

can be tested by immediately re-starting the same piece over again when once it has been played. It is not a very considerable loss, but enough to take the 'edge' off the melodic quality. It is a fault easily remedied, it simply needs exact intonation by every singer. In one or two places some of the singers fall victim to that greatest difficulty of the Plainsong singer, to keep the word accent right, especially when, as in hymns, it pulls against the lilt of the melody. How difficult to sing 'Praesta Pater piissime,' and easy to let it sound like 'Praesta Pater.'

A great deal has been got on to these four sides which will be useful to every choir, Asperges, Responses, parts of Compline, etc. While those who are anxious to attempt the Proper for Whit Sunday will find the Alleluia and Sequence invaluable.

Wise choirmasters will invest in these records and play them over many times to their choirs.

F.M.

'BILL.' By C. C. Martindale, S.J., London. (Sheed and Ward; 5/- net.)

Bill, the hero of this book, is yet another of Father Martindale's entertaining young gentlemen. He joins the select company of Jock, Jack, the Corporal, and Albert Alfred, P.C. First encountered on a tram in Poplar, when he cadges a cigarette (so many 'conversions' begin with the offer of a Gold Flake!) he emigrates to New Zealand and 'grows into a knowledge of out-door life and the Catholic Faith simultaneously.' The story is unfolded in a series of letters, though, as the author admits, 'no single "Bill" would have written such long letters and so often.' 'But there are hundreds of thousands of Bills who compose a collective Bill . . . and they have said, I think, pretty well all the things that the book-Bill says.'

Bill is first shocked into serious thought when a mate of his suddenly gives a grunt and falls down in a heap, dead. He tells Father X, in England, all about it, in his Poplar English, and follows up his first letter with various pertinent questions. From 'I never had no religion and never wanted any' he is impelled to ask 'Will you tell me why I should believe in a God?' Given such an opening, his mentor is ready to explain that the 'thing that is at the back of the whole world is what we call God . . . otherwise the world wouldn't have got going at all . . . Because, however many links there are in a chain, you can't hang it up on nothing. See?' Gradually Bill 'sees.' And the end of his 'seeing' is enthusiastic believing, and reception into the Church.

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From his letters Bill Brock's character emerges as something simple, lovable, and essentially humble. 'He is a perfect example of what good stuff men really are, and how, if their minds were only helped a bit, they would come quick towards Christianity and into the Church.' And it is Father Martindale's genius that he can give to such minds as Bill's (and others) just the kind of help that is needed. His method is far removed from that of the average 'catechism': the religion he imparts is a 'life.' Not only is he able to approach the truths of faith from an entirely new angle, but he has found a fresh way of expressing them. Then, just because religion *is* life and not merely a system of thought or code of conduct, he links it up at every possible point with everyday life. Therein lies the author's powerful appeal. He is nothing if not practical. But the illustrations he uses are more than arbitrary examples: they are types, symbols, of the truth he is stressing.

Non-Catholics could have no better introduction to the Church than this book. Even to many Catholics it must come as a revelation of the faith that is in them. We are grateful for the coming of 'Bill.'

E.E.

SOME CATHOLIC NOVELISTS; THEIR ART AND OUTLOOK. By Patrick Braybrooke. (Burns, Oates and Washbourne, Ltd.; 7/6.)

The 'some' are seven; four living, three have passed—we dare not say are dead. G. K. Chesterton, Hilaire Belloc, 'John Ayscough,' R. H. Benson, Sir Philip Gibbs, Sheila Kaye-Smith, and Katherine Tynan are Mr. Braybrooke's choice. These writers are 'Catholic Novelists'—so Mr. Braybrooke tells us; and they 'lead in the curious and romantic world of fiction.' (But how they lead, or whither he tells us not). Of course many other 'Catholic Novelists' left out of Mr. Braybrooke's team may be named. Maurice Baring, Mrs. Belloc-Lowndes, Isabel Clarke, 'Darley Dale,' Enid Dinnis, Compton Mackenzie, Miss Grace Ashton, Canon Sheehan, 'Lucas Malet,' Mrs. de la Pasture, Mrs. Victor Rickard, Mrs. Wilfrid Ward, Mrs. Yeo. Why these distinguished writers of fiction, excluded from Mr. Braybrooke's list of winners, not even given a place, but banished utterly, should be thus dismissed in silence only the arbitrary will of the author could disclose. However, there it is; and since Mr. Braybrooke is satisfied that not one of his seven but is a 'Catholic Novelist of the first rank' we can only leave it at that. An essayist, after all, must be allowed to choose his own subjects. As the choice of subjects is the fruit of Mr. Braybrooke's private and per-