

Book Reviews

concerned. All lost causes live in a past and future which are infinitely more important to the life of the imagination than the unseizable present; and she rightly leaves no opportunity for retrospect and reverie unfulfilled. Her titular hero, 'Crumplin' is dead before the story opens; for 'Crumplin' was Yorkshire's affectionate nickname for the little son of Richard and Ann of Gloucester, whose idyllic princehood, passed among the chivalry of Middleham and the burgesses of York, is kept green here in the memories of his Benedictine tutor. If the book were written primarily as the story of its personages, it would be permissible to suggest that its characters—especially the two small princes—have a way of usurping each other's primacy of place as the chronicle unfolds itself. But although all its intricate threads are gathered into a final skein, I do not feel that 'Crumplin' is a book to read for its admirably-solved enigma, It is a book to read for its atmosphere of place, period and personality, and that unforgettable fecundity of human action which the historian's cunning sees as distilled from all three. A word should also be said for the grace of its narrative style, and for the entirely happy compromise that has solved its problems of dialogue.

H.P.E.

PAGEANT OF LIFE. A Human Drama. By Owen Francis Dudley. (Longmans; 6/-.)

Fr. Dudley's many readers will welcome his new novel. It is worthy to rank with his trilogy and Catholics and non-Catholics alike will find much in it both to interest and amuse them. The author presents us with an antithesis to 'the modern vogue of the vague and non-committal' and the lives of his three chief characters are unusually full of incident. Still, although the heroine is blinded by falling on some barbed wire and the hero crucified by 'red reptiles' near Archangel, we are glad to state that their friend and counsellor survives to become a masterful monk.

G.M.

TUDOR SUNSET. By Mrs. Wilfrid Ward. (Sheed & Ward; 7/6.)

This historical novel describes the Catholic life in England in the last years of Queen Elizabeth with a combination of deep sincerity of purpose and subtlety of thought which lend distinction to an absorbing book. The wide knowledge of the Catholic sources for this period is everywhere apparent and certain of the character sketches, notably those of Lady Arundel

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and Dona Luisa de Carvajal, reflect that refreshingly balanced and illuminating judgment which is apparent in the appendix of notes on historical sources. Similarly the account of the last night of the condemned priests and in especial the description of the Blessed James Duckett and his bookshop carry the conviction of an essential accuracy of feeling. In dealing with the Elizabethan Court and particularly with its non-Catholic elements the author seems on less sure ground. It is only necessary to compare the short sketch of Dona Luisa with that of the courtier FitzUrse. The adulation of the courtiers is presented, but not their wit; while, although the hero Captain Whitlock is a Court poet, there is no indication of that overheated literary atmosphere which the names of Essex and Harrington suggest. Still, in so far as it deals with Catholic life, this book presents an unique picture. 'I started with my brethren,' the author states in her preface, 'and I became distracted by the glitter of the Court.' It is delightful when she abandons this distraction and writes with a rare understanding of the martyrs of her Faith.

D.M.

MIMES, SACRED AND PROFANE. By H. D. C. Pepler. (Samuel French, Ltd.)

THE FOUR MINSTRELS OF BREMEN. By H.D.C.P. (St. Dominic's Press, Ditchling Common, Sussex.)

'The art of mime consists in the doing of formal actions formally, relying upon gesture and not words to express the story to be told.' So Mr. Pepler tells us in his interesting preface, which serves as an introduction to the subject of mime. Mime is derived chiefly from the Church—the Liturgy and the Liturgical dramas, and secondarily from the nursery—the child is a natural mimic or imitator. Mime has nothing to do with the realism of the modern stage, though it is nearly related to the Ballet.

The sacred mimes in this book—the Rosary Mysteries and the Stations of the Cross—have the true spirit of the Liturgy; the profane ones, St. George and the Turkish Knight and a Harlequinade are real pantomime. The whole is fascinating, especially when Mr. Pepler is himself in his Notes and Introduction.

Mime-plays and Puppet-plays belong to the same family, for the mime-actor 'becomes a puppet but controls the strings.' The second book contains two plays for puppets, 'The Four Minstrels of Bremen,' founded on Grimm, and 'Two Robbers,' for a juvenile audience, both charmingly done in the right tradition of Puppetry. It is interesting to see that the Puppet-plays