

It is not surprising that the book should arouse comment of various kinds. No one, however, will deny the lofty views, independence of thought, admiration for the People of France and penetrating vision with which he scrutinises the inside causes of the catastrophe and points out the road to be followed towards purification and resurrection. No one will question his faith in the moral values which rise above technical ability and material force, his community of affection and 'passion' with his compatriots under the hard trial of the German occupation—in a word, his detachment in judging the events which are tormenting humanity in this tragic hour of its history. Maritain has written a profound book, sober, calm, clear-sighted and constructive.

CANON A. DE ONAINDIA.

REVIEWS

INTERNATIONAL ORDER

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND INTERNATIONAL ORDER. By A. C. F. Beales (Penguin Special; 6d.)

'Why doesn't the Pope condemn Hitler and Mussolini? Why is it that, though one and the same God is acknowledged by all the great European nations, the peoples of Europe are . . . praying to that God, each of them, for victory? Why is it that their Churches are encouraging them so to pray, each in the national cause . . . ? What claim has the man of religion to be listened to by the man in the street, if religion matters so little that it can be harnessed to lesser causes and used to multiply mass-slaughter?' It was a good thing to begin this book—the importance of its appearance as a *Penguin* need not be stressed—with these questions; for the lack of an adequate answer to them is convincing many that they were right to think religion a racket, and is even driving some Christians to the same conclusion. To argue to such a conclusion is irrational; but it is no less tragic for that. Mr. Beales supplies answers; and his argument is full and formidable. The only major fear that one has for the success of the book is that perhaps the simultaneous treatment of the two distinct, though obviously interdependent, themes—the 'neutrality,' let us say, of the Papacy, and the fundamental principles of international order—may dismay a type of reader who would have followed with interest the more immediate and concrete questions, but will think the more abstract theme 'beyond him,' and so may never reach the 'answers' at all. Whereas, if he had first been given the immediate statement of papal policy,

the immediate reasons for papal 'neutrality,' and shown that this consistent attitude was necessitated by fidelity to Christian teaching, as it applies to international order, he might then have been inveigled into studying that teaching itself as it is admirably set forth in the main part of the book.

The author has managed to include a vast number of important and often little-known facts. Some of these are tragically exciting, like the letter of Pius X to Franz-Joseph, a letter which was intercepted and never reached its destination, so that the appeal was unavailing, and the Pope died a week later: 'Your father . . . prostrates himself before you. I kiss your feet and implore you to abandon this impious war, this fearful iniquity, this scandal of the Gospel . . . I kiss your feet, and will not leave you till you give the order for peace as you gave the order for war.' Other facts, nearer the present date, are disturbing in the extreme: that the Vatican had proposed an international conference in May, 1939, and that the idea had been turned down by the French; and again the suggestion that the Pope's efforts in June to bring about direct discussions between Poland and Germany were accepted in principle by the latter but turned down by the government of Colonel Beck. What this mass of evidence mainly proves, however, is the fidelity of the papacy to its character and its mission. 'The Roman Pontiff,' as Benedict said in 1915, 'must embrace all the combatants in one sentiment of charity . . . It is necessary, therefore, that in them he must consider not the special interests that divide them, but the common bond that makes them brothers.' And again: 'In the present conflict, as a general rule one side accuses and the other denies, and the Holy See, consequently, being unable to conduct an inquiry and to find out the truth, cannot make any pronouncement.' 'I bless peace, not war,' said Pius X when asked by the Austrian Emperor to bless his armies. And what is made abundantly clear, in the second place, in these pages, is the immense and ceaseless energy of the Vatican, in attempting not only to bring hostilities to a swift and just conclusion, but to lay the foundations of a better international order; and the sad fact that the failure of such efforts is due to the antagonism of statesmen, and sometimes, alas, to the opposition of Catholics themselves. Yet—and this is the third main conclusion that the author establishes—the attempts that have been made to establish a world order have failed, in spite of the truth that was in them, precisely because they ignored those things for which the papacy primarily stands: 'the spirit of an organisation matters more than the machinery,' and 'without a foundation of elementary ethical principles, clearly stated, and accepted by all parties concerned, no machinery or international constitution will be worth the time and labour spent in drafting it.'

It would be a tragedy if this book, valuable as it is in explaining papal policy and Catholic teaching to the non-Catholic, were to be

regarded by Catholics as no concern of theirs. On the contrary. The time may well come again when much will depend upon the response from Catholics themselves to papal initiative; it is difficult to remember the universality and the supernatural character of Christian brotherhood in time of war; and books such as this can do much to keep our minds close to the integrity of the Faith, lest when the time come we fail.

One small point may be worth mentioning. On p. 187 the use of the word 'motive' may cause misunderstanding.. It is not motive, merely, that 'determines whether an act is sinful or not'; the first thing is knowledge and deliberation with regard to the act itself (and it seems clear from the context that it is these the author has in mind); if these are present, and the act is itself evil, goodness of *motive* will not redeem it.

GERALD VANN, O.P.

LE CRÉPUSCULE DE LA CIVILISATION. By Jacques Maritain. (Editions de l'Arbre, Montreal; \$6.60.)

A lecture given in Paris in February, 1939. M. Maritain has altered nothing; he had no need. He begins with a summary of the main argument of *Humanisme Intégral*: the pagan man-centred humanism which encloses man within the narrow confines of the natural, which proclaims his self-sufficiency, which denies the whole realm of prayer and penance, of contemplation and of the Cross, which is wrong therefore not in what it affirms but in what it denies—this humanism has shown its falsity by the very fact that it cannot be lived, it leads inescapably to a bankruptcy of the spirit. And anti-humanist irrationalism which is the reaction to its failure is a far greater impoverishment of the spirit, since it denies far more, denies the very essence of man himself. Against these two the only alternative is the humanism of the Incarnation, of the Cross. The three ways of life struggle for victory in the twilight of civilisation. If the world is to be won for the Cross it can only be by an immense effort of spiritual renewal. Christian humanism must concern itself with the welfare, not of an élite, but of the masses; it must end the separation of morals from mundane affairs; it must put its trust, not in force alone or in hatred, but in brotherly love (and 'in order to prepare a new age, perhaps martyrs of brotherly love are first of all necessary'); it must be faithful to the *primauté du spirituel* not only in regard to the end it pursues, but also in the choice of means—the *mode* of action must be Christian too; finally, it must realise that as the empire of sin is founded on the concept of hatred—unity at home achieved only by force of a common hatred of the outsider—so the kingdom of Christ on earth is founded on love, and on love of one's enemies: 'if we think that the true Catholicism is that of the two apostles (Pentecost was still to come) who wanted to call down fire from heaven upon the unjust, then our Catholicism is not