

Professor Willson has done his job extremely well. It has all the thoroughness of American scholarship. Everything is there, objectively presented. And yet what emerges? Not a lovable man. Henry of Navarre, a robust opportunist, thought Paris worth a Mass. James VI and I could have made his aphorism, that England was worth a mother's death. Professor Willson blames Mary for her son's defects. 'To her son', he says, 'she transmitted her extravagance, her carelessness, her highly emotional nature easily finding relief in tears, her fondness for pleasure, her capacity for love and hate.' Surely this should have been counteracted by the highly moral training he received from some of the leading Scottish Reformers. And what, one wonders, about the inheritance from his father, Darnley, whom Professor Willson describes as 'not only stupid, but vain, insolent, treacherous and debauched . . . a raw boy dragged to his ruin by evil courses before he ever became a man'?

This book covers a vast area of Scottish and English history. It is done with meticulous care and exactitude. A Scottish reader, though, will regret that a former Historiographer-Royal for Scotland, the late Sir Robert Rait, and a historian of the eminence of Dr Annie Cameron are referred to only as Mr Rait and Miss Cameron.

KIERAN MULVEY, O.P.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF BENVENUTO CELLINI. (Penguin Books; 5s.)

BENVENUTO Cellini was unquestionably a great master in his own craft. One can only hope that he was also a great master in the Renaissance craft of lying. Such scandalous stories, such outrageous revelations; surely this is the frankest of all autobiographies. And such a mixture of piety and worldliness, such artistic genius and so much bragging.

Mr George Bull has made an excellent translation into appropriately racy, vivid English. Cellini bursts into vigorous life in these pages and slashes his way around with magnificent bravura. A mere silver crown expended and you can be transported into a Renaissance world of violent death, conspiracy, battles, and, above all, wonderful art.

KIERAN MULVEY, O.P.

BRITAIN IN MALTA. By Harrison Smith, PH.D. (Malta: Progress Press; 26s. 6d. the two volumes, or 13s. 6d. each.)

Great Britain came into possession of Malta at the beginning of the nineteenth century, during the Napoleonic Wars. At first the islands were governed by an administrator directly responsible to the government in London, but in 1835, pursuant to the Letters Patent of that year, a governor was appointed, assisted by a council with a minority