

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