

## BLACKFRIARS

### NOTICES

**GOD'S GOOD CHEER.** By Fr. Vincent McNabb, O.P. (Burns, Oates; 3s. 6d.)

We are here presented with a lifetime's gleanings of one who has also reaped a copious harvest in the same field. It is a valuable collection of thoughts, often expressed in a sentence, seldom in more than a paragraph, clearly inspired as much by the venerable author's devotion to the Blessed Sacrament as by his more than ordinarily deep understanding of the doctrine itself. It is perhaps inevitable that in such a volume by this particular writer the pithy epigram and thoughtful paradox should occasionally trip up or jolt the reader, and not always find favour (or understanding, maybe). For example: "Jesus is really, not mystically, present. Jesus is mystically, not really, slain." Or again: "It is the Mystery of God's *Love* towards us. God is the first idolater." Yet it would be entirely misleading to give the impression that these are typical of the whole volume. On the contrary there is abundance of attractive food for both mind and heart which will do much to help all those who partake thereof to relish and appreciate the more that supreme gift of Divine Food, here so aptly called "God's Good Cheer."

O. P.

**THE ABSENT-MINDED REVOLUTION.** By J. L. Benvenisti (Sands; 3s. 6d.)

"I do not think Communism will ever come to England for the simple reason that it is already there. It is there at so high a degree of potentiality, that its presence may for practical purposes be accounted as actual. Those who are surprised at such a statement are men who judge by outward forms and do not look to the soul of the thing." (p. 1.) This theme, familiar enough to BLACKFRIARS' readers, is relentlessly expounded in less familiar detail and from less familiar angles in Mr. Benvenisti's new book, to which he brings all his gifts for exposing the naked insanity of This England. The reader can only be left wondering whether the conscious and purposeful Communism of Moscow can be quite so bedlamite a monstrosity as that directed by the absent-minded cerebrum of London. The author thinks a Distributist counter-revolution (by which he means simply the wide distribution of capital wealth) unlikely but not impossible, and he detects trends in that direction which may yet save us, even without catastrophic events, from the abyss. On the political side, Mr. Benvenisti seems to find some glimmerings of hope in Fascist dictatorship. That a major operation—perhaps a dictatorial one—will be unavoidable seems

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tenable; but, notwithstanding the Fascist neo-Distributists, will it be Fascist in any sense in which the term could be used to-day? The point is perhaps one of language only and is not here developed, and no bogey of Fascism should distract from the main contentions of the book. It is a book to read, to have, and to leave lying around for others to read. V. W.

MAN AND ETERNITY. Cambridge Summer School Lectures for 1936. (Burns, Oates; 7s. 6d.)

The reactions, possible and actual, of our Anglican, Methodist, and undenominational friends have concerned us largely in reading each paper. Observation shows a more searching interest in the problems discussed among these than among many Catholics—partly because Catholics are habituated to the traditional solutions, partly because they are not seldom prone to ignore the tremendous questions raised by these solutions themselves. Hence we were sorry that Fr. Lattey did not give us more on the inspiring concept of prophetic "telescopic" vision hinted at on p. 23. This rich notion does so much to dispel the critical fog clinging to eschatology and Jewish Messianism in general. Again the paper on hell is a responsibility in a book which an unusual variety of enquirers must inevitably pick up and read with curiosity and, indeed, considerable anxiety. It constitutes the real turning point for quite a number of readers. For this reason careless and unsympathetic construction is inexcusable. And we feel that this particular paper does fail in precisely these two aspects. It is carelessly constructed—for how otherwise have we no mention of the basic distinction between the *pœna damni* and *pœna sensus* till p. 247 after the main theological section is closed? And it is unsympathetic—for a distinction between sentimentality and sensibility may seem rather subtle to some, while it remains terribly real for others. But the symposium as a whole is a very pleasant one.

N. D.

PRIESTERWUENSCHER—LAIENWUENSCHER. By Bishop Franz von Streng and Dr. Paul Wilh. Widmer. (Räber & Cie, Lucerne; 1.50 francs.)

KATHOLISCHE ZELLENARBEIT. By Dr. Paul Wilh. Widmer (Räber & Cie; n.p.)

Here are two attractive booklets, fruits of the experiences and heartsearchings of Catholic Action in Switzerland. Beautifully printed on good paper, they take the eye and predispose the reader to indulgent perusal of the contents. The contents are good. Dr. Widmer is evidently a man who unites wide knowledge with apostolic zeal and practical sense. The result is that

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his *Layman's wishes for Priests* utter home-truths for the Clergy in a wise, tactful and delicate way. The emphasis he lays on the need for more personal contact between Priest and People is a criticism which, clearly, does not apply to this country. On the other hand, when Dr. Widmer turns to Catholic Action, his remarks on the need for greater confidence in lay initiative and leadership will no doubt find an echo in other countries besides his own.

His exposition of an organization of Catholic "cells" for the more efficient development of Catholic Action contains valuable elements. As we read what he puts forward on this subject, on the need for small groups and personal contacts with those whose interest in the Church has slackened or disappeared, we could not help wishing that some zealous apostles of the Legion of Mary might visit Switzerland and demonstrate that the Legion itself would provide Dr. Widmer and Catholic Action in that region with precisely the organization they desire.

C. R.

JACQUES MARITAIN. By Gerald B. Phelan. (Sheed & Ward; 2s. 6d.)

A tribute, from the Director of the Medieval Institute of Toronto, which takes the form of an introduction to the man and his work. The essay is an expansion of a lecture given in New York City last year; one could wish that it had been expanded further, so as to give a fuller idea of the width of scope, the actuality and the synthetic character of Thomism as a force in the world of to-day.

G. V.

ST. ELIZABETH OF PORTUGAL. By Vincent McNabb, O.P. (Sheed & Ward; 2s. 6d.)

A life of the Queen whose constant heroic work for peace entitles her to be called Patroness of Peace. The book was written during the last war; the fighting ceased before it was published; now that the world is again "so over-shadowed by the dread and preparations of war," it has seemed to the author "almost a necessity to let this Patroness of Peace again ride on her little mule between the armies in a last effort to keep brethren from mutual slaughter."

G. V.

THOUGHTS AND THINGS. By Graham Carey. (John Stevens, Newport, Rhode Island.)

Perhaps readers of BLACKFRIARS will remember Mr. Carey's former pamphlet, reviewed in the May issue of this year. In these two lectures he continues to preach his gospel of common-sense and simplicity in the matter of art theory, but it is to be

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regretted that he repeats the same errors with rather more emphasis. There is one fundamental distinction to be grasped: cutting, the purpose of the knife in use, is *not* the final cause of the man who made the knife, to use an extreme example, because it probably is uppermost in his mind. But the distinction should be luminously clear, applied to the fine arts. The failure to make that distinction runs through the whole of the argument. In general terms it is: The nature of art as such, and the place of art in life.

M. B.

THE FAITHFUL WIFE. By Sigrid Undset. (Cassell; 7s. 6d.)

Give him up—she could not! It gave her a stab in the heart, making her feel as though she sank with the whole bed under her. She was going to be entirely alone. She who had always been cheerful, if only the one with whom she lived was at home. Was she to lie alone every night of her life in a cold widow's bed—wake up feeling cheap and foolish after dreams which something impotent and clumsy within her had patched together from chance thoughts and fancies?

The faithful wife's emotions were strong and true; it was her determination to be reasonable and masculine that kept her from the husband she needed. His was the weakness at the beginning, yet it was his more sensitive and penetrating truthfulness that brought them together again. However it may turn out, she can feel, at any rate it will be better than anything else.

The story repeats the manner and distinction of *Ida Elizabeth*, also the quality of Mr. A. G. Chater as a translator. There is the same deep strength and steady frankness, though rarely is sorrow wistful or pity tender; the same sense of the weeks and months between days, tedious sometimes in the dialogue, but never in its feeling for the weather, the seasons, rooms at different times of the day, the duration as well as the gestures of personality.

T. G.

CHILD ROYAL. By D. K. Broster. (Heinemann; 7s. 6d.)

A disarming and artless simplicity about this book makes it unreasonable to expect subtle characterization or extreme crispness of dialogue. It unfolds a little wistfully, a little uncertainly, a story of long ago in the manner of the day before yesterday. Why should one be superior about the story—so little removed from fairy-tale? The hero is brave and patient, his sweetheart loyal and beautiful, the villain a youth base-born and infinitely treacherous, and the fortunes of all three, intricately linked, revolve round the little Queen of Scots. This is where the charm lies: one is shown a succession of pictures brightly coloured and formal in their stiff designs, whose centre is every time a child surrounded by children. The effect is appealing, unusual, remote.

M. A. B.

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I REMEMBER MAYNOOTH. By Don Boyne. (Longmans; 5/-.)

Writing with that elfish whimsicality peculiar to the Celt, the author presents us with a charming little volume of essays. Five in number; they are his memories of Maynooth, the largest seminary in the world. Records grave and gay should appeal to all; especially to *ipsi alumni Matris* scattered all over the globe. Perhaps there is something of the smoke-screen about "Don Boyne." Could it derive from Dunboyne? G. A.

### BOOKS RECEIVED

- ASCHENDORFF (Münster): *Ex Summa Philippi Cancellarii Quaestiones de Anima*, ed. Leo W. Keeler, S.J. (RM. 1.42.)
- BURNS OATES: *Spiritual Directions*, Cardinal Merry del Val (2s. 6d.); *The Jesuits*, Gaëtan Bernoville (7s. 6d.); *Homes of the Saints in Rome*, Edmond Joly (7s. 6d.).
- CHURCH ASSEMBLY (Press and Publications Board): *The Protection of Our English Churches, Seventh Report of the Central Council for the Care of Churches* (2s. 6d.).
- COLDWELL: *God, Man and the Universe*, Ivan Kologriov, S.J., tr. and ed. Aloysius Ambruzzi, S.J. (6s.); *A Saint under Moslem Rule*, Dom Justo Pérez de Urbal (10s.).
- DESCLEE DE BROUWER (Paris): *Le Pape et le Communisme*, Mgr. Paul Richaud, (pp. 164, n.p.); *Madame Acarie, Epouse et Mystique*, R. P. Bruno de Jésus-Marie (12 frs.); *Œuvres de Saint Augustin, II. Problemes moraux*, ed. Gustave Combes (25 B. frs.).
- EDITIONES DU CERF (Paris): *L'Eglise et la Question sociale*, R. G. Renard, O.P. (15 frs.)
- EDITIONS SALVATOR (Mulhouse): *Larmes et Sourires*, Myriam de G. (15 frs.); *Les Sacraments*, O. Schoellig (35 frs.); *La Vie de Marie, Mère de Jesus*, Fr. Willam (35 frs.); *Recueil d'Exemples modernes* (18 frs.); *Le caractère du jeune homme*, Tihamer Toth (15 frs.).
- GOLLANZ: *Introduction to Philosophy*, John Lewis (1s. 6d.). f
- HUTCHINSON: *Spanish Rehearsal*, Arnold Lunn (10s. 6d.).
- KOESSEL UND PUSTET (Munich): *Von christlicher Ehrenhaftigkeit*, Dr. Richard Egenter (RM. 3.20); *Christus in seinen heiligen Sakramenten*, Rudolph Graber (RM. 3.20).
- LOMBARDI (Sliema, Malta): *The Soldier's Companion*, Gabriel B. Wilkin, O.P., C.F. (120 pp., n.p.).
- OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS: *European Civilization* ed. Edward Eyre, Vol. VI. *Political and Cultural History of Europe since the Reformation* (25s.).
- PUTNAM: *Fairest Lord Jesus*, J. V. Moldenhawer (5s.).
- SHEED & WARD: *An Introduction to Logic*, Jacques Maritain (8s. 6d.); *Insurrection versus Resurrection (The Wilfrid Wards and the Transition, II.)*, Maisie Ward (15s.); *Pope Pius XI.*, Philip Hughes (8s. 6d.); *The Oxford Groups*, Maisie Ward (1s.); *Correspondent in Spain*, Edward K. Knoblaugh (7s. 6d.); *This House was Mine*, Francis McManus (7s. 6d.).

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