

## PUBLICATIONS

*The Life of Gemma Galgani.* By Father Germanus, C.P. London: Sands and Co. Price, 6s net.

Some years ago the present writer, when a student in Rome, had the great happiness of making his annual retreat under the direction of a saintly Passionist Father, and memory still holds vivid impressions of the preacher's discourses on the reality and the inner meaning of our Redeemer's sufferings and death. Later on in his peaceful monastery on the Coelian Hill, Padre Germano told us the story and showed us the rooms of the young Passionist, Gabriel of the Addolorata, whose life was remarkable for extraordinary devotion to the Passion. The sanctity of this young servant of God was officially declared in 1908, thanks mainly to the efforts of our retreat-giver. And now we receive from the same hands an account of the wonderful and saintly life of another 'Child of the Passion,' Gemma Galgani. Padre Germano was the confessor and spiritual director of this heroic maiden, and therefore speaks with exceptional authority.

The life of Gemma Galgani passed between the years 1878 and 1903, and was spent entirely in the world, yet we find crowded into that short space of time a story of virtue, contemplative prayer, and supernatural favors which causes us to say, God is indeed wonderful in His saints. A pious father and a more than pious mother watched over the infancy of Gemma in the village of Camigliano, near Lucca, Italy, and encouraged in every possible way her earliest aspirations after the things of heaven. On the death of her mother the seven-year-old child lived with an aunt for a year and then, returning to her father's home, went to school. Here she was distinguished by mental gifts of a high order, by sweet modesty, and by candour and sincerity which some thought bordered on rudeness. Only constant and powerful watching prevented this girl of sanguine and vivacious temperament from becoming a perfect madcap. Life was very holy and very happy. 'Jesus' she writes with candid simplicity—'made His presence felt in my poor soul more and more. He said so many things to me and often made me feel the greatest consolation.' But even at this tender age God's chosen one had to walk the way of the cross, and for nearly a year weariness, sadness, repugnance to prayer, a sense of abandonment by God burnt as in a crucible the soul of the youthful follower of our Saviour. Gemma left school in 1894 and went home to look after her brothers and sisters. Afterwards she stayed for a while with an aunt, and in 1899 was adopted by the Giannini family at Lucca, with whom she remained until her death in 1903. Outwardly her life was uneventful and commonplace. She did her best to avoid singularity, but the saints seemed to be looking into her eyes and the reflected rays threw round her a dignity and grace which could not be hid. Inwardly these years were years of heroic patience under dangerous illness, severe sufferings, and bitter trials, of great advance in virtue, and of exceptional spiritual favors.

The supernatural gifts received by this child of heaven are a sign (one amongst many) that God still visits His people. But here we must leave the story to be told by Abbot (now Cardinal) Gasquet. 'The favorite, and indeed almost constant subject of thought and prayer with Gemma was our Lord's sacred Passion. Often she begged of our Blessed Lord to be allowed to share those sufferings with Him, or at least to be permitted to feel physically something of what He had to bear in the hours of His Passion and at the time of His death. Some few years before her death, in 1903, her longing was partly satisfied by the reception of the Stigmata (the Five Wounds) in her hands, feet, and side. These wounds opened and poured forth copious streams of blood every week for some years, during the period between each Thursday and Friday night. They then closed themselves in such a way that by Saturday all trace of anything beyond a white mark in the flesh had disappeared. Besides these marks

of the Crucifixion, at various times Gemma received other marks of her participation in the torments which our Lord endured. For example, on July 19, 1900, whilst in an ecstasy the vision of Christ wounded and bleeding came so clearly before her that she begged Him to let her suffer yet more of His Agony and bodily pains, upon which He took the Crown of Thorns from His own Head and pressed it upon hers. From that time, on the Fridays, she bore also the marks of the thorns. . . . Besides these marks of the Passion, Gemma was permitted on many occasions to suffer a sweat of blood like our Saviour underwent in His Agony in the Garden. This phenomenon, which naturally could not be hidden from those who lived with her, is testified to by many witnesses, and the fact cannot reasonably be called in question. She also had on her left shoulder the open wound, which, according to some revelations, although it is not recorded in Holy Scripture, our Blessed Lord received from carrying the Cross to Calvary. With this also came the bruised knees, which must have been caused by His repeated falls. But perhaps the most extraordinary marks of our Lord's sufferings, which the saintly girl bore on her flesh, were those of the terrible scourging at the Pillar. These marks on her body are described by many witnesses as fearful to behold: great gasbes appeared in the flesh of her body, on her legs and arms as if they had really been torn open, in places even to the very bone, by the loaded whips of the soldiers as in the case of our Lord.' (Introduction. pp. xxx., xxxi.)

In these days of blatant unbelief it is good to come into such close contact with the Supernatural, to see at work in His saints that God in 'Whom we live, and move, and have our being.' We are not, indeed, bound to believe in the reality of the wonders here recorded, for the Church has not pronounced judgment on these matters, or even as yet on the sanctity of Gemma Galgani. But here is a sober record of facts coming from one who, as spiritual director of the holy maid, had unique opportunities of knowing the secret mysteries of her soul, and who brought to his task profound knowledge of mystical theology, wide experience in the direction of souls, and first-hand acquaintance with the results of modern psychology. The critical Appendices show that modern science has no natural explanation to give of these strange phenomena.

A book emphatically to be read and studied.

*The Freedom of the Sciences.* By Joseph Donat, S.J., D.D., Professor at Innsbruck University. Authorised translation from the revised edition of the German original. New York: Wagner. London: Herder. Pp. 419. Price, 10s net. 1914.

The reviewer confesses that he took up this work with considerable misgivings. We have had a number of books during the past few years treating of the relations between religion and science, and even the best of them assume a half-apologetic tone in face of the claims of pseudo-scientists. Such an attitude is really out of date, for the battle has long since been fought and won: men of culture in Europe now freely admit that scientists must work within the sphere of observation and experiment, leaving the philosopher and the theologian to deal with the causes and origin of things. Many of the greatest men of science have made confession of faith; and the sense of the limitations of science is bringing many more to the theistic and religious view of the world—in other words, to the view consistently maintained by the Catholic Church. And the Catholic theologian takes high ground. He assures himself by strict reasoning that there is a God and that this God has spoken to men. He sees at once that such a revelation must be true, and that it cannot be contradicted by any scientific truth. So he welcomes every advance in scientific knowledge, confident that truth can but confirm truth. Occasionally collisions occur between religion and science, but these alleged conflicts do not exist in reality, for each has its own sphere, with its own subject-matter, and its own

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