the medico-moral problems proper to married life. Its aim is to provide responsible information on medical matters to priests, and to offer a reliable body of moral principles to physicians, nurses, and social workers. In our opinion, it is the priest who receives the better instruction from this book. The sections which deal with the biological and medical explanations of various functions and disorders are most informative; and provide the priest with a wealth of useful knowledge. In giving moral solutions to medical men, however, the authors fall a bit short of their goal. Practically all of the moral instructions concerning the human body and married life are treated summarily in one chapter. The solutions proposed are sound, but are often so brief as to be incomplete. Had as much time been given to the moral as to the medical sections of the book, we would have had a work far more worthy of authors of such unquestionable caliber. The