

BLACKFRIARS

Raj in India. The film critic sternly rebukes the Nazi censor for a very grave lapse. May such freedom of speech be suffered to continue!

The same publishers send us a specimen of a new periodical, *ZEIT UND VOLK* (35 Pfennig weekly). 'It comes from a group of young Catholic Germans who seek to co-operate in the solving of our national problems.' Its purpose is to discuss and direct the Catholic contribution to national reconstruction. An article by Dr. Jos. Himmelreich in the issue of August 12th hails the National-Socialist revolution and the Concordat as the final triumph of Catholic culture in the Reich. Oppressed under the Kulturkampf, liberated as an independent entity under the Weimar Constitution, it is now established as a recognised factor in the nation's cultural life. The Catholic influence of the South and West must deliver Germany as a whole from the exclusive domination of specifically Prussian cultural elements. Dr. F. Landmesser welcomes the new régime as an opportunity for realising the vocational ordering of society as outlined in the *Quadragesimo Anno*. It has overthrown liberal individualism, it must overthrow its economic counterpart, individual Capitalism, if it is to achieve its task. It must at all costs avoid the danger of Hegelian State-Absolutism and find the true conception of the community and the commonweal in St. Thomas. Less encouraging is the special pleading of some other contributors on behalf of Nazi barbarities and the militarisation of athletics. Yet more disturbing is the tendency to religious Indifferentism resulting from the anxiety to co-operate with Protestants. But, though few of us may share their enthusiasm for the Hitlerite régime, we must admire the determination of this group of German Catholics to make the very best of the new situation.

V.W.

THE PLAY

THE COMMONWEALTH THEATRE, a community of players deserving practical support, made its bow at Oxford in the first week of August with John Fletcher's tragi-comedy *The Faithful Shepherdess*, presented by Virginia Isham, produced by Ida Teather, music arranged and the four songs composed by Imogen Holst. Those who were fortunate to be at one of the performances in New College Gardens must have a new appreciation of the melody and pattern of this lovely pastoral, if to the reason it still appears a statement rather than an explanation of chastity. From a talented company, Miss Enid Percival's quickening Amarillis remains particularly in the memory, and the Chloe of Miss Sylvia Coleridge, which can best be described as polisht;

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while Mr. George Wray as Satyr, droll and pathetic, and Mr. Owen Reed as Sullen Shepherd, tortured and restrained, were both as they should be. The Commonwealth Theatre is not committed to one school or period of drama, and proposes to follow with *Love's Labour Lost*, a Living Punch and Judy for children, possibly a comedy by Goldoni. *Prosperè procede*. T.G.

NOTICES

THE LIVES OF THE SAINTS. By Alban Butler. (*April, August*.) Revised by Herbert Thurston, S.J., Norah Gleeson and Donald Attwater. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne; 7/6 per vol.; pp. 355, 401.)

Fresh volumes of the new edition of Alban Butler's *Lives of the Saints* continue to appear with commendable regularity and with similar defects and merits. Each volume has been of interest as a modern version of one of the classics of English Catholicism, and Fr. Thurston continues to be fortunate in his collaborators. Yet it is still difficult to discover any underlying unity of design beneath strangely contrasted styles and methods. Thus the welcome stringency with which an occasional fable is rejected is combined with a spasmodic loyalty to the hagiographical conventions of the last two hundred years; a quiet homeric persistence in the repetition of epithet and a carelessness of some at least of the *minutiae* of scholarship. Titles are still granted lavishly, and the erratic spelling of proper names provides strange variants from Celtic, Arabic and Armenian roots. But if at times the reader may feel lost in the familiar twilight of hagiography with 'Hoa' and 'Melek Seleh' and 'The King of South Wales,' each biographical sketch gains a permanent value from its bibliography, and though their work is marred by inconsistency the editors and revisors are doing a service to English Catholicism since but for them many of the saints commemorated in these two volumes would have been forgotten or remained unknown. G.M.

MÉDITATIONS sur les Mystères de notre sainte Foi avec la Pratique de l'Oraison Mentale. Par le Vénérable Père Louis du Pont, S.J. Traduites sur le texte espagnol de Valladolid (1605) par le R. P. Pierre Tennesseeux, S.J. Édition revue et argumenté d'une biographie, par le R. P. Ugarte, S.J. (Paris, Desclée de Brouwer et Cie. Six volumes, 60 frs.; each volume, 12 frs.)

This spiritual classic is the most celebrated work of Louis du Pont, de Ponte, or, in its original Spanish, de la Puente. As his