

autobiographies, and one which is not often adverted to by those who give way to the strange impulse to set before the world the experiences of their own past histories. The weakness, too, does not necessarily make a book of this nature less readable. Miss Graef's account of her life is certainly readable. C.P.

GOD'S TREE: ESSAYS ON DANTE AND OTHER MATTERS. By Kenelm Foster, O.P. (Blackfriars Publications; 10s. 6d.)

Of the fourteen essays reprinted here, five deal directly with Dante, others with Italian history and literature, two with French literature, and there is a speech for St Thomas's day on 'The Tact of Saint Thomas'. The author has brought them together because his 'implicit concern throughout has been to gain some insight into the reach, so to say, of the human soul'.

I can best place these essays by saying that they have the close argument and careful presentation of specialist studies yet are brief and light enough for the reader with no specialist knowledge. This is true even of the 'exploratory' papers on Dante, written primarily for people familiar with the argument of the *Divine Comedy*, but useful for introducing others to a way of reading the poem. Fr Kenelm's method of studying authors in relation to the contemporary theological interests enables him to form many original judgments which really deserve greater elaboration. He offers them with a certain delicacy and an unflinching courtesy. B.M.

GUILLAUME DE SAINT-THIERRY: LETTRE D'OR. Introduction, Traduction et Notes par J. M. Déchanet, O.S.B. (Desclée de Brouwer; n.p.)

A few years after the foundation of the Charterhouse of Mont-Dieu William of Saint-Thierry visited the community and later sent them his golden letter 'to encourage them in their holy profession'. He intended it mainly for novices and those recently professed. As becomes a friend who had shared their solitude, he wrote in a familiar and simple style.

Dom Déchanet has preserved this simple style in translation. He has limited himself in the present 'minor edition' to a translation with an introduction and notes. The 'major edition' will contain the Latin text and translation, a critical apparatus, illustrative notes and studies of historical and doctrinal problems. In the meantime he has given us just enough to see the letter in relation to William's other writings, and has added some bibliographical helps for further study. More important, he has provided an admirable translation of a treatise which, although occasional in inspiration, offers a spiritual doctrine of classic fullness and maturity. B.M.