

## NOTES ON RECENT BOOKS

MISSIONARY BOOKS are nearly always of interest and it is a pity that *Immortal Fire* by Sister Mary Just, O.P. (Herder; 56s.) and *Pacific Hopsotch* by Sister Mary del Rey (Scribner; \$3.00) are both printed in America where prices are so heavy. Both volumes proceed from one of the greatest and most intense centres of Catholic missionary zeal, Maryknoll, New York. The first describes the history of Catholic Missionary zeal from St Paul to modern times in terms of the outstanding personalities and events that related to the spread of the faith; the second is a vivid and picturesque account of the sacrificial lives of the Maryknoll Sisters amid such scourges as leprosy. These books are well illustrated. LIVES OF SAINTS and of holy people also never cease to fascinate. Editions Spes has added to the great collection of hagiography by a new and modern approach to the life of the young nobleman St Aloysius Gonzaga (150 francs), together with a biography of a modern married woman devoted to her husband and children and to the spread of the Christian idea of marriage—*Mamie: Foyer d'Amour* (275 francs)—she was killed in a road accident in 1945. Burns and Oates offer us the Life of Blessed Placide Viel, Superior General of the Sisters of the Christian School, written by a member of that Congregation (8s. 6d.). She was born in Normandy in 1815 and her life is so typical and so simply told that the book is certainly worth reading.

CONFERENCES—a difficult word in English—are made to be heard rather than read, so that their publication is always a doubtful undertaking. But *Christlikeness* by Sister M. Victorine, I.H.M. (Newman Press; \$2.75), which was composed by the authoress for the Sisters under her care, has stood the test of being printed. The discourses appeared in the American *Sponsa Regis* and are here published together at the request of the readers. *Days with our Lady* (by W. Stephenson, S.J., Clonmore and Reynolds; 4s.) comprises thirty-one short talks to a sodality in Galway. The author bases his thinking on the gospels, so that his thought is full of straight-forward doctrine without sentimentality.

Two very different books on the Mass: *Living the Mass*, by R. Desplanques, S.J. (translated from the French; Newman Press; \$2.75) has the excellent purpose of helping to integrate the Mass with daily life, though its meditations on the words of the Mass are too full of asterisks, blank verse and exclamation marks; *How to Serve at the Altar*, by Canon J. Lane (Clonmore and Reynolds; 3s. 6d.), is replete with practical advice on every aspect of serving—including a Dominican and a Carmelite Mass, High Mass and Benediction—and with many photographs.