

REVIEWS

Don Quixote—**Fantastic Variations of a Chivalrous Nature**—played by the Berlin State Opera Orchestra—including a wind machine—under the baton of Richard Strauss himself, recorded by Decca Polydor (LY 6087-91, 3/6 each). On the last side the Berlin Philharmonic misses nothing of the point-device humour of *In der Konditorküche*.

Johann Strauss is also represented in recent H.M.V. lists. The song is hackneyed, but Maria Ivögun gives fresh lilt to *In der schönen blauen Donau*, and bitter-sweet to the *Czardas* from *Die Fledermaus* (DB 4412, 6/-). When the flexible and impetuous young voice of Miliza Korjus reaches what people call a rounder tone, she may well prove to be one of the world's greatest sopranos; as it is, brava! to her debut in Proch's *Variations*, and the Strauss *Waltz Voices of Spring* (C 2664, 4/-). The art of *bel canto*, line of melody and perfection of phrasing, **this** you will hear in Tito Schipa singing two old songs, *O del mio amato ben* and *Plaisir d'amour* (DB 2131, 6/-). Decca Polydor present the only recorded version of two arias from Puccini's *Turandot*, *In questa reggia* and *Del primo piano*, sung by Anne Roselle of the Dresden Opera (C.4 8180, 4/-). Also two extracts from pianoforte suites by Liszt, a *Leggierazza* and *Eroica*, played by Sigrid Grundeis (PO 5094, 2/6).

The **seventeenth** Italian masters have been somewhat neglected by the gramophone companies, but H.M.V. now give Vivaldi's trim and formal *Concerto à Quatre—L'Estro Armonico*, in a clean and finished performance by the Pro Arte Quartet (DR 2148, 6/-). Beethoven's Overture *Coriolan* is well recorded, but the playing by the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Adrian Boult, **lacks** spirit (DB 2101, 6/-). However, the same combination justifies itself in a rich and expressive performance of the orchestral prelude to *The Dream of Gerontius* (DB 2194, 6/-).

The words are another sign of the Victorian revival, and with the music Schumann hotted-up and Lupino Lane singing: *An Elephant never Forgets* is a taking mixture (Decca, F 3983, 1/6). This record of music-hall humour, together with that of the four Mills Brothers singing *Jungle Fete* (Brunswick, 01766, 2/61, are fair samples of our present ballad-tastes, English and American.

T.L.

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THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION. By Joseph Clayton, F.R.Hist.S. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne; 5/-.)

Mr. Clayton has succeeded in producing a well-balanced and readable account of the religious changes in the sixteenth century as they affected the people of Great Britain. He has been

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at great pains when dealing with the innovators, to **view** the scene **as** they might have been expected to view it. He has taken into account all the forces that influenced them, and stresses the fact that the people of England lost the Faith because they did not understand that they were losing it. And reading the book one is struck by the many similarities between the sixteenth century, when Europe was disrupted by Protestantism, and the twentieth century, when Europe is threatened by Communism. Here is a book which is eminently readable.

J.K.

THE LIFE OF CARDINAL VAUGHAN. By J. G. Snead-Cox. Abridged Edition. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne; 5/-.)

LIFE OF MOTHER MARGARET MARY HALLAHAN. By Mother Francis Raphael Drane, O.P. With a Preface by Archbishop Ullathorne and a Foreword to the Second Edition by the V. Rev. Fr. Bede Jarrett, O.F.M. (Longmans; 5/-.)

We welcome these new Editions of two works so well known and so excellent as to be classical and in no need of commendation. It is peculiarly fitting that the lives of these two great contemporary servants of God should be recalled to our minds at this time when Catholic Action is so much to the fore, for they were both outstanding characters of their period not only by reason of their sanctity but also because of their very practical activities. The proof of this, if any be needed, is in the Missionary College of Mill Hill and the numerous Convents of the Third Order of St. Dominic in England.

Whereas the *Life of Mother Margaret Mary* remains unchanged, except for the all-too-short Foreword by Fr. Hede Jarrett, Mr. Snead-Cox has allowed the publishers to make an abridgment of the official *Life of Cardinal Vaughan*. Though Messrs. Burns, Oates and Washbourne confess that they 'alone must bear the responsibility for any inevitable lack of proportion in this shorter version of one of the most distinguished of modern biographies,' we venture to submit that the careful pruning shows only lack of detail and not lack of proportion.

H.

THE WAY OF THE KING. By Father Martin Dempsey. (Washbourne & Bogan; 3/6.)

In a series of sketches drawn from the history of the Church through the ages, and from the lives of her sainted and saintly children, Father Martin Dempsey has succeeded admirably in

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shewing what the abiding Presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament has meant, and, perhaps, means now more than ever, to the devout faithful. The writer's vividly-drawn and sympathetic studies range from the Last Supper to the Eucharistic Congress in Dublin, each forming a variant on the theme *O Sacrum Convivium*. A book which by the universality of its appeal may be commended to the unlettered and the lettered, to the simple as well as to the spiritually sophisticated. Dr. Orchard has contributed an appreciative and devotional foreword.

A.

THOUGHTS OF BL. JULIE BILLIART. Selected and Arranged for Every Day in the Year by a Sister of Notre Dame. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne; cloth 2/6, leather 4/-.)

Those who know the spirit of the Sisters of Notre Dame, their great saneness, practicality, devotion to duty and high spirituality will know what to expect in these Thoughts of their holy Foundress. One thought, for January 14th, is perhaps typical: 'Simplicity is the true way to find God. Let us get ready for death by a life which is all for God and our duty.' There is guidance in this little volume not merely for Religious but for any follower of Our Lord. Here are a few 'Thoughts' taken at random: 'Charity comes from God, and is distinguished from cordiality or from politeness by its humility.' 'In whatever way God comes to us He must always be welcome. Be not wise in your own conceit, that is, do not commit the folly of thinking you can never make a mistake.' Our thanks are due to the Sister who selected and arranged these Thoughts.

H.

SPARKS BENEATH THE ASHES. Experiences of a London Probation Officer. By Mary Ellison. (John Murray; 6/-.)

The happy title of this fascinating book is part of a striking passage from the Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* which Mrs Ellison so happily quotes on the title page. We confess to finding the volume all too short, yet its comparative brevity does but emphasize the vividness of impression which can be produced with economy of words. In the 240 pages we are introduced to a great number of people of the more or less 'criminal' type whom the writer obviously regards as friends to be known, loved, and as far as possible helped, rather than as units of a troublesome class to be dealt with officially. The last chapter, as well as a previous passage, leaves us wondering (not indeed for the first time) whether the marvellous work of the Béthanie Convents in France, to the founding of which Père Lataste,

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O.P. devoted his life and energies, could not and ought not to be extended to the English Province of his Order. It is definitely a work for Religious as well as lay-folk, especially in the case of the *Madeleines réhabilitées* to whom the standard and vision of definite holiness appeals more than the mere prospect of a 'respectable' life.

Mrs. Ellison's reminiscences will not only prove intensely interesting to all types of reader but should set many thinking more hopefully of apparently desperate cases and should even move some to action—a truly Catholic action.

M.A.T.

OBERAMMERGAU. Its History and its Passion Play. By Elisabeth H. C. Corathiel. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne ; 3/6.)

This illustrated little book presents an interesting story of what will be the centre of innumerable pilgrimages this year. The historical origin of the Oberammergauers and that of their world-famed Passion Play is as entertaining as many a novel—here told in a charming, simple style. How these Celts of Southern Germany have striven to maintain their splendid independence, both spiritual and temporal, in the face of seemingly overwhelming difficulties from war, pestilence, etc., and of their heroic effort to fulfil that solemn vow made on a certain July morning, 1633—this is the story which the author tells us. For those who have already seen the Play it will serve as a handy souvenir ; for those who intend to see it, a convenient *cade mecum* ; and for those unable to see it, a first-rate substitute.

M.M.

WILD STRAWBERRIES. A Novel by Angela Thirkell. (Hamish Hamilton ; 7/6.)

Mrs. Thirkell's third ; the only criticism is that they appear only once a year. Cool and continuous humour, with a human irony, and here and there a subdued bass of sadness to make it more than a pastime book.

T.G.

The article on **FR. BEDE JARRETT** by Fr. Bernard Delany, which appeared in **BLACKFRIARS** for May, has now been reprinted, together with the portrait, and may be obtained from Blackfriars, Oxford, price 3d.

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