

in the poet's case by difficulties he himself amusedly describes—'first getting to know people, and then when you're under their protection, having to avoid seeing them; and one can hardly introduce oneself to them with such a programme'. Later, 'the future of any individual seems possible only in so far as he learns a sort of hovering that can dispense with firm ground underneath!' Soon after this his own anxieties were largely dispelled by the provision of the Château de Muzot, but he suffered intensely with others who were forced to remain in Germany; it is the sympathetic friend rather than the great poet who is foremost in these letters, though we catch glimpses of the latter, his friendship with Gide, his translations of Valéry, a library, gardens, a castle, books and pictures which stir him. The notes are very informative, with one exception—the reference on page 97, 'It's anyway thoroughly German', to a letter to his wife might have been quoted in full in an English version. The notes to letters 5 and 6, which contain an account of him lecturing and reading his own poems, are particularly interesting. The Epilogue by the editor is best read as a Prologue, since it reveals how the friendship began. The whole book gives a pleasant picture of Rilke in the round, and is free enough from hyperdulia.

BENET WEATHERHEAD, O.P.

ST BERNARD: ON THE CHRISTIAN YEAR. Translated by a Religious of C.S.M.V. (Mowbrays; 10s. 6d.)

Those who have already found this translator's selections from St Bernard useful will welcome the appearance of another volume drawn from the sermons for the seasons and feasts of the liturgical year. It is difficult indeed for people who either cannot read Latin easily, or who have no access to the large editions of the Fathers, to find spiritual reading that even approaches the quality of this. Moreover the scholarly-minded, who will perhaps be disapproving at abbreviations, selections of themes, and internal divisions within the sermons, would do well to remind themselves that the making of a florilegium has the best of monastic precedents, and need not necessarily be a vulgar abuse. Our shelves have room for many more productions of this kind, at reasonable prices, provided they are prepared with a genuine respect for the original, as this one is. The texts are furnished with scriptural references and a few brief notes at the end of the book. One only misses here any passage from the many eloquent sermons on the Assumption, and the omission of even a snatch from the exposition of the Beatitudes in the first sermon for All Saints is hard to account for.

A.S.