

and face, and the brown shroud, and soul gone out from suffering into unfathomable mystery.'

This book has to tell of frightful things as well as gay and happy things and it is salutary, for here too are tears for the lot of men and man's vicissitudes touch the human heart.

R. O. F. WYNNE

BACH. By Eva Mary and Sydney Grew. (Dent; 7s. 6d.)

RAVEL. By Norman Demuth. (Dent; 7s. 6d.)

St Thomas Aquinas reckons love as one of the sources of knowledge, and Oliver Cromwell, reversing the order, said of his Ironsides that they 'know what they fight for and love what they know'. Mr and Mrs Grew's book on Bach, the fruit of a lifetime's study and devotion, is a beautiful example of this mutual generation of love by knowledge and of knowledge by love.

Avoiding the normal division of such a book into biographical and critical sections, the authors have adopted the unusual and more difficult course of discussing Bach's life and works in conjunction; a course made doubly difficult in that (as revealed by the publisher's statement on the cover) Mrs Grew is mainly responsible for the biography, while her husband has devoted himself more particularly to the music. In Bach's case, the fact that, in general, each phase of his life coincides with the production of certain types of music makes the scheme possible; moreover, the need for illuminating discussion of these types with suitable illustrations, rather than the singling out of a multitude of individual works for brief mention, gives it great advantages. The authors have succeeded so finely in their task that their joint work has a wholeness and an integrity which many a single writer might envy.

There is one statement in the book which calls for a respectful question-mark: that in writing the Brandenburg Concertos Bach 'had to evolve a technique and an art of writing for instruments in the combination of *concertante* and *ripieno*'. Since the authors themselves record his faithful study of contemporary Italian composers (notably Vivaldi and Corelli), who had brought this art to a high pitch of accomplishment, it in no way detracts from Bach's glory to acknowledge that 'others had laboured, and he had entered into their labours'.

It would be pleasant to be able to give equal praise to the book which Mr Demuth in his preface describes as 'the first book on Ravel by an English author'. His love and his knowledge are alike incontestable; but the nearness of his subject to us in time, and perhaps the very extent of his familiarity with him, have inhibited Mr Demuth from giving more than a superficial account of Ravel's life and personality, while certain inconsistencies of judgment, together with an irritating style, mar the critical section of the book. This section, however, is a rewarding one despite its blemishes, for here the author brings the understanding of a fellow-composer to bear

on Ravel's methods of construction, his harmonic idiom and his technique in writing both for keyboard and for orchestra. He is over-eager to defend Ravel from the charge of being a '*petit maître*', but his discussion must bring a fuller appreciation of the fine qualities of the composer's larger works, as well as of the original genius underlying all his best work, on whatever scale.

ROSEMARY HUGHES

VISION OF PERU. By Violet Clifton. (Duckworth; 21s.)

Mrs Clifton has done well in calling her book a 'Vision'. Her approach is sensory rather than conceptual, resulting in a nebulous impressionism which, while it blurs the outline and obscures the shape of her narrative, tends at times to be somewhat tedious to those bred in the fresher atmosphere of the ordered precision of well-attested facts and their logical deductions. There are, moreover, certain purely subjective passages—for example, the pre-natal experiences of Martin Porres, on page 264—which might well have been omitted without prejudice to the general build-up of the picture.

It is evident that Mrs Clifton has lived among the scenes she describes with such colourful imagery and such powerful understanding of human passions. Her knowledge of her sources is surely unrivalled; and but rarely does one come across an author who can merge her consciousness so wholeheartedly into the life whose unfolding she describes.

Having reached the end of her task, Mrs Clifton tells us that she has intended to show 'how God is guessed at by means of Nature—of lightning and of sun; and is through reason known of by the writings and by the teachings, and by the revelation of the Spoken Word; and at last of God experienced by the love, and in the wilful choosing of the mystics; of the Saints'. Beginning in the mists of primitive legend, primal urges jostle one another until there emerges the worship of the Sun. There seems to be no trace of a primitive revelation. Apart from a passing reference to 'a haunting memory of a great destruction by water', there is nothing to compare with oriental traditions of a Golden Age, no mention of a 'Fall' from an original state of integrity. On the contrary, the race appears to emerge from the Caves of Birth with the God *Vira Cocha* who rose from Lake Titicaca. This first section of the book traces the slow development of the Inca Empire, under the aegis of *Vira Cocha*, the Sun God, until *Huayna's* division of the inheritance between his rightful heir *Hauscar* and his illegitimate son *Atahualpa* laid the country open to the Spanish conquerors, in the first quarter of the sixteenth century.

The second section deals with the conquest, and the consequent influx of the romantic chivalry of medieval Christian Spain into the consciousness of the still primitive Indian mind. Christianity and Spanish culture accompanied the conquest, and inter-marriage