

## R E V I E W S

MIT BRENNENDER SORGE, *das paepstliche Rundschreiben gegen den Nationalsozialismus und seine Folgen in Deutschland*, edited by Dr Simon Hirt (Verlag Herder).

ZEUGNIS UND KAMPF DES DEUTSCHEN EPISKOPATS, *Gemeinsame Hirtenbriefe und Denkschriften*, edited by Dr Konrad Hofman (Herder Verlag).

BISCHOF GRAF VON GALEN SPRICHT! *ein apostolischer Kampf und sein Widerhall*, edited by Dr Heinrich Portmann. (Verlag Herder.)

These three volumes belong to the series entitled 'Christian Germany, 1933-1945, Documents and Testimonies, edited by Catholic and Evangelical Christians in co-operation'. There is to be a Catholic section, of which these books are the first three, an Evangelical section, and a common section. Herder is to publish the first section, the Furche-Verlag the second, and both the third. An undertaking, even a gesture, of this kind could hardly have been imagined before the great common persecution of Christians as such in Germany.

The first Catholic volume very properly prints the encyclical 'Mit Brennender Sorge'. It is good to see that historic document printed in its own language. I brought back to England (and later deposited in the Bodleian) a typewritten copy of the text. Such copies had been typed surreptitiously and were passed from hand to hand, bringing almost as much comfort and joy to Evangelicals as to Catholics. A fleet of motors delivered the printed text secretly on the Saturday night in the various presbyteries of each diocese. On Palm Sunday, 1937, the encyclical was read at Mass, and by the evening the secret police had seized almost every copy. Fourteen printing presses for having had a hand in its production were suppressed. In addition to the text of the encyclical we are now given very interesting correspondence that immediately passed between the (Nazi) Church ministry and Cardinal Bertram and the exchange of notes between the German ambassador to the Vatican and the Secretary of State, Cardinal Pacelli, as he then was. Cardinal Pacelli did not mince matters! These documents, so far as I know, have not hitherto been published.

Volume II contains four pastoral letters from the German episcopate and two memoranda addressed by the bishops to Hitler in one case and to the Government in the other. The book thus gives a very good account of the sufferings of the Church as the persecution increased and, as may be surmised, it is intended also in some degree as a vindication of the episcopate; for some of the faithful were disposed to think, at least at first, that stronger opposition should have been offered by the Church's leaders, the truth being, I think, that while the bishops were inflexible in respect of Nazi teaching, they were able to view without excessive pain the collapse of the Centre Party and the break-up of the extra-diocesan or nation-wide organiza-

tions of the Church for Youth and the various sodalities. The first memorandum addressed to Hitler in August, 1935, is a faithful and admirable statement of the Church's position; it is based on the alleged conviction that Hitler himself desired the peaceful co-operation of Church and State. The bishops were careful before the Government and their own people to make it plain that their protest was not against the 'Staatsform' but against the breaches of the Concordat, and they constantly emphasised the Fourth Commandment as requiring obedience to the State, subject only to the principle, 'ye must obey God rather than men'. In the second memorandum, dated December, 1941, Cardinal Bertram declares that the Catholic religion has been practically driven out of public life; the document ends with the warning that, if this appeal be neglected by the Government, the bishops will not be responsible for the consequences. The reader does not get the impression that the German bishops lacked courage; they protested to the Government; they encouraged and exhorted the faithful, but, it would appear, they took no action by way of resistance comparable to that taken by bishops in Belgium and in France.

But if the protests of the bishops were in general courageous rather than effectual, an exception must be made of Clemens August von Galen, Bishop of Muenster and later Cardinal, to whom the third volume in the series is given. His utterances are not unjustly compared by the editor to the words of the Hebrew prophets; they were frequent; they were utterly fearless; they were delivered, as this book clearly proves, at peril of his life. The introduction gives a spirited account of the magnificent battle waged by the Bishop. His general position has been not unknown in this country, but here are printed documents which show the extreme perplexity and disquiet which his activities caused in the Nazi camp. Here, for instance, is a memorandum from a high official in the Propaganda Ministry addressed to Goebbels; how were they to deal, he asks, with a man who publicly declares that the bombing of Muenster was the righteous judgment of Heaven in retribution for the misdeeds of the secret police, who lauds Pastor Niemoeller in his published letters, and who charges the secret police with responsibility for destroying national unity? In the documents here set out the Nazi Government discusses whether in the case of his arrest there would be serious disaffection, whether it would be well to arrest him when there comes a patch of good war news, that the thoughts of people may be diverted, whether he should be hanged. Goebbels was for deferring vengeance. In the end the Bishop was not hanged because the Government decided that, if he were, Muenster would, for all practical purposes, be out of the war from that time on. The book is a not unworthy tribute to one who already is a hero of his Church and well deserves for all time to be a hero of his nation.

NATHANIEL MICKLEM

IN DARKEST GERMANY. By Victor Gollancz. (Gollancz; 8s. 6d.)

The record, illustrated with 144 photographs, of Mr Gollancz's recent visit to Germany is a terrible indictment of the refusal of