

BLACKFRIARS

NOTICES

VOODOOISM IN MUSIC. By Sir Richard R. Terry. (Burns Oates; 3/6.)

The aim of this book of collected articles is to 'get at' the plain man and make music more understandable and less of a mystery guarded only by the initiate, an admirable object which it achieves excellently, in non-technical terms. Sir Richard Terry's common-sense but expert and scholarly pen attacks racily (the humour sometimes a little strained) the degenerate element in jazz, the 'gift of music' legend, the tyrant piano, the scoffers at mechanical music, the obstinacy of parish choirs which *will* not be reformed; and explains simply polyphonic music, describes medieval choirs, throws carol-singing into its true light, and discusses with splendid courage the difficult problem of vernacular hymns. Any plain man who has even a passing interest in music ought willingly to deliver himself up to be 'got at,' and read this book. (F.M.)

A new edition of **A GRAMMAR OF PLAINSONG** by a Benedictine of Stanbrook (paper 3/-, cloth 3/6) has been published. It is still one of the best introductory books to the practical study of the subject. The new edition is improved by a recasting of the chapter on Rhythm, and an additional one on Transcription.

Part II of **PLAINSONG FOR SCHOOLS** (paper 6½d., cloth 10d.) contains many useful things: the Proper of the Mass for principal feasts, Litanies of the Saints, Sunday Vespers, and Hymns for various occasions. There is also a **COMPANION** to Part I (price 6d.) consisting of a literal translation of the words contained in it. The purpose is to assist teachers to explain exactly what the Latin means. This is a sound idea, because a proper religious interpretation of the Chant is essentially bound up with the understanding of its meaning. All these books are published by Rushworth and Dreaper. (F.M.)

The eight chapters of Mr. L. V. Lester-Garland's **THE IDEA OF THE SUPERNATURAL** (S.P.C.K., 5/-) bear such titles as 'Belief in a Personal God,' 'The Modern Philosophy of Nature,' 'The Freedom of the Will.' As these indicate, the book covers a wider field than would be conveyed by its title understood in the strict meaning current in Catholic theology. It is concerned to maintain the foundations on which any true religion must rest, and the eight essays which compose it are evidently the result of wide reading and sincere thinking. There are, of course, passages which a Catholic would find it difficult to accept, but as a

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quiet, even exposition by a judicious mind at home in ancient and modern thought and anxious to preserve what is good in both, the book is to be highly commended. (L.W.)

A STUART PORTRAIT, a Study of Elizabeth Queen of Bohemia, by Alice Buchan (Peter Davies, 7/6) deserves notice, for it is the work of a new writer who achieves a definite measure of success in that very difficult *genre*, the modern imaginative biography. As a character study it is lively and consistent; as a study in the seventeenth century it is weak only where it is not original; thus there is the customary absence of references and a conventional over-emphasis on the felicity of Elizabethan England, on the lack of personal dignity in King James, on the religious aspect of the Thirty Years' War. But it is successful where it is most personal, and the characterization of the Queen's children shows an admirable sense of the individual. (G.M.)

ARCHBISHOP DOWNEY reprints a number of papers on theological, philosophical and scientific subjects in CRITICAL AND CONSTRUCTIVE ESSAYS (Burns Oates; 5/-). Evolution, Comparative Religion, Personal Immortality, Aquinas and Aristotle, Psychology and Psycho-Analysis, the Reunion of Christendom, are among the subjects dealt with.

A new edition of Fr. Hugh Pope's THE LAYMAN'S NEW TESTAMENT in 930 pages has been issued by Messrs. Sheed and Ward for 3/6. The work has been enlarged and very thoroughly revised, and many who possess the old edition will be glad to possess this more handsome volume as well.

STARS WERE BORN. By Barbara Lucas. (Constable; 7/6.)

A cinematic study of a passing phase; a girl of 16 in the classroom of a London day school between 4.15 and 4.30 on an autumn afternoon. Viewed from such a standpoint this first novel is perfect in its achievement, a compressed *Ulysses*. The long interlacing plots lose much of their significance if they are followed slowly and chronologically. The future of Petra as a married woman, with £450 a year and a swarm of children, like the future of the almost identical Domenica at Paris with her many lovers, is quite unconvincing as fact and very convincing as dream. Many of the cast like Noel Corbett, fair haired in his black felt hat, at a restaurant at Ostia or Guy Shewring, short and solid in a London *Brasserie*, retain throughout a photographic realism admirably fitting them to be phantoms. Among such motion-pictures Domenica at school stays integrally spontaneously alive. Thus stars were born. (V.G.)