

Borrow's journeys; she reduces them all to a dead level of ineptitude. With Henry Floyd the Jesuit she is at once carping and candid, quoting from the letters of the English Consul in Lisbon who, at the time of the Gunpowder Plot, had good reason for mis-liking the proselytizing Roman but herself summing up his character thus: 'He knew no loyalty but to his church, his order and his God'.

In her disarming preface Miss Macaulay assures us that she has, for the three years since she visited Portugal, lived with the persons she sets before us 'and they have given me the entertainment of very varied and miscellaneous society'. It is to be hoped that this entertainment has not so much distracted the author's mind from her own experiences in Lisbon and Oporto when war was at its height that she has lost the full record of her sojourn in the country whose outlines she has presented to us by so original a method, and that, one day, another writer, re-editing what may well become a classic in its kind, will be able to add a pungent chapter headed *Rose Macaulay*—1943.

In its present state the book contains some 300,000 words, on far too closely printed pages. It is natural, under present conditions, that the first edition of such a work should need revision. No stipulator so keen as she is for correct English can have willingly left the question: 'How much can be blamed on De Visme?' on page 187, and when did any tourist ever see groves of oak trees in the Douro ravines or find the best port vineyards only forty-five miles from the river's mouth? And there is an Anglo-Portuguese tradition of Cromwell's treaty connected with the English cemetery at Lisbon which might well be added to the necrology of the many Englishmen who—

*'Neath the green Estrella trees  
Sleep with the alien Portuguese.*

NAOMI ROYDE SMITH

THE VISION SPLENDID. By Nevile Watts. (Sheed & Ward; 7s. 6d.)

This book is an eloquent plea for a return to poetry and poetic values. It is one that might well stir enthusiasm; and this is an enthusiastic book. In an excellent chapter on the value of poetry, the author shows how its high and permanent value was not questioned until the present era: 'There have been times', he writes, 'in the history of the human race when the value of prose might well have been questioned. There have been times, and great times, too, when literature meant poetry, and poetry alone'. This is a good and indisputable point, and the author has many good points to make on this subject.

For the very reason that we agree so heartily with the theme of this book, and believe so strongly that what the author has said needs to be said, we cannot but be disappointed with the way in which the case has been stated; he does not seem to have done himself or his argument justice, and the statement seems hardly worthy of the wide reading and deep culture that is evident on almost every

page. It is difficult to escape the impression that the book has been 'put together' and that there is too much enthusiasm and too little accurate and precise thought. There are too many exaggerations and woolly statements. If poetry is really dying, it is doing so because of the restless externalism which seeks to deaden thought in distraction, as the author himself so well points out. But romantic and airy enthusiasm will not help matters; there is need for a return to accurate and precise thought. Such statements as 'we all of us have divinity in us' we find very irritating; we believe we know what the author means, but why can he not say so precisely? So many people are saying just the same thing but meaning something very different from the author. Then to say of the teaching profession that it and no other 'lives in the daily presence of the vision', if it means anything at all, is simply not true. The author's admiration for Dickens is obvious; and no one would quarrel with it even if he does not share it, but to speak of Dickens's 'abundant charity' is surely to go too far; Mrs Dickens could have had something to say on the matter. Even the most lofty social consciousness and philanthropy is not always charity; and although charity need not begin at home, it cannot exclude the home. Undoubtedly the author's tastes are 'romantic' in the literary and best sense of the word, but need this lead him to quote Keats with approval when he says: 'I am certain of nothing but the holiness of the heart's affections and the truth of the imagination'?

The chapter on Virgil is good. All the usual quotations are there and they are translated for the benefit of the illiterate reader, but it would be refreshing to find someone writing on Virgil and not quoting Aen. 1:462 without something fresh to say about it. Even on Virgil the author seems to us to have succumbed to an over-statement, although a not uncommon one. We yield to none in our admiration and love of Virgil, but we do not believe it justified to depict the poet as a philanthropist of liberal outlook on the grounds that he wrote with exquisite sympathy of the troubles and sufferings of man and beast. We should not forget that he also wrote Georgic ii. 498-499. Undoubtedly Virgil's was a fine and sensitive spirit; more than this he may have been, but the evidence does not justify us in saying so.

BRUNO S. JAMES

HOW OUR MINDS WORK. By C. E. M. Joad. (Westhouse; 6s.)

Dr Joad's essay contains nothing that has not been said in substance in hundreds of books, articles and lectures on modern psychology. This does not detract from its value as a convenient summary of the problems discussed by modern psychologists, simply written and with little or no trace of the scientific *mystique* which usually surrounds the treatment of such problems.

There is much that is interesting and informative in the account given here of the various 'mental' activities, sensation, perception, the emotions, thought. Yet at the end of it all we are still in the dark