

Straying a little from his subject the author makes a good point in regard to Hoadley (p. 66). The chapter on literary theory and practice contains many suggestive lines of enquiry, and in the final essay the author's devotion to Henry Vaughan is very pleasing. If the book sometimes strikes one as derivative, this is perhaps accounted for by the admirable candour with which Mr Bethell acknowledges his indebtedness especially to Dr Tillyard and the late Canon Hutchinson.

DAVID MATHEW

THE GUNPOWDER PLOT. By Hugh Ross Williamson. (Faber; 21s.)

The author's justification for another book on a well-worn theme is not that he has discovered new evidence, but that current events in Eastern Europe make it at last possible for us to appreciate the 'climate' of the plot. Incidents that seemed incredible to the Victorians are now commonplaces. Nobody can read the trial of Fr Garnet without being reminded of Cardinal Mindszenty, and when it comes to propaganda the Gestapo of 1605 have little to learn from their successors of today. Mr Williamson tells the story without a vestige of Protestant bias: indeed, what bias he has is a too ready leaning to the theory that the plot was a Government fabrication. There are grave difficulties in the way of this theory. They may not be insuperable, but they should be frankly stated. Fr Garnet confessed that, in the previous July, Greenway 'discovered unto me all the matter, as it is publicly known abroad'. In other words, Garnet knew in July what the Government are alleged to have invented in November. The still unpublished account, in the Brudenell collection, of Tresham's death in the Tower—a document entirely free from Government 'editing'—certainly implies that the traditional version is substantially true. Nor is it accurate to say (p. 251) that after the discovery, the gunpowder disappears from history. The Earl of Shrewsbury wrote to his brother on the fatal fifth: 'I have this afternoon been advertised that all the powder must remain as it was, untouched, till tomorrow and the next day, until the Mayor of London [and others] may behold this most damnable spectacle'. (H. M. C. Rutland I, 398.) The Powder Plot always seems to be the occasion for indulging in wild speculations that have no foundation in fact:

It was natural that Fawkes should visit his home and family in Yorkshire—which he presumably did in the summer. . . . It was equally natural that he should take service with Percy (who, a Yorkshireman like himself, probably knew his parents), for he needed means of subsistence. (p. 112.)

Fawkes' mother had remarried years before, and was living in London. There is no evidence that she ever met Percy, or that Fawkes visited Yorkshire at this time.

In what concerns the background of the plot, the author shows a lordly indifference to accuracy of detail. To take one example. Speaking of the summer of 1604 he says:

At Salisbury a priest and a layman, who had aided him, were executed; at Warwick two priests were martyred for their priesthood; laymen were executed at York and Ripon.

There were no executions at Salisbury; at Warwick the victims were a priest and a layman; the executions at York and Ripon were not till 1605. The next paragraph begins: 'An aged Lancashire Catholic Thomas Pound'. Pound was then sixty-five, and his only connection with Lancashire was when he went there to have his ears nailed to the pillory. These errors do not affect the main narrative, where greater care has been exercised, but they are a blemish in a scholarly book.

GODFREY ANSTRUTHER, O.P.

STONOR. By Robert Julian Stonor, O.S.B. (Newport: R. Johns; 21s.)

The grand old Catholic house of Stonor is perhaps best known to history as the place where Edmund Campion hid his secret press in 1581, and printed his famous *Decem Rationes*. But Stonor has a Catholic history that dates from Saxon days and has continued to our own. With great industry and filial piety Dom Julian Stonor has gathered together into a sumptuous volume all that can now be discovered of a thousand years of continuous life. Much of the book is naturally of particular interest to genealogists, but it is written in a popular style that should appeal to a wider public. Certainly there are parts of this book that lift it far above the norm of family histories. Stonor is fortunate in possessing family letters of the fifteenth century, whose importance is second only to the Paston Letters. They have been long in print, but are probably unknown to most general readers. This book gives the quintessence of them in very readable form. There are also some charming eighteenth-century letters that have not been printed before. Thomas Stonor, aged twelve, writes from Douai in 1778, giving us a fearsome picture of the school time-table:

I get up at five o'clock every morning, play till seven, then go to prayers, then have my breakfast, which is bread and butter and milk, then play till eight o'clock, then go to study till half an hour after eleven, then go to Mass, after Mass go to dinner, after dinner play till one o'clock, at one o'clock go to study till seven, then have a little play again, after that go to prayers, then to supper. After supper sit at table till nine o'clock and then go to bed.

The profits on this book go to the upkeep of the chapel at Stonor. We wish it every success.

G.A.