

Blackfriars

the tantalising changes of the Flavian and Alexandrian episodes are scarcely credible. Yet, even in this second portion, there appears such a delightful scene as Josephus' conversation with the peasants in the tavern in Galilee. The fact that Karl Alexander and Vespasian both seem to bear the same relation to their Jewish protégés throws a clear light upon the relative success of the two studies. Viewed from this standpoint a failure to envisage the first century Jewish Faith becomes apparent. It is under the stress of an uncomprehended Semitic religious background that the latter story fails. There is here in this intricate involved religious detail nothing of the confident humility of Judaism, the calm and constant spirituality which found expression in Reb Joseph's cry of 'Adonai.' It is only a praise to *Jew Süß* to point out that its author's later works have failed to reach that profound unity.

D.M.

COSMOPOLIS. By Rupert Croft-Cooke. (Jarrolds; pp. 331; 7/6.)

This is the tale of Utopia—the advanced new school, set high up on an alpine peak for the children of the rich. It tells how a young society beauty, disillusioned of life, comes to visit it, and learns the meaning of simple, unspoilt love; and how her introspection and hesitations bring tragedy to herself and ruin to the school.

These are but the bare bones of a novel packed with life and humour, satire and malicious wit. Whether Mr. Croft-Cooke is dealing with certain trends in contemporary education, whether he is illustrating the effects of nationalism on the universal brotherhood of man, his touch is sure, and his satire kept within bounds. Some of his writing is in places unnecessarily outspoken, but what may cause more pain to the Catholic reader is the atmosphere of futility and impermanence which pervades the book. The world is suffering to-day from knowing too much, without having any firm foundation on which to order this knowledge; the result is an outlook similar to that of the Epicureans of old, who were part of a civilization not unlike our own; a longing to be free of this vale of tears, and to rest for ever in unbroken sleep. There is only one force to-day which can save the world, and Mr. Croft-Cooke hints at it in an isolated sentence.

S.U.

GOLD OF TOULOUSE. By John Clayton. (Heinemann; 8/6.)

Mr. Clayton owes much to an older school of romantic novelists, but he writes with a vigour to which they seldom at-

tained and their cast has rarely been so vividly portrayed. The Sinister Count has never been more sinister nor the Fat Monk more fat, and neither the Young Spaniard nor the Girl Disguised as a Boy can ever have survived more perils in so short a time. Their adventures are staged in thirteenth-century Languedoc at the outbreak of the Albigensian wars. Mr. Clayton has achieved the seemingly impossible with the ease of one of his heroes, for he has reconciled a neo-realist technique in description with fidelity to the conventions of romance.

G.M.

THE PLAY

FOLLOW ME. By Tyrone Guthrie. At the Westminster Theatre, London.

If Christ came to earth to-day how would the world treat Him? Would it hail Him as the Saviour of mankind, or would He again be crucified. Such is the problem which Mr. Guthrie has had the courage to tackle in this play.

Whilst we may possibly disagree with the answer provided by the author, that the events of some two thousand years ago would only be repeated, nevertheless we can but admire his logical explanation of the reason for the inevitability of the disaster, and the simple dignity of his treatment of the whole subject. The extremely natural speech and behaviour of the obscure Scottish family of Anderson, abandoned by their devoted father, 'Matthew,' most effectively gives an air of reality to the incredible situation with which they are faced.

The acting throughout the cast is of a very high order, but special praise is due to Mr. Barry Livesey for his restrained and dignified portrayal of 'Matthew' Anderson, and to Miss Elliot Mason in the part of Kate, his devoted wife, who, although secretly unconvinced as to the genuineness of 'the cause,' is, nevertheless, so completely certain of his very real need of her that she eventually leaves the children she loves in order to be with him.

Mr. Guthrie raises a great question and gives us little more than an arbitrary answer. Despite this we are considerably in his debt, for he is a good and sincere craftsman who points down a long and interesting road of thought, although he does not even remotely attempt to describe its many turnings.

One person, at least, came away from this play with the uncomfortable feeling that the drama he had just witnessed might be only too accurate a forecast in the event of the fulfilment of its premise.

P.K.G.