the queen of a little kingdom of love where peace and union reigned. She practiced what she taught and was herself the example for the others to follow. She was a true Dominican in her love of the liturgy and her love for souls. She was really 'blessed' because she was one of those meek and gentle ones who possess the earth.

Blessed Emily Bicchieri was beatified by Pope Clement XIV in 1769 and her feast is kept on 19th August.

SOURCES: Archiv: Ord: Rom: Reg: Maj: Gen: Cassette (1481).
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CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Sir,—May I dare to say that I disagree very strongly almost with every word of your article, 'What is Mysticism'? in the LIFE OF THE SPIRIT for August?

Believing, as you seem to do, that visions and ecstacies form an integral part of Mysticism, you must discard almost the whole sane teaching of St John of the Cross. If you maintain, as you seem to do, that a profound intuition of Union with God is necessary for the Mystical state, you must discard most of what the old Classic writers taught on Mystical Theology.

I maintain that Mysticism is *cognition by pure species*, and I maintain that it begins as soon as the soul enters the Night of the Senses, and is never higher or more pure than when it is most desolate, devoid of sensible experience, and empty of all spiritual phenomena. Visionaries, in so far as they are just visionaries, are Mystics only in a derived sense, for no sensible phenomena can possibly be a proximate means of union with God.

When you say that a Mystic knows the divine mystery because he 'feels' it, you make my hair stand on end. May I refer you to Letter xi of St John of the Cross in the third volume of his works in the edition of Allison Peers? Perhaps one might say that a mystic sometimes feels the divine mystery because he knows it. This is the exact reverse of what you say.

Of course there is some experience; the matter is an extremely delicate and subtle one. Even in times of greatest desolation there is an experience of God's presence, but in such a way as not to lessen

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or mitigate the contrary feeling of being abandoned and desolate. Can one dare to use as a parallel our Blessed Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the Cross? Suffering and desolate, abandoned by God, and yet still the second Person of the Trinity? At any rate I do not think this experience is integral to the mystical state; I do not think it is the form of it. I should say that the pure love of God was the form and essence of the mystical state.—Yours, etc.

BRUNO S. JAMES

REVIEWS

THE MISSION OF A SAINT: Essays on the significance of St Teresa of Lisieux compiled by Vernon Johnson. (Burns Oates; 3s. 6d.)

THE WAY OF PERFECTION by St Theresa of Jesus, translated from the Spanish by Alice Alexander. (Mercier Press; 10s. 6d.)

Familiarity can breed more destructive vices than contempt. In the spiritual order nothing is perhaps so deadly as the good-natured acquiescence in the usual that acknowledges a truth but may be far from accepting its implications. It might seem that the veneration of a saint who died but fifty years ago must be secure from the cold hand of formalism, and it is certain that never in the Church's history has devotion sprung up so naturally and so warmly as it has done in honour of St Teresa of Lisieux. And yet one remembers some of the biographies, and most of the statues; remembers too that basilica at Lisieux, which in its pretentiousness is a monument to what the saint was *not*.

Already, then, it may be necessary to get behind the plaster façade and to attempt to rediscover the central strength of one whom the present Pope has described as 'the greatest saint of modern times'. It is to travesty St Teresa's message to the world if one confines it to the circumference of sweetness and roses: St Teresa in her autobiography used the idiom of the world she knew—French, bourgeois and nineteenth-century at that. It matters only in so far as it is the providentially intended setting for a teaching that is as hard as steel. Most opportunely, therefore, has Fr Vernon Johnson edited (on behalf of the Association of St Teresa of the Child Jesus) a series of essays on the mission of St Teresa, designed to celebrate the jubilee of her death and to inaugurate a Lay Association in her honour, similar to the existing one for priests.

Messages from the Holy Father, Cardinal Griffin and the Apostolic Delegate preface essays on various aspects of St Teresa's mission—with regard to the Gospels, our Lady, the Holy See, the Priesthood, the Foreign Missions, England, Scotland and Russia. Within the space of 48 pages the treatment must inevitably be slight, and one would have wished especially for a fuller consideration of the

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