

pelled his readers to recognise their continuity with their forbears by the challenging jingle of Hamilton Aidé:

Say, shall these things be forgotten
In the Row that men call Rotten,

But his experiences at that time, so movingly told here in 'A Small Boy seeing Giants', now appear to belong to an age from which we are as completely isolated as from that of the Saxon kings. How gently he criticises us! He hopes that the housemaid will not handle untenderly the last of all top-hats, filled with earth and nourishing the bulb of a hyacinth; thinking the while in the categories of an age which still knew housemaids. If he cannot enthuse over the sight of a syndicate and is certain that he will never enjoy playgoing as he did half-a-century ago, he is ready to admit that the play at least is 'a better thing than it used to be'.

Best of all, he is still the critic of merely conventional views and traditional stuffiness, wherever they are found and at whatever time. Schooldays, he insists again in 'Old Carthusian Memories', are not the happiest time of our lives: after-life must not be one long anticlimax, the American's justification for joy in the presence of his race's cradle can only be that he himself was never rocked in it. 'T. Fenning Dodsworth', an affectionate description of an impressively futile personality, is a fitting close to this slender and characteristic addition to the never unweildy bulk of Max's works. For it was written when the Dodsworths not only survived but were recognisable, and when the continuity of historical progress from the Reform Bill to still wider vistas of democracy still seemed secure, in 1922. That was before there broke in upon us the Century of the Common Man and before we were cut off alike from the good life of the old tradition and from the newer, more sweetly reasonable faith of the year 2000 by what our author has elsewhere so aptly called 'the great pale platitude of the meantime'. EDWARD QUINN

SCOTT-KING'S MODERN EUROPE. By Evelyn Waugh. (Chapman and Hall; 5s.)

Ageing schoolmasters and dotty republics have a special interest for Mr Waugh, and this cautionary tale of the adventures of Mr Scott-King while enjoying Neutralian hospitality provides every opportunity for the exercise of his tricks of aculeated observation and the manoeuvring of the preposterous. The classical master at Grantchester attends the tercentenary celebrations of Bellorius, a poetaster who is his 'special subject', and the combination of totalitarian hospitality, bogus scholarship and graft brings out the authentic Waugh *bouquet*. American critics will surely see a moral in this offering, and nearer home it may be saluted as another instalment of Mr Waugh's *corpus catholicium*. In fact it is a novelist's fair copy: skilful, slight, an extended note in the margin. I.E.