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BOOK REVIEWS (Cont'd)

and formidable, with a son-in-law capable of writing two strenuously polemical pamphlets in his defence. Often enough he risked life and limb in the cause of peace by standing between opposing Maori armies. He fought without reserve or hesitation against men or movements of which he disapproved. Tactless and outspoken he had neither the will nor the ability to compromise. As a result he was often the subject of bitter if unmerited reproach. For instance, he was shamefully maligned by agents of the New Zealand Company; yet the founders of Wellington could scarcely have been expected to manifest unqualified approval on discovering that their chief enemy had contrived to forestall them by buying up most of the Thorndon flat.

—R. M. Burdon

ODDLY NAMED
THE ROMANTIC COMEDY. By D. G. James. Geoffrey Cumberlege: Oxford University Press.

IT seems a little unfortunate that the publishers should have used the word "history" in recommending this oddly-named book about the English romantic movement. To my mind it hasn't a great deal to do with history. Mr. James's view is that romanticism begins with Blake's gospel of Hell, traverses the Purgatory of Shelley and Keats, and arrives at Coleridge's and Newman's gospel of Heaven; and in the long and careful elaboration of this theory Wordsworth receives comparatively little mention, while Byron is not mentioned at all so far as I can discover, except in a quotation from Newman. And there are other omissions—a remarkable one being that the author makes no use of modern psychological discoveries and methods, a lack particularly to be regretted in the section dealing with Blake. Mr. James confesses that he has been puzzled and baffled (and I fear shocked, too) by certain passages in Blake's poetry and prose. "Such passages reduce the reader to despair of fixing Blake into a clear frame of doctrine," he says. It depends on the doctrine, maybe. A man who could go for a walk to the end of the heath, and ask you to believe that he had touched the moon with his finger—well! But there are tentative doctrines in the writings of Groddeck and Freud that might have helped quite a lot.

Although he doesn't explicitly say so, it is plain that Mr. James has written from a Christian standpoint; and perhaps this is the reason for his being most at his ease in dealing with Coleridge and Newman. His view of Newman as a romantic Catholic attracted to the Christianity of the saints, supports his theory that romanticism has finally worked itself out, since it is true that in more recent times interest has shifted to the Christianity of the theologians—though perhaps one should never exclude the ultra-romantic possibility that it may one day shift to the Christianity of Christ. I found the exposition of Coleridge's Protestantism tedious, however. After all, Kierkegaard (whom Mr. James doesn't mention), is fashionable these days—but fashion apart, his statement that Protestantism is not a principle for Christianity, but only a remedy at a given time and place, seems to have left very little more to be said.

WILLIAM BLAKE
Groddeck and Freud might have helped

Very generally speaking though, what makes one doubtful about the book as a whole is that the author doesn't convince one that he is exceptionally sensitive to poetry as such. His study of Blake, Shelley and Keats is about men who were poets beyond all else. And perhaps one might fairly say the same of Coleridge. It is surely a mistake to be over-concerned with "a clear frame of doctrine." It is an important matter, no doubt, but one that tends to obtrude itself between Mr. James and his enjoyment of the "poetry." (The quote marks are his.) And perhaps it has something to do with the apparent slip that he has made in writing of Coleridge's *Christabel*. He writes of "the embodiment, in *Christabel* herself, of the very essence of evil set over against the perfection and beauty of *Geraldine*." (The italics are mine.) I may be showing a lack of perception that marks me out as grossly incompetent to write this review—yet I have to say that, for me, the statement makes sense only if the two names are transposed.

—Frank Sargeson

SHORTWAVE HIGHLIGHTS

LISTENERS may have noticed that the Armed Forces Radio Service have made a number of major changes in the frequencies of stations, which carry their programmes to the Pacific Area and also that the afternoon programme now begins at 1.30 p.m. instead of 3.15 p.m. Many of the football commentaries have also been replaced with variety programmes.

Stations, Frequencies, Wavelengths, and Times of Transmission: KCBA, 6.12 mc/s., 49.02 metres (1.15 p.m.-8.30 p.m.); KCBF, 11.81, 25.40 (1.15 p.m.-8.30 p.m.); KGEI, 9.70, 30.93 (5.30 p.m.-10.30 p.m.); KWID, 11.90, 25.21 (5.30 p.m.-9.0 p.m.); KGEI, 9.70, 30.93 (10.45 p.m.-2.30 a.m.); KWID, 9.57, 31.35 (9.15 p.m.-11.30 p.m.).

Headlines in the Evening Programmes— 6.15 p.m.-6.30 p.m.: Basic Music (Sunday to Saturday); 6.30 p.m.-7.0 p.m.: Greatest Story Ever Told (Sunday), Bookshelf of the World (Monday), Bill of Rights (Tuesday), Science Magazine (Wednesday), Heard at Home (Thursday), This is the Story (Friday). 8.30 p.m.-8.45 p.m.: Bob Carlton (Sunday), Passing Parade (Friday and Saturday). 8.45 p.m.-9.0 p.m.: Red Harper (Sunday), Melody Round Up (Thursday), Strike Up the Band (Friday and Saturday). 9.45 p.m.-10.0 p.m.: At Ease (Sunday), Bob Carlton (Wednesday). 10.15 p.m.-10.30 p.m.: Basic Music (Sunday to Saturday). 10.45 p.m.-11.0 p.m.: Gordon McCrae (Sunday), G.I. Jive (Monday to Saturday). 11.0 p.m.-12.0 midnight: Music by Faith (Sunday), Fred Waring (Monday to Friday), Jubilee (Saturday).