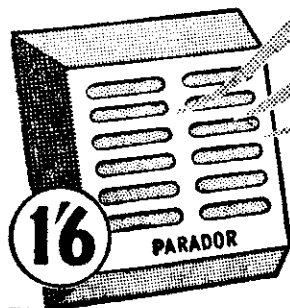


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BOOKS

(continued from previous page)

to grief and a trace of envy. One feels that he leaves Africa too soon behind.

Miss Scovell brings to her poetry a most rare innocence and maturity of heart and mind. Her themes are not unusual—chrysanthemums in a garden, the habits of children asleep and awake, isolation, distance, the mystery of human identity—but her strong delicate poems, like scrollwork done in steel, reveal the truth of her unique experience.

The days fail: night broods over afternoon; And at my child's first drink beyond the night

Her skin is silver in the early light.
Sweet the grey morning and the raiders gone.

These four lines come from a sequence quite unparalleled, I imagine, in English poetry—"The First Year," love poems of a mother to a child, in which no trace of stereotyped feeling or language appears. She understands so much and pretends so little. Her descriptive and metaphorical powers match her insight.

—James K. Baxter

A TRAVELLER'S GUIDE

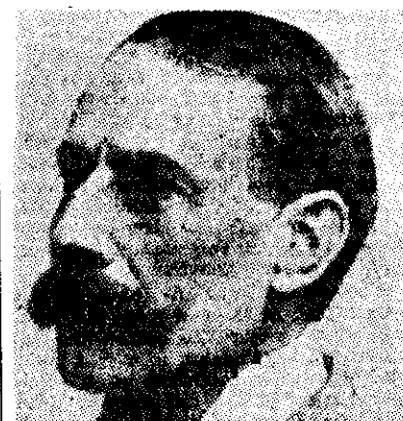
ITALIAN ART, LIFE AND LANDSCAPE, by Bernard Wall; Heinemann, English price 21/-.

THIS is to be recommended as a most interesting book on Italy, and its emphasis on Florence will interest Kiwis who had the opportunity between fighting and bartering to study the artistic and architectural setting. The back cover blurb says that it is not a baldly written guide book, but in essence a guide book it is, and none the worse for that. Considerable space is devoted to cultural interests and local customs and characteristics, but it would be a poor guide book which did not do so. The photographs are wretched, due, one imagines, to the deliberate rejection of all the orthodox shots and angles of famous buildings and statuary. In particular, one could do without the scaffolding in the Church of St. Apollinarus at Ravenna. The one of St. Peter's is particularly bad, and looks like the Belfast Town Hall. —F. J. Foot

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

THEY ARRIVED BY MOONLIGHT, by Captain Jacques Doneux; Odhams Press, through Whitcombe and Tombs, 15/-. The dramatic story of a secret mission in enemy-occupied Belgium.

PORTRAIT OF



EDWARD ELGAR

EDWARD ELGAR composed his 14 "Enigma" variations as a musical portrait of himself, his wife, and 12 friends. The pet bulldog of one of the latter was also included. Now, as a centenary tribute, the BBC has compiled *The Fifteenth Variation*, a word-picture of Elgar by 15 people who knew him well. Devised and introduced by Alec Robertson, the programme includes remembrances by the composer's daughter, Carice Elgar-Blake, by Ralph Vaughan Williams, Sir Compton Mackenzie, May Grafton, Yehudi Menuhin, Bernard Shore, Sir Adrian Boult, Harriet Cohen, Lady Hamilton Harty, Astra Desmond, Sir Stuart Wilson, Sir Arthur Bliss, Julius Harrison, Sir Percy Hull, and Sir Barry Jackson.

(*The Fifteenth Variation: A Portrait of Edward Elgar*, all YC stations, Wednesday, June 12, at 9.20 p.m. The programme lasts one hour.)

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