

land an interesting example of the dross of one saint becoming the gold for the crown of another. Dr. Reany deals adequately with this very human episode.

St. Theodore has not been given his due in the popular imagination, even though Stubbs did become lyrical on his account. The names of Bede and Augustine, Cuthbert, Aidan and Wilfrid loom larger. But it was Theodore who stabilised the sees of England, who brought Greek culture into the land, who consolidated the seven hundred years' reign of the Rule of St. Benedict, who moderated the harshness of the Penitentials. All this will be found solidly established in Dr. Reany's interesting and readable work.

COLUMBA CARY-ELWES, O.S.B.

THE LAND OF PRESTER JOHN. By Peter Baker. (Resurgam Books; 2s.)

The publishers inform us that 'this long (32 pages!) sequence of poems combines an accomplished simplicity of language and technique with an unique vision.' The simplicity is certainly there, but the technique and the vision are to seek. The poet hears voices which enchant his 'survey from greyer thoughts of parish weal and restive congregations' to this sort of unique vision:—

'Turbine and winch, crank and crane,
Will free us all from labour's endless strain,
From dreariness and drudge.
By furnace; factory, forge and mill,
The people hear, upon the hill,
The swift, resistless surge.'

I suggest that a daily meditation on the 'greyer thoughts . . . of restive congregations' and a total abstinence from ecstatic italics and exclamation marks would be a less damaging discipline than listening to the voices, who retail a vision not so much unique as uniquely suburban. The author is a captain in the Intelligence.

J.D.

A FURTHER SELECTION FROM THE 300 POEMS OF THE T'ANG DYNASTY.
Translated by Soame Jenyns. (John Murray; 3s. 6d.)

This continues an earlier volume of selections from a famous Chinese anthology of classical poetry. Mr. Jenyns' translation is less finished than Mr. Waley's and his vocabulary is not quite consistent in tone. Nevertheless his work is good, and these versions in general convey something at least of the unmistakable atmosphere of traditional Chinese culture—order, calm, sensibility, gentleness and refinement. There are useful notes, historical and other.

W.S.

PURPOSE IN PAINTING.

THE 'Third Exhibition of Contemporary Paintings' now touring with C.E.M.A. is a rather dull little exhibition. Its catalogue lists

some names from whom we expect first class work, but the paintings here shown lack the essential spirit of their makers. Perhaps a lack of a sense of purpose is partly to blame, for one finds oneself asking : what are they all for? The craftsman to-day, who makes things for a definite purpose, has the advantage over the painter ; for there are so few patrons of painting for use, while the craftsman's skill has many uses. The local artists and craftsmen of Ditchling (Sussex) and district organised an exhibition of their work in the parish church. It showed a clear contrast between the craftsman and the painters. The lack of the sense of the quality of paint and canvas, and of the purpose of painting is as striking as is the deep understanding on the part of the craftsmen of their materials and of the use to which their things are to be put. The ' things ' were as truly holy as the paintings of ' holy ' subjects were mere pious descriptions.

At the parish church of Berwick (Sussex) the vicar, with the encouragement of the Bishop of Chichester, has given painters a chance to use their work for a purpose. Duncan Grant and Vanessa Bell tell again the story of the Annunciation and the Birth of Christ in language that the unlearned can understand. The application of the events is made clearer as the events are set to background of the South Downs behind Berwick, and the shepherds are local ones known to the congregation. But the artists have shown a complete lack of respect for a wall as a wall, its shape and purpose ; the chancel arch plays no part in the picture surrounding it. It is a pity that the English tradition of flat, decorative, linear wall painting, suited to and preserving the flat surface of the wall was not used. The medieval painters knew the necessity for the wall as a protection and a support, and did not try to deceive us into believing it was not there.

M.C.

BLACKFRIARS

(with which is incorporated *The Catholic Review*).

Literary Communications should be addressed to The Editor, Blackfriars, Oxford (Tel. 3607). The Editor cannot be responsible for the loss of MSS. submitted. No MSS. will be returned unless accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope.

Communications regarding Advertisements should be addressed to the Manager, Blackfriars, Oxford (Tel. 3607).

Subscriptions and orders for copies should be sent to Messrs. Basil Blackwell, 49 Broad Street, Oxford (Tel. 3487). Annual Subscription 12/6 post free (in U.S.A. \$3).