

In conclusion one may be permitted to hope that many headmasters will read this book with sympathy, although it is rather sanguine to expect that many will yet be willing to support so extensive an experiment as is here expounded.

AUSTIN FENNECK, O.S.B.

ON BEING A STUDENT. By Pierre Danchin. (Harvill Press; 3s. 6d.)

This little book is full of practical wisdom for the ordering of the student's life. M. Danchin applies the principles of a Catholic humanism to put specialisation in its proper place, and to emphasise the need for integration in the too often haphazard and narrow life of the modern undergraduate. He is not just concerned with principles, but also with their practical application even in such little details as the student's need for a budget but, 'a budget that is pervaded by Charity'.

The author lays stress on integration—integration of studies, and studies with life. Intellectual work must have a moral basis of purity and poverty. 'Thought and life should properly speaking be always inseparable', an appeal against the experiential immaturity of so much university life.

M. Danchin discusses the dangers arising from specialisation and the neglect of the 'fundamental inter-relation of things'. He would have done well to show the reason for this inter-relation: '*Omne Verax a Veritate*' in St Augustine's words. He talks of the inter-relation of the sciences but not of their relations to the queen of the sciences, yet surely the greatest need of contemporary intellectual life is for an ordering of science in the light of wisdom that is born only of contemplation. Every science can and must lead to the author of being and of science. M. Danchin knows these things if he does not say them, and his deeply humanistic approach does rely on them for its validity, as his constant quotations from Newman show.

Finally he emphasises that the inner spring of the student's life must be love, which alone can transform facts into life. The failure of the modern university 'is all, at bottom, a question of lack of love'.

A. HASTINGS.

I FIGHT TO LIVE. By Robert Boothby. (Gollancz; 21s.)

Mr Boothby says approvingly of Lord Birkenhead that he gave one a feeling that he preferred the company of undergraduates to any other and that he was himself still an undergraduate. Mr Boothby can be assured that this book entitles him to that very same approbation, for this autobiography has many of the notes of an undergraduate essay, particularly from the rambling fashion in which it raises many issues without making enough effort to separate them,

raising them, indeed, more because they happen to rush into the head at the same time than on account of any logical sequence. A few instances will make the point clear.

He says of 'fanatics', 'In so far as they are all actuated by sublimated sex, they are all mad', and of the problem of wealth, 'Let us start with three assertions. First, equality is incompatible with the very nature of man. For this we have the august authority of Freud himself. . . . Second, private property is essential to freedom. Third, private property is essential to progress'. One is not surprised, after reading such an argument, to discover that Mr Boothby is against dogmas of any (body else's) kind: and that 'of all prophets who have claimed divine attributes, Jesus was the least concerned to persuade his followers to believe any special proposition about himself'. The difficulty which undergraduates feel in ending their essays is painfully obvious in Mr Boothby's high-pitched, not to say shrill, ending, 'Do we accept or reject life? If we accept, we have to fight, here and now, for the values we believe in. I accept'. The reader who likes political gossip, and can endure all things to secure it, may like this book.

DONALD NICHOLL.

BYZANTINE MOSAIC DECORATION. By Otto Demus. (Kegan Paul; 2 gns.)

Dr Demus is a Byzantinist of an international reputation and his present volume is the best general introduction to the study of Byzantine mosaics which has yet been published. It is one of the many tragedies of Catholic ecclesiastical art that no such book was in existence when the fashion for mosaic decoration was revived in England, Ireland and America in the late 19th century and when the natural reaction against the debased traditions of the Venetian school led to an attempted return to a half imaginary 'Byzantinism'. For Dr Demus combines a meticulous scholarship with a power of vivid aesthetic perception and he provides a careful analysis of the aesthetic purpose of Byzantine Mosaic work and of its necessary relation to the architectural whole. Inevitably there are details both of fact and of interpretation that other specialists will dispute. But no such minor criticism can alter the immediate value of his book.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.

THE RELIGIOUS ORDERS IN ENGLAND. By David Knowles. (Cambridge University Press; 30s.)

This eagerly-awaited volume will surely satisfy the most critical scholar; it will certainly delight as well as instruct the reader who seeks to learn more of the lives of the English Religious of the Middle Ages. It is the second stage in the series which, when completed, will cover the history of the Religious Orders in England from the time of St Dunstan until the dissolution of the monasteries.