

writing the essays, articles, and latterly even short stories that she has been writing ever since, about American life illumined by the Catholic Faith. She had no difficulty in finding a Catholic editor, she tells us, and we are not surprised; for she writes with refreshing zest, with a lightness of touch and a humorousness that is sometimes purely Thurber. She is no theologian, as indeed she is the first to admit—yet it seems she cannot go wrong.

Of the stories that make up the final selection of this book, the only one that can really claim to be called a 'short story' is the first—'I Remember Mama'—and that has a poignancy both startling and moving. There is the making of a story in the one entitled 'The Little Girls' that makes one wonder what Katherine Mansfield would have made of it. But for the rest, Mrs Hasley's stories are still almost essays; they haven't yet 'arrived'. They lack something of that incisiveness, that general vision, that mixture of the personal and the universal in looking at people, that heightening of a situation into a drama, that the short story requires.

They are nice little stories for the parish magazine, but so far that is all.

ERIKA FALLAUX

HEROIC TALES FROM MANY LANDS. By D. E. Burton. (Sands and Co.; 9s. 6d.)

These stories of saints and heroes through the ages will surely serve to give the Catholic boys and girls for whom they are written some sense of the universality of their Faith. The stories range from St Tarcisius, the boy martyr of the catacombs, who died to protect the Blessed Sacrament which he was carrying to the imprisoned Christians, to our present-day Group Captain Cheshire, V.C., the bomber ace and modern hero, whom horror of atomic warfare drove to caring for the sick and homeless, and thence to the Faith. History and even literature link up with the Faith in the story of the eleventh Century St Margaret of Scotland, who married Malcolm, son of that King Duncan who was murdered by Macbeth—and who, as Queen of Scotland, brought the Faith once again to that country. These and other stories are written simply, yet not too simply. Throughout one has the feeling that careful research has been made to ensure historical accuracy; and one is grateful for a very matter-of-fact manner of story-telling that is blessedly free from sentimentality and hero-worship. These saints and their Faith are left to speak for themselves, as well they can.

ERIKA FALLAUX