

## REVIEWS

THE DIARY OF BENJAMIN NEWTON. Edited by C. P. Fendall and E. A. Crutchley. (Cambridge University Press, 1933; 12/6 net.)

If, as some one (was it Disraeli?) once said 'History is but the essence of innumerable Biographies,' then this book may be looked upon as a decided contribution to the history of the Jane Austen epoch. Here we have a vivid and somewhat pleasing picture of one of the more dignified clergy of that peaceful time. The Rev. Benjamin Newton, Fellow of his College and tutor to the Earl of Ailesbury, was presented by his pupil to one of the most valuable Yorkshire livings in his gift, and there spent the best years of his life. He stands half-way between the jovial port-wine pluralists of the eighteenth-century and the grave sedate churchmen of the early days of the Oxford Movement, and is a very creditable specimen of his class, decidedly on a higher level intellectual and otherwise than any of the parsons depicted for us by Miss Austen. Newton kept up his reading and his scholarship, attended well to his duties as a clergyman, and was thoroughly devoted to his parishioners. At the same time, he was a typical country gentleman, he rode and hunted, shot and fished, kept greyhounds, and went to the races. He was a successful farmer and horse-breeder, an excellent and painstaking magistrate, and a good social influence.

His Diary shows us his daily round, and something of his personality, which is a rather charming one. The record is not exciting in any way, and Newton does not seem to have come in close association with any of the celebrities of the day with the exception of David Ricardo, the economist. In politics he was a decided liberal, 'a great enemy to Tyranny, but a greater to Anarchy.' As to religion, 'controversy makes shipwreck of charity'; while so far as Bible and Christian Knowledge Societies are concerned he thinks it better to pray for one fold under one shepherd, leaving the time and measure of accomplishment to the Good Shepherd himself. Newton appears to have had hardly any Catholic contacts, but he enjoyed the writings of that rather latitudinarian priest the Rev. John Chetwode Eustace, whom he oddly describes as 'the best dissenter I have met with.'

F. R. B.

CAVALIER: LETTERS OF WILLIAM BLUNDELL TO HIS FRIENDS, 1620-98. Edited by Margaret Blundell. (Longmans, 1933; 10/6 net.)

Seven miles from Liverpool stands Crosby Hall, an old rambling manor-house of stone, its park hidden in a belt of woodland, the country round still agricultural in character, and