

and the novelist. The Misses Wynne developed the habit at the early age of nine and ten and never abandoned it.

The diarists give us plentiful glimpses of the life of high society in England and on the Continent at the close of the eighteenth and opening of the nineteenth centuries. The French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars came and went, but dominant in these diaries is the gay life of country house and ballroom, surviving these world-changing events, unaltering and apparently unalterable.

The diarists were fifth in descent from Richard, brother of Sir John Wynn of Gwydir, the North Wales magnate of Elizabethan times. In upbringing they were cosmopolitan, their mother being French and their father's mother Italian. Elizabeth Wynne, responsible for most of the entries, became the wife of Admiral Fremantle, Nelson's second-in-command at the battle of Trafalgar. His account of the engagement and that of Copenhagen is included in the diaries.

Life at the great house of Stowe, the visits there of the French court in exile, balls and salons in London and Venice and Naples, these make up the greater part of the entries, which are seasoned with lively comments on persons and things. There is a contemporary note in some of the homelier entries:

14th, Sunday (Jan. 1802): I am in the agonies of looking out for a cook again; mine which suits in every respect will not stay without a kitchen-maid and exorbitant wages. Servants are great torments.

Wednesday: The cook went; they none like the country.

The 'good old days' of 150 years ago were perhaps in this respect not so very different from our own after all!

R. WYNNE

UNAMUNO. By Arturo Barea; Studies in Modern European Literature and Thought. (Bowes and Bowes; 6s.)

This is a very competent, moderate and fair account of Unamuno's life and works, or most of them, and may be unreservedly recommended to the English reader who wishes to get to know this writer, the greatest influence on the Spain of his generation. There are some emphases and differences of perspective which would not be acceptable to everyone—few would claim, for example, that the Spanish mystics were heterodox (p. 18); not all would phrase so oddly the statement that 'the Eucharist is the core of popular Catholic piety'; Sr Barea over-rates Unamuno's concept of *agonía* without analysing, as one could have wished, his clearest exposition of it, *La agonía del Cristianismo*; nor perhaps should he have omitted Unamuno's study of *Don Quixote* and the most illuminating *Cómo se hace una novela*. These three works might have been admitted to Sr Barea's keen analysis, in exchange, perhaps, for some of the novels, especially as he finds *Amor y pedagogía* unsympathetic. He is excellent,

however, on *Niebla* and the other novels he deals with. One would like to add to Sr Barea's perceptive account that the fundamental characteristic of Unamuno's characters and—perhaps—of Unamuno himself is self-absorption to a point little short of the pathological. This self-absorption is the root-cause of the blockage between Unamuno and Unamuno's fictional characters, and the Ultimate Reality which he and they yet seek so desperately. This is as clear in *Niebla* as in *Nada menos que todo un hombre*, which is a tragedy of two people, each absorbed in their self-love, rather than a tragedy of rationality, just as Joaquín's real sin (*Abel Sánchez*) was not that he did not love his wife, but that he loved only himself, and from that sprang the envy (no form of which, surely, can be noble) of which that novel is such a penetrating study.

Sr Barea is most interesting on *San Manuel Bueno*, Unamuno's dream of the secret unbelief of a priest who is a saint and of one, if not two, of his flock who come near him in goodness. This is a novel which must be approached only with the utmost charity: whatever Unamuno meant by it, it revealed a nostalgia for a state of religious reality which he deemed unattainable, but the very longing makes one ask whether it was not that Unamuno's own faith was not dissolved but deeply overlaid.

Sr Barea's views on Unamuno are more taken up with the weaker side of that great writer. Of his 'courage and integrity' there can, of course, be no doubt, but that he is 'a thinker who teaches how to turn conflict, contradiction and despair into a source of strength' can hardly be maintained. Unamuno could not really face death, and, as a spiritual influence, is weak and ineffectual. One regrets that, of set purpose, Sr Barea says nothing of his true worth for us, which is the fierce light and force with which he manipulated the ideas of being, life, reason, truth, reality and anguish, all the background of the work and outlook of a much subtler philosopher—of Ortega and of his school, none of whom, however—García Morente, Zubiri, Marías—plumb the poetic depths in which Miguel de Unamuno lived and groped—*que Dios haya*.

EDWARD SARMIENTO

THE LITTLE WORLD OF MAN. By J. B. Bamborough (Longmans; 20s.)

Since the appearance of Hardin Craig's *The Enchanted Glass* in 1936, there has been an increasing stream of books on the world-view of the Elizabethans. To single out only two, Theodore Spencer's *Shakespeare and the Nature of Man* and E. M. W. Tillyard's *The Elizabethan World-Picture* illustrate how in the last twenty years we have become aware of pre-Cartesian scientific and psychological beliefs, not in the merely piecemeal fashion which is applicable to the elucidation of texts, but as contributing to a total view of man and the universe very different from the mechanistic view of the post-Newtonian age.

It is natural for the reader to approach any new study in this field with