

JULIANA OF NORWICH. Edited by P. Franklin Chambers. (Gollancz; 15s.)

Mr P. Franklin Chambers, already known for his work on Friedrich von Hügel, has produced an anthology of longer extracts and 'aphorisms' from the *Revelations* of the East Anglican visionary. Any publication which serves to make this great woman better known deserves a welcome: but those who find themselves attracted by this book will be well advised to read her revelations in their entirety, and in the order in which she received them, or, better still, to wait until we at last have her own fifteenth-century English before us, in the critical edition which Sister Anna Maria Reynolds is now preparing. What Julian taught on grace, on sin, on passivity (her 'noughting') and on deification is not to be paralleled in the writings of any medieval English mystic: and yet, in what might seem mysterious and inscrutable ways, she had felt and known what Mechtild of Magdeburg and Hadewijch of Antwerp, Eckhart and Ruysbroek had felt and known and taught. Such mysteries would truly be ineluctable if what Mr Chambers tells us were so, if indeed 'an exclusive and possessive ecclesiasticism, whether Roman, Anglican or Nonconformist, has no relevance to the spirit of Mother Julian'. Let Julian answer him: 'In all things I believe as Holy Church believes, preaches and teaches. For the Faith of Holy Church, which I had previously understood and, as I trust, by God's grace intended to practise and observe, was constantly in my sight: I never wished nor intended to accept anything which might be contrary to the Faith, and with this intention I contemplated the revelation as diligently as I might, for everything in this holy revelation I regarded as one with the will of God.' We have all much to learn from the unbounded charity which was perhaps Julian's most solemn lesson: but to deduce from that wonderful charity that she was ever other than a faithful daughter of the Church which nurtured her is an imputation which must be rejected as often as it is made.

ERIC COLLEDGE

THE SPOIL OF THE VIOLENT. By Emmanuel Mounier. (The Harvil Press; 6s.)

'Violent words are sometimes necessary to awake spirits slumbering in doctrinal equilibriums and objective balancings', wrote Emmanuel Mounier; and here is a spate of violent words to arouse Christians from their drowsing, to sting them into a virility which is lacking in their 'comfortable certainty of a sort of fortunate retreat', by reminding them of the two capital facts of human existence: the infinite transcendence of God and the profound universality of sin. These essays were written, it appears, at a time of great pessimism and depression during

the Occupation of France and M. Mounier insisted on the necessary distinction between despair and the tragic sense. He was at pains to rally his fellow Catholics against despair and to make them see in their experience of the tragic 'an experience of fullness (which) bears in its injured plenitude hope and the first promise of ultimate reconciliation'. But first he must make them appreciate the anguish of their state, and to do that he comments on various remarks of Nietzsche. In fact the whole of this urgent appeal might be likened to a dialogue between Nietzsche stigmatizing somnolent Christianity and the fervent committed outpourings of the anguished Catholic who is equally outraged by the election posters which say '*Play Safe, Vote Catholic*', and by the Catholics who find it easier to come to terms with a bad conscience than a bad reputation. Mounier's death was a grievous loss to the cause of virile committed Catholicism, but in this slim volume his words are still potent to remind us that the kingdom of heaven is to be taken by violence and not by smooth acquiescence and debilitated conformism.

J.F.

VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS AND SOCIAL PROGRESS. By Mary Morris.
(Gollancz; 18s.)

Lady Morris writes with authority, having been engaged in social work at local, national and international levels and was recently elected President of the National Federation of Community Associations. Her theme is a vast one, nothing less than the contribution made by voluntary bodies to philanthropy, politics, working men's associations, education and social service in England from the Middle Ages to the present day. Inevitably there are omissions and emphases that one would criticize, but this is the fault of trying to pack an encyclopedia into a little over two hundred pages. The lack of balance is in the scheme rather than in the judgments and appraisals: the potted history of British Trade Unionism and the Co-operative Movement along with the chapter on 'Political Movements' (although together they form a third of the book) might well have been omitted in order to do more justice to the voluntary principle in education. Surely any account, however compressed, which does not even mention the work of the religious congregations is woefully lacking. For the rest, the description of the development of philanthropy in the nineteenth century is extremely well done and the central position and influence of the Charity Organization Society is admirably sketched in. Lady Morris also deals adequately with the changing situation in the Welfare State where statutory and voluntary organizations are more and more integrated, but she is not perhaps as good a guide to the possibilities of future development and outlets for voluntary effort. Her book is useful