

Book Reviews

a nominal part in this 'King's Book,' with its grave exposition of conjugal duty, and its gracious commendation of the *Ave Maria*. The Introduction emphasizes Henry's Constans-like imposition of the regal theology, and his grim amusement at the quandaries of the obsequious bishops. Canon Lacey, a 'bonnie fighter,' makes allusions (to 'foreign influence' and other) which might ask for comment. But we prefer to sympathize with those of his own communion in the loss of a learned writer who made 'troops of friends' and whose precise place will not be easily filled.

E.J.

THE LITTLE MARIE-JOSÉ. By Elinor M. Brent-Dyer. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne; pp. 170; 3/6.)

In *le grande siècle* it did not do to quarrel with Monseigneur's daughter. So Marie-José and her family had to escape across the seas to New France, and their many adventures on the way and in their new home are very well told in this book. It will make a delightful present for children; but they may find that some older people want to borrow it. A word of special praise is due to the wrapper: it is far too nice to spoil; and besides, you will enjoy it more when you have read the book.

A.E.H.S.

CALVIN'S FIRST PSALTER. (Ernest Benn, Ltd.; 10/6.)

A MEDIEVAL CAROL BOOK; and GILBERT AND SANDYS' CHRISTMAS CAROLS. (Burns, Oates and Washbourne; 3/6 each.)
Edited by Sir Richard Terry, Mus.Doc., F.R.C.O.

These three books are a monument to the scholarship and tireless research of Sir Richard Terry, who, by their publication, has added to the great debt we already owe him for the many treasures of old music he has rescued from oblivion. Each has a preface in which he explains, in his clear and interesting way, the source and origin of the matter contained in the book.

The first, *Calvin's First Psalter*, is much the biggest and most important of the three. It contains that first collection of Psalms, translated and metricalised, made by Calvin in 1539 for the reformed churches, and for many years thought to be irretrievably lost. There is first, the Psalter with its melodies in facsimile; secondly, a transcription into modern print and notation of the vernacular French and the old C clef; thirdly, the Psalter translated into English verse by K. W. Simpson, with the melodies in a harmonised setting by Sir Richard Terry.

Blackfriars

The other two books are smaller and unbound. The Medieval one has twenty tunes from MSS. in the Bodleian Library; eleven from Trinity, Cambridge; three from the British Museum; and the Christmas Sequence *Laetabundus* from the Dominican Gradual, with the Latin words and a beautiful English translation by Fr. John O'Connor. The proof-sheets of this must have gone astray judging from the number of B flats that are missing. Also, were this the place, which it is not, to discuss the accompaniment of Plainsong, we would like to ask several questions about the method adopted here. There are also in this book a number of misprints in the Latin. The vigour and beauty of both words and tunes are most striking. It is interesting to compare these versions (where they overlap) with those of the Oxford Carol Book, and to see how much more alive is the rhythm in the versions that Sir Richard gives.

The third book is a definitive edition of those few folk carols rescued by Gilbert and Sandys in the early nineteenth century. The number is not nearly as great as is generally supposed (Gilbert, eight tunes; Sandys, eighteen). Many of them are popular favourites, and they formed the first beginning of the carol revival in this country. They are harmonised and put in a singable form by the editor.

All these books have one object, to make the music in them available for modern choirs. The carol books will succeed in this admirably. Whether choir-masters will use the Calvin Psalter, with its magnificent tunes but irregular and unusual rhythms, is another question. If we dared to criticise so eminent an authority, it would be to say that the work of harmonisation does not come up to our expectations, it is rather heavy and 'thick'; especially is this true of the carol books; and surely the over-use of the *tierce de Picardy* is unnecessary and irritating. The editor has only restrained himself from using it at the end of a tune in two cases out of a possible twenty-eight! But perhaps it is a matter of taste.

F.M.

CHRISTOMATHIA BERNARDINA EX OPERIBUS S. BERNARDI. Compilatore P. Dr. Emerico Piszter, S.O.Cist. (Marietti: Via Legnano, Turin; pag. viii—392; 18 lire.)

The Prior of the Monastery of St. Gotthard has gathered within the pages of a manageable volume a veritable synthesis of St. Bernard's teaching. The ordinary run of student who 'does' theology must confess to being somewhat daunted by the formidable tomes of St. Bernard's works in the Mabillon