

REVIEWS

MASS FOR FOUR MEN'S VOICES. By John Taverner, edited by H. B. Collins.

MASS IN C MINOR (No. 2) for Organ and Four Mixed Voices. By C. H. Kitson.

MASS 'VENI CREATOR SPIRITUS' for Four Voices with organ accompaniment. By Richard Keys Biggs.

MISSA DOMINICALIS for Two Equal Voices with organ accompaniment. By Don Mario Pettorelli.

These four masses have been recently published by Messrs. Cary and Co. of London at 2/- each, with the exception of the mass by Don Mario Pettorelli, which is published at 1/6 per copy. They are by no means all of equal musical interest. Mr. Collins' edition of Taverner's 'Plainsong Mass' stands first in this respect, and his editorship is a guarantee of sound musical scholarship. It would form a useful addition to the repertoire of any choir; but since it is on the easy side, we strongly recommend this mass to choirs that may have fought shy of polyphony on account of the inherent difficulty of performing such music adequately. The mass is short and the Gloria and Credo can always be sung to the chant. No choir which is at all competent will now have any excuse for not having at least one polyphonic mass on their list.

Mr. Kitson's mass rather lacks inspiration, but its construction is workmanlike and sound. It is unadventurous without being banal. The average Catholic choir will enjoy singing it. Mr. Bigg's mass if it is generally commonplace (especially in the Kyrie), contains some ideas of genuine musical interest and should prove quite effective. Both these masses are better stuff than one frequently hears in Catholic churches. The accompaniments consist usually of doubling the vocal parts, but a competent organist should be able to rectify this if his choir can stand up to it.

Don Pettorelli's mass is the least ambitious and is the least meritorious; it is inclined to move about in thirds excessively. However, it will appeal to churches with very slender musical resources where harmonized music is regarded as a *sine qua non* of the Sunday mass.

R.W.

L'ARTISAN LITURGIQUE. (Quarterly. Abbey of St. André, Lophem, Belgium; 40 Belgian francs annually.)

It is no longer considered essential to prayer that it should take place in a Gothic edifice, and one aspect of the Liturgical Movement is its revitalizing of 'ecclesiastical art,' so that

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churches and their contents are coming to take a harmonious place in the setting of modern life. This excellent illustrated review is valuable as a guide to what is being done in this matter, especially in Belgium, France, Germany and Holland. In the number October-December, 1933, there are good articles on the architecture of Julian Barbier and V. Marrés, and M. A. Couturier, O. P., writes instructively on the paintings of Georges Desvallières. There is also an article on the new Paschal candle at St. Joseph's, Antwerp, which, in its fruity luxury, is everything that such a candle should not be. In the number January-March, among other good articles we note one on the churches of Karl Wilbe in Germany, a discussion of regional architecture and an impressively illustrated account of the altar furniture of a church in Syria, where the influence of dogma can be felt in majestic simplicity. In the number April-June we note an account of the churches of Ch. Henri Royer in the devastated areas, a study of how the Germans solve the problem of the position of the organ in a church, an article on the work of Dom Bellot and his school, and a brief notice of the windows of Raphael Ladeur. In general, the review is to be recommended to English Catholics: it may prove a much-needed inspiration.

A.M.

HISTORY

CYMRU'R OESAU CANOL gan Yr Athro Robert Richards. (Hughes a'i fab, Wrecsam; 15/-.)

The author has produced a book of scholarship which should yet have a considerable popular appeal. He has provided his readers with a survey of social life in medieval Wales and he has done it in such a fashion that the book should appeal to several types of reader. The difficulty of the task and the extent of his success can be gauged by comparing *Cymru'r Oesau Canol* with some English books of the same type.

The book starts with two excellent chapters which serve to explain what is meant by that elusive term a 'period' in history and to define and explain the position of the medieval civilization in the development of Europe. In other words Professor Richards enables the general reader to see the period in its relation to the whole sweep of European civilization. Such an introduction is, for the general reader, of capital importance and it will certainly do the more expert reader no harm.

This is followed by a series of chapters dealing with the life of the countryside and the town, the parish and the monastery.