

successful art, on the surface'. (p. 224.) But the only meanings we can extract from the surface are through character — and plot-analysis, and by such standards *Henry VI* is as interesting as *King Lear*. 'Meaning', on such terms, can only be a kind of prose argument, as if Shakespeare consciously set out to solve problems of ideas. This is to forget that Shakespeare was a poetic dramatist, to forget the poetic imagery and the handling of the dramatic conventions. By neglecting the poetic and dramatic significance of Shakespeare's presentation of the theme of redemptive Nature, Mr Darby passes over entirely the connection between *King Lear* and the plays of the final period, in particular *Winter's Tale* and *Cymbeline*. By treating Shakespeare's doctrine of nature as if it existed in the realm of abstract ideas, Mr Darby resorts to the kind of approach which may pass in the lecture-room but which is rather embarrassing to see in cold print: '. . . *King Lear* reflects the alternative readings of man's position in regard to God and his neighbour which were current at the turn of the century. The main choice lay between the dead mechanical Nature of the infidel politician and the normative moral Nature of the worthy King; between the Lion-headed Goddess and the Goddess, God's handmaid, whose face was that of a beautiful woman; between the Nature of Edmund and the Nature of Cordelia; that of Hobbes and that of Hooker. Shakespeare was born at a time when the afterglow of the Middle Ages was still casting strong lights and vivid shadows. But Galileo, too, was born in 1564. The ferment of a new world was at work.' (p. 198.)

After digesting that, the reader should have a good idea of what he is going to get for his sixteen shillings. T. A. BIRRELL.

CESAR FRANCK. By Norman Demuth. (Dobson; 12s.6d.)

The judgment which contemporaries pass over composers often differs greatly from that which is ultimately given in the history of music. While it would be absurd to maintain that there can ever be an exact assessment of any artist, it is nevertheless true that, after a time, a certain mean is to be found amongst the opinions of critics. It is now nearly sixty years since Franck's death, and, living in an age no longer concerned with the politics of factions and of art which precluded an unbiased examination of his position as a composer, we may now begin to look for a more complete and a more reliable account of his life, music, and influence.

Unlike many other composers Franck has not been overwritten. As Mr Demuth claims, this is the first book on the subject to be written by an English author, although M. Vincent d'Indy's study has been translated. In some ways Mr Demuth's book will supersede that of d'Indy. M. d'Indy was the greatest of Franck's pupils, and, writing always with romantic veneration and love of the 'Pater Seraphicus', has done much to create the legend of Franck as a saint and mystic. His distortions are usually obvious, and he has an enthusiasm and charm which his successor lacks.

Mr Demuth's book often parallels d'Indy's very closely, particularly in the biographical section. On the other hand, he considers the music itself under classifications of 'The Choral Works', 'The Organ Works', and so on, which seems a more rewarding method than d'Indy's three periods. Mr Demuth gives more analysis of the music and more quotations than d'Indy, although his remarks about the music can only be fully appreciated by reference to the music itself, when they are liable to be superfluous. Occasionally he is really illuminating, as when he discusses the orchestration of 'Le Chasseur Maudit'. There are several misquotations in the music examples, varying from the omission of a tie to bad mistakes of notes (e.g., examples 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 40, 43, 47, 49, 54, 58, 97, 99). If the book runs to another edition these can be easily corrected. d'Indy says Franck was born on the 10th December, 1822; Mr Demuth the 22nd. It would be interesting, though not very important, to learn why he departs from the traditional date.

In his biographical section, a perfunctory thirty pages, Mr Demuth is very inadequate, making no substantial advance on the information given by d'Indy over forty years ago. The author has neither an analytical mind nor a feeling for historical method. He refutes d'Indy's insistence upon Franck's 'spirituality' by no very clear reasoning, or by naïve assertions, as when he claims that Franck's visiting Westminster Abbey and delighting in Anglican chant 'entirely refutes the legend of his Roman Catholic bigotry which has become part and parcel of the legend of spirituality'. Nor does Mr Demuth's picture of 'The Man—Summary' bring us any nearer Franck, who can be espied but dimly through these prosy pages, carrying no more conviction than a cardboard figure, creeping humbly and hesitatingly to Saint-Clotilde, concerned only to be 'happy' but not 'spiritual'.

The problems of Franck and his music are not less real because Mr Demuth rarely poses them and even more rarely answers them. Why, for example, have Franck's operas failed? (On this subject, which he treats inadequately, it appears that the author omitted to look at Charles Van Den Borren's important and illuminating book on 'Hulda et Ghiselle'. Similarly, a study of M. Romain Rolland's 'Musiciens d'aujourd'hui' might have inspired Mr Demuth to greater profundity and intellectual effort). Or what has been Franck's influence on French music? We could well have afforded to learn more about Franck as a teacher, and, perhaps, more about his cultural interests, or lack of them. In many ways Franck must have been curiously insensitive: one notices it, for example, in his awkward setting of Latin words.

It is claimed for this book that it is intended as a reference work as well as for general reading. In the latter, it fails, since Mr Demuth's literary style is frequently inelegant and commonplace. The course at the Conservatoire was 'pretty stiff'; Franck père 'did not mean this composing business. Oh, dear, no'; the opera was

proceeded with, and so on. As a reference book it will be of some use, particularly to the superficial student who is unwilling to spend much time or interest. No one, however, who contemplates writing on César Franck or his music need think that Mr Demuth has made his task unnecessary

ERIC TAYLOR.

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## BOOKS RECEIVED

- Art and Technics.* Art for All, 6s. 0d.  
*Batsford.* Jasper More: The Land of Italy, 18s. 0d.  
*Geoffrey Bles.* Nicolas Berdyaev: The Divine and the Human, 18s. 0d.  
*Brown and Nolan.* Donal O'Sullivan: The Spice of Life and Other Essays, 10s. 6d.  
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*La Colombe.* Culture Catholique, 175 fr.  
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*Faber and Faber.* Sir Noel Curtis-Bennett: The Food of the People, 16s. 0d.  
*Gollancz.* David Low: Years of Wrath, 25s. 0d.  
*W. Heffer.* Journal of the International Folk Music Council, Vol. I., 10s. 0d.  
*Herder (Vienna).* Albert Mitterer: Elternschaft und Gattenschaft: Die Zeugung der Organismen insbesondere des Menschen; Aiois Dempf: Selbstkritik der Philosophie; Walter Brugger, S.J.: Philosophisches Wörterbuch; Albert Niedermeyer: Pastoralmedizin; Leopold Nowak: Te Deum Laudamus; F. M. Willam: Geschichte und Gesetsschule des Rosenkranzes; Der Rosenkranz und das Menschenteben, n.p.  
*Université Laval.* Ernest F. Latko: Origen's Concept of Penance, \$2.25.  
*Longmans.* John Guest: Broken Images, 10s. 6d.; Isabel Ross: Margaret Fell, 21s. 0d.  
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