

agree with the criticisms-expressed against those who hold a different opinion.

The present volume of *Traditio* reflects great honour on American scholarship, and promises well for the future. It remains to be added that an Index of subjects and proper names would have augmented the value of the book.

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GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS. W. H. Gardner. (Secker and Warburg ; 25s.)

In twenty-five years the critical study of Gerard Hopkins has accumulated to fill a four-page bibliography and the critical approach to his work has developed from an attack in *The Universe* of March 1919 against Robert Bridges' editing of the poems, through the varied minor excitements of psychologists, notably of Dr. I. A. Richards' school of criticism, through the elucidations of theologians, Jesuit and other, through the appreciations of poets and of scholars like F. R. Leavis, to the admirably comprehensive work of Dr. Pick and of W. H. Gardner in the present volume. There is no need by now to argue for Hopkins a place on the literary map. All that has been done. The task of a writer like Mr. Gardner has been to bring together all that contributes to an understanding of the poetry and of what Hopkins meant by the poetry. And it was no light task. It involved the due appreciation of Scotist theology, of the Ignatian exercises, of Catholic priesthood, of Welsh language and prosody, of the origins in English verse and dialect of the diction and rhythm of the poems, of Hopkins' other creative interests in music and drawing, of his interest too in early Greek philosophy,—and all this in a mind able to devote years of work to the single task of bringing these things to bear on the detailed elucidation of the poems. It makes one gasp a little that such a task should be completed in war-time. It is amazingly well done.

And it is well done because Mr. Gardner has come to share in the intensity of Hopkins own interests and in the right order of their predominance. It is absolutely right that the bulk of the finest work in the book should fall under such chapter heads as 'Diction and Syntax' and 'Sonnet Morphology'; and that 'The Wreck of the Deutschland' should receive more than thirty pages of study with the focus of interest in the achievement of its diction and rhythmic structure. The poet's profound and difficult meaning is not ignored, but is made to 'flash off exploit' as Hopkins himself would have had it explained. The 'Windhover,' 'Spelt from Sybil's Leaves' and 'That Nature is a Heraclitean Fire' receive the same type of handling. It is a critical manipulation which must be written down as the most adequate yet to the understanding of these difficult master-pieces.

*Respect* for the man, Hopkins, for his dual vocation of priest and

poet; for the *achievement* of his resetting of the pitch of poetic utterance, have proved an indispensable condition even of the making sense of the poetry. In this context 'the faithless fable and miss' precisely to the extent that they condescend to the object of their criticism. May critics of the psychological school please note.

The book is so thorough that the loopholes for minor dissatisfaction are very few, though it is perhaps worth mentioning that the word 'fang' in the sense of 'seize' for which literary antecedents are sought on page 131, features quite commonly in North Staffordshire dialect where '*fang howt o' this*' means 'catch hold.' In face of the constant and intensely interested notes on local words in the notebooks perhaps there is slightly too literary an emphasis in Mr. Gardner's derivation of Hopkins' diction and vocabulary.

Mr. Gardner is sailing on deeper controversial waters when he takes up T. S. Eliot's criticism to the effect that Hopkins is a 'devotional' poet rather than 'a religious poet in the more important sense in which Baudelaire and Villon were religious poets.' He rebuts the criticism with two rather obvious arguments while at the same time allowing that it is 'a paradox which Mr. Eliot could, if he chose, brilliantly expound.' But Mr. Eliot has expounded it in his essay on Baudelaire, which, together with Maritain's '*Frontieres de la Poésie*,' may be offered as a corrective to a certain academic naiveté which fails to recognise any other dimensions of poetry than those in which Hopkins showed himself so supreme a master.

It is in keeping with a Scotist reverence for particularity that Hopkins should be, as I think it true to say he is, a poet of the senses—precisely in the particularity of their direct contact with nature—rather than a poet of the imagination. Of course he goes further than the senses, for it is not the senses which tell him the beauty of Our Lord in the bluebell he has just been looking at. The question is rather of the character of his imagery. His most brilliant symbols—the Windhover—have a powerful personal relevance in a personal context in which we may come to appreciate their metaphysical import. Yet in a very true sense they cast no shadow. They are curiously devoid of connotation in the language of imagery which, no less than the language of word and syllable of sound and stress, belongs to the *inherited* material for the handling of which the poet is responsible.

However it is difficult in a short space to discuss these things without ambiguity. Mr. Gardner promises a second volume which will be awaited with keen anticipation.

BERNARD KELLY.

BLAKE AND ROSSETTI. By Kerrison Preston. (De la More Press; 18s.).

'Is it too fanciful,' asks Mr. Preston, 'to imagine that part of his [Blake's] mighty soul quitting his body so vigorously may have