

Without attempting to supply final answers to the difficult questions involved, it sets out with remarkable lucidity the moral problems which arise out of political crimes of this nature.

D. C. POTTER

VAUGHAN WILLIAMS. By Percy M. Young. (Dennis Dobson; 18s.)

Vaughan Williams is such a rich character in his personality, his views, and his many activities, that there is always a strong temptation for critics to discuss these rather than his music, or at best to discuss his music as a reflection of these. This book is to be welcomed because it places the music first and sets out to discuss it objectively and impartially. Unlike many of the composer's admirers, Dr Young is prepared to admit that it is possible to dislike Vaughan Williams' music and to disagree with some of his opinions without being a moron, a degenerate or a traitor. Even so, he insists, it is impossible not to *respect* the music of Vaughan Williams. The object of this book is to show why this is so.

Dr Young has many of the qualities needed for the task he has undertaken: a wide knowledge of his subject; a real sympathy with it; a critical faculty which is not disarmed by partiality; and great experience as a practical musician. Only one thing more was required: an ability to write. It is strange that while Vaughan Williams himself writes so well, in a simple, direct style, most of the people who write about him do so with self-conscious, 'literary' elaboration. One can understand this in the professional critics who have to disguise that they have nothing of any importance to say, but it is quite unforgivable in a man like Dr Young. Certain mannerisms of construction are irritating, but no worse. What is much more serious is the author's habit of confusing his readers and possibly himself by flights of involved but vague and unhelpful philosophic and literary allusion. At best these give an appearance of saying a great deal more than they really do; occasionally they end up as near or complete nonsense. An interesting and useful book, but a disappointing one, because economy and discipline would have made it so much better.

E.T.

A HANDFUL OF AUTHORS. By G. K. Chesterton; edited by Dorothy Collins. (Sheed and Ward; 10s. 6d.)

Though there are many felicities and fireworks here, it is doubtful whether the cumulative effect of these essays warrants their publication in book form. It would be a very great pity if they were to fall into the hands of some young creature unfamiliar with Chesterton's major work, and make him judge and dismiss it all as irrelevant and out of date. For it is with a feeling of 'for old sake's sake' that the reader must set himself to this volume of collected pieces. Throughout its pages he will remember that here is the journalistic output of a mind matured before the first