

BLACKFRIARS

Slavie' by Count Sforza, ex-Foreign Minister of Italy; and 'Le Problème de l'Europe Centro-Orientale' by Don Sturzo.

B.B.C.

CINEMA

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

It was due to the kindness of Mr. J. Russell Orr, of the new Central Information Bureau for Educational Films, Kingsway House, Kingsway, W.C.2, that we were favoured with a private view of this fine film. Produced under the auspices of the Bishop of Rochester, U.S.A., it depicts in unabridged detail the action of Low Mass, interspersed with short sequences from the Life and Passion of Our Lord. It is straightforward photography, and no attempt has been made to enhance dramatic effect by cutting, but the work is a singularly beautiful example of motion-picture art. The photography is excellent, and the clever camera-angles are no less admirable for their aesthetic than for the pedagogic qualities. The shot of the fraction of the Host is particularly memorable. The film aims chiefly at demonstrating and explaining the rubrics of the priest, with the result that he is apt to appear as a solitary performer rather than as the representative of a congregation acting in union with him. This would be a serious defect in a film which claims to convey the meaning of the Mass in its entirety; but the fault lies here in the title rather than in the film itself. It is an achievement which opens up wide vistas of the possibilities of the cinema as a powerful medium for religious instruction and, in particular, for the liturgical apostolate. Copies are available for hire on two reels of sub-standard (16 mm.) non-inflammable stock. All enquiries should be addressed to Mr. Russell Orr.

V.W.

MUSIC.

February has long been recognised as the 'peak' month of music-making. The orchestral concerts, chamber music, instrumental and vocal recitals from which the public can choose this year are many and varied. On February 4th Herr Huberman

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gives one of his regular, and justly popular, recitals at the Queen's Hall. At his best this violinist touches great heights, the smooth strength of his playing and his incisive attack being the qualities which most impress. On February 6th, 7th and 9th the Courtauld-Sargent Concert Club are giving their usual form of triple-repeat programme. On these three days Cortot will be playing the Chopin F Minor Concerto and César Franck's *Variations Symphoniques*. Elena Garhardt is singing three of the best loved from amongst her repertoire of Strauss songs at the B.B.C. Orchestral Concert on February 8th. This great singer can always be relied upon to give a most enjoyable and authoritative rendering of the songs she chooses. In the same series of concerts Herr Artur Schnabel will play the Beethoven Emperor Concerto. It would not be a bad thing if Herr Schnabel were put under a permanent contract to play this work at least once a year in this country—just to remind us what it really sounds like. In the same programme we find the great Mozart Jupiter Symphony (No. 41), which requires an orchestra of the B.B.C.'s calibre to do it justice. On February 9th the Royal Philharmonic Society are celebrating the Brahms Centenary with an orchestral concert of that composer's works. The Haydn Variations, the Double Concerto and the Fourth Symphony are due for performance on this occasion. This trio cannot be said to represent Brahms at his greatest; the substitution of the Second Piano Concerto for the Double Concerto, and, possibly, the First Symphony for the Fourth, would make a stronger programme. The Léner Quartet are giving three programmes at the Queen's Hall in February, on the 11th, 21st, and 28th. They form part of a series of six subscription concerts. At the first of the February group Léon Goossens will collaborate with the quartet in the Mozart F Minor Oboe Quintet. The second concert consists of the three Beethoven (Op. 59) *Rassumovsky* Quartets. The third is also an all-Beethoven affair. In this Aubrey Brain and Aubrey Thonger will play the horns in the E Flat Major Sextet. It appears to have become the fashion, of late, to criticise the Léner Quartet on the ground that they are 'over-delicate' in their phrasing; nothing could be more absurd than this charge. They are as robust in their tone, when there is need for such a quality, as any of the combinations we ever hear in England, and far better balanced. In the afternoon, on February 12th, they are combining with the London Philharmonic Orchestra, under Geoffrey Toye, in the first performance in England of Spohr's *Quartett-Konzert*. In the same programme we are going to hear the first concert performance of the conduc-

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tor's *Douanes*. It will be interesting to see whether this work will conjure up vivid memories to all who have suffered the indignities, cold, and discomfort of those draughty sheds and endless passages at Calais, Boulogne and Dieppe.

We are to have our annual visit from the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under Herr Furtwangler. They are giving two concerts at the Queen's Hall, on February 13th and 14th, and one at the Albert Hall on the 19th. Save for the inevitable all-Beethoven programme on the first date, the works chosen for performance do not make very inspiring reading. This German orchestra is still as fine an instrument as ever, but mere virtuosity can never overcome the handicap of ill-chosen programmes. We have an orchestra or two of our own nowadays that can play interesting music brilliantly.

The B.B.C. are presenting a fine series of eight subscription concerts of chamber music in the new Concert Hall at Broadcasting House, beginning on February 6th. Such great artists as Carl Flesch and Lamond, and such well-known ensembles as the Brosa, Kutcher, and Pro Arte Quartets are taking part.

PATRICK GEOGHEGAN.

GRAMOPHONE NOTES.

With the memory of recent concerts in honour of Sir Edward Elgar's seventy-fifth birthday still fresh in our minds, it may be interesting to see just how much our gramophone companies have done to preserve, for all time, the true spirit and authentic interpretation of his works. Between them, the H.M.V. and Columbia companies have recorded nearly all the major works and a large number of the minor ones. Two notable exceptions are *The Dream of Gerontius* and *The Kingdom*, H.M.V. having only four extracts from the former, while no records of the latter work are available. A not too abridged version of these works would be very welcome. Most certainly, *The Dream of Gerontius* would make very ready sales. Another crying need is a new recording of the Second Symphony. Admittedly the early H.M.V. electric recording was considered highly satisfactory, nevertheless we now judge these productions by a far stricter standard. The recent issue, by the same company, of a magnificent recording and performance of the First Symphony has shown the big strides that have been made in the knowledge of microphone-balancing, and the consequent improvement in instrumental detail.

The same plea for a new recording might also be made on behalf of that great favourite, the Enigma Variations. One