

plain'; 'Dead as icebone breaking the hedge'). And her sharp understanding of Welsh metrical forms gives a distinctive shape to her poetry; she uses an idiom and never an accent. Writing in English, she has, as she should have, a proper regard for the integrity of that language. But she comes to it fresh, inquisitive, with a Welsh memory. Her English readers should be glad. I.E.

THE INNOVATOR. By John Brett Robey. (Faber; 10s. 6d.).

Its title would hardly suggest that *The Innovator* is a novel concerned with the events leading up to the Crucifixion of Our Lord. It is indeed a strikingly original essay in a medium that invites disaster. Almost any scriptural novel at once induces a feeling of resentment. Quite apart from the Christian's sense of reverence towards the God-given record of the Bible, there is its unparalleled literary economy. To add to the story is to destroy it. One has only to think of Hall Caine, not to speak of the exquisitely written blasphemies of George Moore.

Mr. Robey's novel deals with the first four days of Holy Week, and in particular with the deliberations of the Sanhedrim. He draws a clear picture of the conflicting loyalties of the Jewish leaders and he makes such figures as Annas and Caiaphas consistent with the basic account of the evangelists. Many of the minor characters are excellently conceived: Hayyim, the cynical councillor; Susannah, the secret believer in the Messiah; the crude servants. Perhaps the novel's chief achievement is the character—for as such it emerges—of the City of Jerusalem. It comes to life with all its crowded humanity, its oriental splendour and squalor, the city of David and the city of the Roman soldiery. Most wisely Mr. Robey only introduces our Lord at the end, before the Sanhedrim at night; and the only words that are uttered by Him are those we already know.

Some of the incidental detail of *The Innovator*, however, seems to reveal a failure in discrimination. As realistic writing it is successful enough, but it would better serve a Hollywood film-scenario than a novel which, because of its theme, demands absolute singleness of mind. I.E.

NO DREAMERS WEAK. By Michael de la Bedoyere. (John Miles; 9s.).

At the present critical moment in world history the questions which Mr. de la Bedoyere poses and discusses are of the first importance. Never has it been so urgent that we should clear our minds concerning the spiritual and moral principles which should regulate international relations, and on the way in which Christian principles can be applied to world events. Discussion is heard on all sides at present on the political and economic background of European problems, but far less interest is shown in the more fundamental principles

of the spiritual background. It is vital that we should be reminded, as Mr. de la Bedoyere reminds us here, of this aspect of our problems.

He is not concerned with detailed plans, but rather with an analysis and a valuation of present trends. We may not always agree in detail with his analysis or with his criticism, but that is of minor importance, compared with the fact that we have been compelled to face the problem from this point of view. Only in so doing can we hope to discover the lines along which progress towards peace may be made in the light of Christian values.

But here a warning may not be unnecessary in pointing out how easily a political bias may show itself, even on this higher ground, in favour of personal political views deeply felt and held. It is a danger against which most of us will have to guard. The author of this book does not himself seem always quite immune from such political prepossessions. There is both justice and wisdom in all that he says of the treatment of Germany after the war.

MARGRIETA BEER.

FOUR QUARTETS. By T. S. Eliot. (Faber; 6s.).

The sequence of poems from *Burnt Norton* to *Little Gidding* is here reprinted, under a title which aptly suggests the chamber-music quality of the verse. The four poems can only be understood in their relation to each other, and this publication places them conveniently together for study. It does more than that: it presents them in a format whose austere beauty of typography and wonderful paper make it worthy of a great work of art.

LUKE TURNER, O.P.

THE WIND AND THE RAIN is now published by the Phoenix Press, and the current (Winter 1945) number is excellent value—48 well-printed pages for 1/-. Especially notable is a study by Dallas Kenmare of the poetry of Francis Berry and David Gascoyne.

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