

## BLACKFRIARS

in a circling wave : the sculptors hammer at the chiselled crucifix, the fresco painter awakes to paint, the weavers of vestments sway rhythmically about their loom, the metal workers complete a chalice, and lastly the illuminator, sitting at a desk, lifts her brush . . . .

The choruses which divide the scenes are spoken by seven men and ten women, masked, in dull gold draperies. Here the poet had **plainly** a free hand, and it would be hard to over-estimate their craftsmanship and wise loveliness. Space forbids adequate quotation. One can only mention the opening chorus, with its penetrating question :

'Where is the Life we have lost in **living**?  
Where is the wisdom we **have** lost in knowledge?  
Where is the knowledge we **have** lost in information?'

Or the **final** chorus of praise to the Light, Invisible and Visible?

'The light that slants upon our western doors at evening,  
The twilight over stagnant pools at batflight,  
Moon light and **star** light, owl and moth light,  
Glow-worm glowlight on a grassblade.  
O Light Invisible, **we** worship Thee.'

**How** the light diminishes, in the very length of the lines, the sound of the vowels, till the last line **bursts** out in white radiance !

That one who is perhaps the greatest of our **living** poets should lend a docile pen to write, and, he admits, rewrite under the direction of the organizers **of** the scheme, is an example of literary humility so rare as to deserve **all** reverence.

H.B.C.

## GRAMOPHON

**LAST** month the world celebrated Richard Strauss' seventieth birthday. Incidentally he is a June musician not only by birth. H.M.V. have added to their list of Strauss recordings a new version of the tone poem *Till Eulenspiegel* (DB 2187-88, 6/- each), B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra under Fritz Busch; two brilliant records of music that abounds in tantalizing snatches of the loveliest melodies, then **off** ! the mood changes, trick?; and solemnity, pattern **and** inconsequence; music that tells the story of a rascal who dresses himself in finery, rides full tilt through the market upsetting the booths, who masquerades as a priest and preaches a mock sermon, who falls in love and out again, who baits wise men and roams whistling through the **town**, until finally he **is** arrested nntl sentenced to be hanged as an incorrigible. With the same melodic and harmonic beaut!, vitality and colour, **and in** a similar strain of tragic-comedy comes

## REVIEWS

*Don Quixote*—Fantastic Variations of a Chivalrous Nature—played by the Berlin State Opera Orchestra—including a wind machine—under the baton of Richard Strauss himself, recorded by Decca Polydor (LY 6087-91, 3/6 each). On the last side the Berlin Philharmonic misses nothing of the point-device humour of *In der Konditorküche*.

Johann Strauss is also represented in recent H.M.V. lists. The song is hackneyed, but Maria Ivögun gives fresh lilt to *In der schönen blauen Donau*, and bitter-sweet to the *Czardas* from *Die Fledermaus* (DB 4412, 6/-). When the flexible and impetuous young voice of Miliza Korjus reaches what people call a rounder tone, she may well prove to be one of the world's greatest sopranos; as it is, brava! to her debut in Proch's *Variations*, and the Strauss *Waltz Voices of Spring* (C 2664, 4/-). The art of *bel canto*, line of melody and perfection of phrasing, this you will hear in Tito Schipa singing two old songs, *O del mio amato ben* and *Plaisir d'amour* (DB 2131, 6/-). Decca Polydor present the only recorded version of two arias from Puccini's *Turandot*, *In questa reggia* and *Del primo piano*, sung by Anne Roselle of the Dresden Opera (C.4 8180, 4/-). Also two extracts from pianoforte suites by Liszt, a *Leggierazza* and *Eroica*, played by Sigrid Grundeis (PO 5094, 2/6).

The seventeenth Italian masters have been somewhat neglected by the gramophone companies, but H.M.V. now give Vivaldi's trim and formal *Concerto à Quatre—L'Estro Armonico*, in a clean and finished performance by the Pro Arte Quartet (DR 2148, 6/-). Beethoven's Overture *Coriolan* is well recorded, but the playing by the B.B.C. Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Adrian Boult, lacks spirit (DB 2101, 6/-). However, the same combination justifies itself in a rich and expressive performance of the orchestral prelude to *The Dream of Gerontius* (DB 2194, 6/-).

The words are another sign of the Victorian revival, and with the music Schumann hotted-up and Lupino Lane singing: *An Elephant never Forgets* is a taking mixture (Decca, F 3983, 1/6). This record of music-hall humour, together with that of the four Mills Brothers singing *Jungle Fete* (Brunswick, 01766, 2/61), are fair samples of our present ballad-tastes, English and American.

T.L.

## NOTICES

THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION. By Joseph Clayton, F.R.Hist.S. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne; 5/-.)

Mr. Clayton has succeeded in producing a well-balanced and readable account of the religious changes in the sixteenth century as they affected the people of Great Britain. He has been