

sets out to discuss these problems. The first part of the book is devoted to a résumé of the opinions of Christian thinkers on this particular point. The three tendencies already alluded to will be found exemplified in the development of Christian thought. This part of the book is of great interest and well done. The author's sympathies on the whole would appear to be with the Augustine tradition—his judgment on St Thomas is that he was the Christian apologist *par excellence*, his one serious error was the rejection of the ontological argument, and that 'in turning philosophy into a rationalistic prelude to theology and the life of faith, St Thomas overlooked the essential truth of the Augustinian insistence that, so far as human thought and experience are concerned, faith precedes rational inquiry'. (p. 81.)

In the second part of the book the author presents his own thoughts on the present opportunity of the Christian in philosophy. He believes that the Christian in philosophy is 'a Christian man trying to see life steadily and whole, seeking a comprehensive vision of all the facts, natural, aesthetic, moral and social, by interpreting them as the constituents of a Christian universe, best, because most profoundly, comprehensively and stimulating, explained in terms of analogies drawn from the experience of Christian personality in Christian history. The function of the Christian philosopher is not primarily apologetic at all. He is not in any sense an organ of an evangelical church, but a philosopher seeking to interpret life and reality. His aim is to proclaim and illustrate the truth as he sees it'. (p. 252-253.)

While the reader will probably find a number of points upon which he disagrees with the author, a reading of the book is to be recommended since it is both informative and stimulating. It has moreover the advantage of being well and clearly written.

GEORGE EKBERY

**MY PHILOSOPHY.** And other Essays on the Moral and Political Problems of our time. By Benedetto Croce. Selected by R. Klibansky. Translated by E. F. Carritt. (Allen and Unwin 15s.)

The main title of this book is merely the title of the first essay, a brief retrospect of ten pages in which Croce considers the factors which have moulded his thought. Hence the reader must not be led to expect any summary statement or restatement of Croce's system, nor will he find anything of a kind that Croce has not said before. It is true that there are ten pages on 'Why we cannot help calling ourselves Christians', which show a more positive appreciation of Christianity than we have hitherto associated with the author, but the Christianity is still of a very vague and general sort. The book is really a pious gathering of some of Croce's more recent jottings, varying in length from a single page to

twenty-eight, and it will please those whom Croce has pleased already.

It is natural to take a much more charitable view of nineteenth-century liberalism now that it is a spent force. Fifty years ago, with its aggressive secularism and its complacent belief in inevitable human progress, it was still the enemy of the best, and a powerful enemy too. Today, when so many devils worse than the first have entered into its inheritance, its remaining representatives have become allies, slightly dubious allies but still allies, in the preservation of fundamental human values. Croce, at any rate, has not lost his faith in humanity and liberty, and, although he retains the limitations of his earlier years, it is good to see that the aged philosopher has not been disillusioned by events which have been of their nature more shattering to mere liberal humanitarianism than to a more adequate creed. On such grounds these essays are, if not particularly enlightening, nevertheless rather touching.

D. J. B. HAWKINS

THE MAKING OF CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE. By Francis Dvornik.  
(London. The Polish Research Council, 25s.)

Dr Dvornik's latest book is a continuation of his earlier work *Les Slaves, Byzance et Rome au IX siècle* and incorporates many views already expressed in various languages in different historical journals. Dr Dvornik sets out to correct the impression, too long traditional, that the development of central and east European civilisation was the extension of the German Holy Roman Empire. If at times Dr Dvornik has pressed his case a little too far it may be said in his favour that history is best learned by thesis and anti-thesis.

The hero of the book is the half Saxon half Byzantine Emperor Otto III to whom the muscular christians of the older German school have done scant justice. It must be confessed that some of his more recent defenders have been a little intoxicated by the romance which surrounds this enigmatic figure, half humanist, half ascetic, completely enamoured of the Imperial ideal. Dr Dvornik wonders why it was not he, but his prosaic successor Henry II, who received the honours of canonisation, yet there is something about Otto III in his more exultant moments which reminds us more of Napoleon than of St Louis, while the instability of his character, ranging from the contemplation of grand and far-reaching designs to fits of the most abject depression, leaves us in doubt that a longer span of years would have seen the fulfilment of the noble ambitions he had undoubtedly conceived. The uniting of Germans, Italians and Slavs on an equal footing under the Imperial crown, with a great metropolitan See at Gnesen for the Slavs and the title of Patrician of the Empire for national leaders like Boleslas