

make on their work. Nevertheless, the chief attraction of this book is its almost racy account of the brilliant and exotic court life which was their background: it is in fact a contribution to what might be termed the social rather than to the technical history of music. A social history: and one conceived largely in terms of personalities, above all the personalities of the rulers—despotic, erratic, magnificent, and fallible. How Alan Yorke-Long relished them. Yet for all the perception and humour with which he treats them he is never lacking in sympathy. It has to be admitted that his book might have lost much of its charm and character had the Grand Design been completed, had it been weighted with all the more recognizable symptoms of scholarship—the ponderous detail, the interminable footnotes, the bibliographies and the appendices. The scholarship is there, but tucked away, and the whole is eminently readable: the only regret most of us will have is that it was not longer. It is a most satisfying memorial to its author.

ERIC TAYLOR

THE SOURCES OF HOJEDA'S 'LA CRISTIADA'. By Sister Mary Edgar Meyer, O.S.F. (Michigan University Press. London: Geoffrey Cumberlege; 40s.)

La Cristiada, a narrative poem of approximately two thousand rhymed octaves on the Passion and Death of Christ, was first published in Seville in 1611. In spite of its lengthy digressions and Baroque structure, it is today regarded as, on the whole, the best of the numerous religious 'epics' composed in Spanish in the post-Tridentine period. Only the barest details are known of the life and literary personality of the author, Diego de Hojeda, a native of Seville, who, emigrating to Lima *circa* 1571, made his profession there in the Dominican Order in 1591, and after holding important positions in his community, died in 1615. The sources used by Hojeda were briefly discussed in the edition of *La Cristiada* published in 1935 by Sister Mary Corcoran, I.H.M. (Washington, D.C.), and the present monograph examines the problem in fullest detail. Sister Meyer rightly warns the reader that the task is no easy one, owing to the notorious plagiarism practised by Spanish writers of the Golden Age, and the fact that Hojeda gives no clues, except in the case of a few biblical references. The danger of 'influence grafting' is underlined, and the criterion adopted is that influences can be claimed with certainty only where coincidences in idea and wording are unmistakable, and are not to be found in other accessible sources. The author has carried out her task with diligence and scrupulous accuracy, and deserves high commendation for an impressive work of scholarship. The degree to which Hojeda utilized, or may have utilized, a multitude of sources—classical works, patristic

writings, modern literary epics, legends and traditions, treatises on theology, mythology, astronomy and astrology, Spanish literature in general—is carefully assessed. In many instances, the most that is claimed is a high degree of probability: with regard to a number of specific works and authors, Hojeda's indebtedness is clearly established. This monograph undoubtedly contributes to a fuller appreciation of the religious 'epic' of the Counter-Reformation.

RICHARD J. A. KERR

THE PLATONIC RENAISSANCE IN ENGLAND. By Ernst Cassirer; translated by James P. Pettegrove. (Nelson; 15s.)

It is always stimulating to see wide erudition brought to bear on a limited theme, and this short work of the late Professor Cassirer is no exception. He is concerned with the Cambridge Platonists not as mystics but as philosophers; for him their origin is not Plato or Plotinus but the Platonism of the Florentine Academy, and their importance lies not so much in their ideas but in their attitude, their philosophy of religion. His account of their conflict with rising empiricism and puritanism, and the alliance of these, at first sight, so discordant movements against them, is particularly interesting. The breadth of his mind enables him to set them in the context of historical development and show the unsuspected influence they exerted on later philosophy, principally through Shaftesbury; he seems, however, to treat Utopia too much on its face value, and, missing its satirical character, to attribute its opinions too definitely to its author.

B. W.

NOTICES

THE CHARTERHOUSE, by David Knowles and W. F. Grimes (Longmans; 25s.), is a work of happy collaboration in which Professor Knowles relates the history of the monastery and subsequent school, whilst Mr Grimes tells the story of the excavations made on the site after the buildings had been all but totally demolished in the air-bombardment of 1941. Other scholars have contributed to the appendices and provided interesting data on a leaden coffin containing remains which 'with all reasonable certainty are those of Sir Walter de Manny'. Profusely illustrated, the volume contains many photographs, plates and sketches of the original buildings, together with eight plans.