

We are an unreflective people who do not care to recognise or remember national sins. Most of this prophet's burden is apposite, even more apposite than when it was written. Therefore it is a pity that M. Bernanos has chosen a literary form which is bound to seem artificial, and writes in a style which will only attract an intellectual minority. He is too rhetorical and his anger inclines to be shrill (though one is loth, writing from a country which has suffered so much less than France to make this sort of comment). If in some parts of the book political feeling overshadows Christian values, the author errs in company with other brave and tender-hearted champions of the Lord's poor.

COLIN SUMMERFORD.

LE VOYAGE DU CENTURION. By Ernest Psichari. Preface by Paul Bourget. (Editions Louis Conard; 69 francs.)

No one who read this book in the days of its first appearance can have forgotten it, but our knowledge of the writer has been enriched since 1915. We have seen Psichari through the eyes of his friends; we even know now that it was Jacques Maritain and his wife who sent the postcard with the picture of Our Lady of Salette to Ernest Psichari in the desert and this detail, with much else, has helped us to focus Maxence as the grandson of Renan.

In all ways the book has gained by the years which have passed. Written from a unity of purpose, it achieves great beauty of style and atmosphere, but it is the clear intensity of its faith which stands out so vividly against the darkness of our contemporary sky. The issue between Maxence and God, clean cut as the edge of a razor, gives it a quality rare in these times of muzzy philosophies.

It is valuable, too, in that it reveals a type of spirituality essentially French, more necessary than ever to be understood by the Catholics of other nations. And this, though its individuality is single to the point of genius.

For those who have little knowledge of the spirit of Catholic France there could be no better introduction. Paul Bourget's fine preface will help them to an understanding of that for which they must look. The physical atmosphere is conveyed with such actuality that they will hear the sounds of the camp and smell the tang of the desert air: and they will find the soul of France.

D. M.

THEATRE—Cahier I: Essais par Paul Claudel, Charles Vildrac, etc.; 75 francs. Cahier II: Le Théâtre Anglais d'hier et d'aujourd'hui; 75 francs. Cahier III: Aspects du Théâtre Contemporaine en France; 90 francs. (Paris: Editions du Pavois.)

HISTOIRE DU THEATRE. Par Robert Pignarre. (Presses Universitaires de France.)

One of the happiest results of the end of a war is that the arts of civilisation can be free again. Total mobilisation includes the actor,

and even if he only dons the battle-dress of E.N.S.A. he can scarcely hope to devote himself to the theatre as such: his category is that of morale. In France, the German occupation created special difficulties, but there was never any weakening in that *joy* in creating which is the quality, of all others, that makes the name of France synonymous with Western civilisation. France, that land of manifestoes, can exasperate but rarely bores.

The present volumes, admirably illustrated, are a welcome reminder of French vitality, and reveal how close, now, are the links that bind us. There is no room to give a detailed account of their contents, but the volume on England, with its essays on the theatre of the war years, and its excellent translations of extracts from T. S. Eliot, Emlyn Williams, Sean O'Casey, Synge, and Yeats, together with Gide's version of *Anthony and Cleopatra*, will gladden the hearts of those who wonder how others see us. The third volume, on France, has extracts from Obey, Neven, Puyet, and essays by Gabriel Marcel, André Charmel, and many more.

The little volume published by the Presses Universitaires de France, in a series similar to our own Home University Library, is a masterpiece of compression, and gives a readable history of the theatre from primitive dances, via Greek tragedy, medieval moralities, Shakespeare, and Racine, to modern experiments. Here is an *œuvre de vulgarisation* that is a model.

I. E.

WOMEN AND THE FUTURE. By Margaret Goldsmith. (Lindsay Drummond; 6s.)

The later chapters of this book provide a useful statistical survey of the post-war situation and its problem for women, in industry, the professions, politics, law; there are useful chapters also on housing and the present threat of race-suicide. But it is the early pages, on marriage and the family, which raise the fundamental problem, the full scope of which the author does not seem to see, and to which, certainly, no adequate solution is offered. It is quite clear that women who need and desire creative work ought not to be debarred from it by sex-prejudice or unfair legislation; and that creative work of many kinds is quite compatible with a happy married and family life. But what if the work is the uncreative drudgery of the factory? First, is *that* compatible with family life? The author's only suggestions here are that (a) the day-nursery system should be expanded—which ignores the fact that the creativity of marriage does not end with the birth of the child but essentially includes upbringing and the making of the home; or (b) that nature will somehow 'respond to the requirements of national self-preservation' and induce women to be mothers at an earlier age, so as to be workers later on—which seems extremely questionable. On the other hand, if the two things are *not* compatible, and none the less large numbers of women are to choose the work rather than the family, the fact must be faced that they are rejecting