

NEW BOOKS.

CATHOLIC TRUTH SOCIETY.

WE have received from the Catholic Truth Society Nos. 5, 6, 7, and 8 of *The Stories of the Beatitudes*, written by Louisa E. Dobrée. The authoress has succeeded in weaving pretty tales in which the heroes or heroines, who belong to everyday life, have suffered for the right and made good their title to be called 'blessed.' The tales are told simply and naturally without striving after effect, and the biblical quotation on which each tale is founded is brought out and made clear without boring the reader with a thinly veiled and long drawn out sermon.

The Setting of a Great Hope is a historical tale by C. M. Home. The 'Great Hope' is King Henry VIII. of England, whose early days were full of promise. Fresh from his scholastic studies he wrote his famous defence of Catholic doctrines which had been attacked by Luther, and which secured for the Royal author the title of Defender of the Faith. The morning of his life was fair, but passion clouded the noonday sky, and he sank to the grave in the darkness of infidelity, condemning the very doctrines he so bravely defended in the days of his youth and innocence. A well-told tale is a splendid vehicle for conveying historical truths, and the author has admirably succeeded in briefly showing, under this guise, the disastrous effects of the evil life of the much married monarch on the Catholic Church in England.

In *The Conversion of Miss Drane* (Mother Francis Raphael), by Bertrand Wilberforce, O.P., we have the story of the troubled soul seeking after truth and finding it and religious peace in the Catholic Church. Miss Drane was one of the many cultured members of the Church of England who were drawn into the Catholic Church by the influence of the Oxford movement. Like many of the converts of the time she brought much literary talent with her, and after joining the Dominican Order her pen was often employed in writing books and helping the cause of religion. Very curious is the fact that when still a member of the Church of England she sketched out her ideal of a religious life, and was told by a clergyman of her own creed that the Third Order of St. Dominic had such rules, and stranger still, that she should die as Superior of that Religious Order at Stone many years afterwards.

The Child Guest, by the Rev. G. Bamfield, is a little Christmas story of a poor fisherman and his family who were in sore distress on one Christmas Eve, and whose little store was likely to become smaller by the presence of the 'Child Guest' whom they have taken in out of the storm. How the trust of the poor fisherman in the goodness of God is rewarded, and who the ragged child is are disclosed as the tale proceeds, and ends merrily as all Christmas tales should end.

In *Nano Nagle* we have the biography of the foundress of the Presentation Order of nuns. Nano Nagle was born in the County Cork in 1728, and it was in the city of Cork, at a time when the savage Penal Laws were in full force, that she established this Order for the purpose of educating the children of the poor, and this in spite of the fact that she rendered herself liable to severe penalties, for Catholics were strictly forbidden to impart instruction to their co-religionists. How successful were her efforts, despite the great opposition encountered, is evidenced by the fact that at the present time the Presentation Order and its good work is known wherever the English language is spoken or the Celt has found a home.

Virginia M. Crawford gives us the *Life of Fra Angelico*, the great Dominican painter, whom she describes as 'the most perfect type of the Christian idealist in art.' Fra Angelico was born in 1387, and at that time painting was recognised as the handmaid of religion, and the great Dominican devoted all his great talents to the decoration of the House of God, praying for inspiration and infusing into his works much of his own intense religious feeling and reverence for things holy.

In *Sandro Botticelli*, A. Streeter gives us the biography of another great Italian painter who lived shortly after Fra Angelico, and brings us to that period of art known as the Renaissance. Like

Fra Angelico, Sandro Botticelli devoted his brush almost exclusively to Catholic art, but did not bring into his work that deep religious feeling which characterised the great Dominican, and thus his paintings fail to appeal to our deeper nature. It is worthy of note that his best work was done under the power of deep religious fervor wrought by the thunderings of the Savonarola against the irreligion and corruption of the time, thus again proving that true religion leads to lofty ideals in art and nerves the hand to execute them.

We fear that often when thinking of the many saints that the Catholic Church has produced we overlook the fact that those great ones were mere clay like ourselves who found the road that leads to perfection a rough and difficult one to travel. *The Inner Life of St. Francis of Assisi*, set forth in the title, shows us the inner man and his early struggles and final triumph over himself.

In *A Life of Our Lord*, by Lady Amabel Kerr, we have the story of Christ re-told. The authoress follows closely the Scriptural narrative, and puts briefly and clearly as possible the chief events in the life of Our Lord on earth.

The second monthly number of *The Early History of the Church of God*, by the Bishop of Clifton, is to hand. A concise history of the early days of the Catholic Church, at once clear and reliable and within reach of the poorest, is here provided, and when the volume is completed should be found in every Catholic home. It is pleasant in those days of religious doubts and questionings for the Catholic to be able to trace his faith back to the fountain-head—the days of the Apostles—and finding it renewed and made stronger the truth that is in him.

The Catholic Temperance Reader, published by the Catholic Truth Society, and the joint production of the secretary of that society and Sir Francis Richard Cruise, ex-president of the Royal College of Physicians, Ireland, will, as the phrase goes, 'fill a long felt want' in Catholic schools. Many of the 'intemperate' temperance orators would make all men total abstainers by act of Parliament, but the joint authors of this work, knowing how vain is such a course, convince the reader by calm and clear reasoning. There is but little doubt but that the latter is the more successful way, especially so when addressed to the young before the love of 'John Barleycorn' has warped the intellect. Cardinal Vaughan writes approving of the work, but the high standing of the joint authors is sufficient recommendation.

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It is quite refreshing in those days when we are deluged with literature setting forth the wonderful powers of pills of all colors and sizes and lotions and potions without end, to come across a man of high standing in his profession who undertakes to cure most of our troubles by proper attention to diet. 'Throw physic to the dogs,' says Shakespeare, and Dr. Yorke-Davies would send the quack and patent medicine vendor there too, or hang him by the neck to a convenient sour apple tree. In *Health and Condition in the Active and Sedentary* (Sampson, Low, and Co.), Dr. Yorke-Davies, in some 200 odd pages, gives much useful advice, none of it technical, to all ages and conditions of men and women to. Diet, exercise, and fresh air are the three champions he would let loose against the host of ills that assail the flesh, and if the fort is not held too strong by the enemy, they must prevail. There is much useful and practical advice for those in health as well as the sick contained between its covers.

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