

depreciations of morality and of criticism draw a sharp protest from the reviewer, whose critical principles derive, it is clear, largely from Dr Leavis. And it is so far a thoroughly commendable protest as it draws attention to a certain overweening aestheticism in Bullough's lectures, which calls, at least, for a good deal of further clarification—such as Bullough himself in part provided in an essay which, it is to be hoped, may be reprinted in a second volume of his writings ('The Relation of Literature and the Arts', in *Modern Languages*, XIV, 1933). But it would be regrettable if the word went round that Bullough has nothing of value to teach the young today. In the first decade of this century, himself not yet thirty, he was fighting to get aesthetics recognized as a discipline in its own right, distinct from metaphysics (as he then understood this) and distinct from, though drawing upon, psychology. In the heat of battle he sometimes exaggerated. He should be valued for the truths he discerned and forcibly stated. As Miss Wilkinson observes, a reader who sets out to refute Bullough with anything like Bullough's own thoroughness will, at the end, 'have learned a great deal about aesthetic thinking, and indeed about thinking in general'. She herself contrasts, briefly but suggestively, Bullough's psychological approach, his placing the unifying principle of aesthetics in 'the receiving subject' and not in some objective Beauty, with the contemporary American philosopher, Susanne K. Langer's impressive attempt to turn the tables and find that principle in the 'art object as something in its own right, with properties independent of our . . . reactions, which command our reactions'. If this contrast is not to be left as a mere difference of 'points of view', there is needed, it seems to me, (a) a clarification of Bullough's somewhat confused statement (pp. 50–53) of the role of *criticism* in preparing the way for aesthetic contemplation, and (b) an explanation, such as he never really attempted to give, of what it is, ontologically—in terms of the place of the human soul in the structure of reality—that such contemplation bears upon. The latter question is perhaps posed by Miss Wilkinson when she says that Bullough's theory of art as 'formation (*Gestaltung*) of feeling before the eye of the mind, sufficiently removed to be contemplated . . . positively begs for a theory of mind which accepts art as a means to *knowledge* and tells us what it makes *known*' (my italics). And that, I suggest, leads us back to M. Maritain who has been repeatedly concerned with the formulation of precisely such a theory.

KENELM FOSTER, O.P.

THE PENGUIN BOOK OF ITALIAN VERSE. Introduced and edited by George R. Kay. (Penguin Books; 5s.)

There will be different opinions about this anthology, but no one will find it conventionally dull. It is a decidedly personal selection and

will provoke objections. It will be called one-sided—not sufficiently representative, either of all phases in the history of Italian poetry or of its main characteristics. To start with, a mere counting of pages yields the surprising result that the medieval period and the twentieth century together account for one half of the whole book; the five centuries, roughly, between Sacchetti (died in 1400) and D'Annunzio being compressed into the rest. That implies a notable shift of emphasis away from older conventional evaluations, a very decided reshuffling, which for my part I find refreshing and is surely praiseworthy in principle; for an anthologist should also be a critic and it is for his own generation that he critically selects. Nevertheless Mr Kay must look out for criticism, and especially from academic readers. He totally excludes Alfieri, Parini and Monti, he allows Ariosto and Manzoni only one poem each and only thirty pages out of 416 to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (if we count Foscolo as of the nineteenth); and shows only slight interest in Carducci.

Allowance must be made for Mr Kay's decision to give no snippets; each of his items is a complete poem in itself, or at least can be read as such, like the lovely chorus from Tasso's *Aminta*, 'O bella età dell' oro'. And if this means that the greatest of Italian poems does not appear at all, we have some splendid examples from Dante's 'minor' works—three of the strange 'Pietra' *canzoni* and the wonderful *Tre donne*. Most readers, probably, will be seeing these poems for the first time.

And in general, apart from the *Divine Comedy*, Italian poetry is scarcely known to English readers, even to people who could read it if they tried; yet it is a major expression of that old motherland of Europe, Virgil's 'mater antiqua', and a treasure of beauty and intelligence to which each age, our own included, has contributed. Moreover Italian literature is predominantly a verse literature: with few exceptions its major figures have been poets. In prose fiction Italy cannot rival France or England. She has a great tradition of argumentative writing in prose, especially in ethics and political theory. But poetry is her chief literary glory. In poetic drama she cannot, it is true, compare with either France or England; but in two other types, so to call them, of verse-writing (which often overlap) the Italian output is marvellously rich—in the expression, I mean, of purely sensuous beauty, visual and oral, and in the poetic presentation of moral themes and reflections. The musical beauty of the Italian language is a commonplace; less appreciated is a certain clarity in the Italian imagination; an imagination less rich and suggestive (even in Dante) than that of the greatest English poets, and supremely Shakespeare, but, because of this, perhaps more clearly articulate, more amenable to verbal expression

and rational control than is usually the case with the English imagination. And so Italian poetry has frequently shown a power of rising easily into the realm of ideas, of transforming the particular experience with reflections which seem to have a universal validity. So it is in Dante supremely, and in Leopardi the sceptic and Manzoni the Catholic.

I could wish that Mr Kay had given us more of Manzoni; his very slender representation here leaves a notable gap. He was not, of course, a prolific writer anyhow; but he brought a highly personal, a unique distinction to Italian verse, with his sweet intelligent gravity. And he is very representative of that characteristic reflective and universalizing tendency noted above. But perhaps he is too much of a 'stock' figure for Mr Kay's taste, which shows a bias towards the less expected choices. So he gives us more than twenty poems by Michelangelo—surely (for all the interest of their content) an excessive allowance. On the other hand I am delighted to see Tommaso Campanella brought out of his obscurity: this trouble-tried Dominican was a grand poet in his dry, sombre and pregnant fashion. As *religious* poetry I find Campanella's verse and, in its very different way, the *Pietà* of the modern poet Ungaretti the most interesting things in this book. But in general this is indeed an anthology to be grateful for. It will awaken interest—that is the great thing. And the prose 'cribs' at the foot of the page, though not impeccably accurate, will be a real boon to beginners in Italian.

KENELM FOSTER, O.P.

#### ROMAN CATHOLICISM IN ENGLAND FROM THE REFORMATION TO 1950.

By E. I. Watkin. (Home University Library: Oxford University Press; 7s. 6d.)

This is the companion volume to the history of the Free Churches in the Home University series. It is clear that Mr Watkin has done much close reading during its preparation and it is tightly packed with fact. The standard of factual accuracy is high; the misspellings in surnames and titles like 'Brudnell' and 'Teghnam' are almost certainly misprints. If it does not come alive, that is most probably because few of the personalities referred to seem convincing—no one could believe in such purely black characters as Mr Watkin's Bishop Stonor or his Bishop Milner. Mr Watkins emphasizes several factors in English Catholic history that have been too commonly ignored; it is a pity that he tends to over-emphasize them. He is surely right in stressing the persistent strength of a Gallican tradition within English Catholicism. But it is not tenable to assert that hardly any of the English Catholic priests in the eighteenth century accepted Papal Infallibility 'in any sense'. All would have held that the Pope was the head of an infallible Church. Undoubtedly he is right to emphasize that the majority of