

Dizzy's letters when 'wreathed with smiles . . . she rattled, glided about the room like a bird'.

The anthology opens with a character-sketch of the cold, unlikeable Dutch William. It closes, suitably, with Queen Victoria no longer remote but 'much moved and gratified', describing the Diamond Jubilee celebrations. It is a pleasant note on which to end and brings to an admirable climax this excellent choice of eye-witness accounts of a major period in British history.

KIERAN MULVEY, O.P.

ITINERAIRE DE HENRI PERRIN, Prêtre-Ouvrier. 1914-1954. (Editions du Seuil, Paris; n.p.)

Father Henri Perrin, who was killed in a motor-cycle accident in 1954, was one of the few priest-workers well-known in the English-speaking world. His small book, *Priest-Worker in Germany*, gave an account of his experiences with the deportees during the war, and this moving story of an unusual priestly mission stirred up a good deal of interest at the time. But it was only a fragment in the story of a life totally devoted to the service of God and of the working class. After his tragic death, Henri Perrin's friends and relations collected all his letters and papers, and now publish them in tribute to his memory.

Henri Perrin is made to tell the story of his life through his personal correspondence, through circular letters to friends, and above all through many letters to an anonymous Carmelite nun. Unfortunately his diary, which he destined to his mother, was accidentally destroyed. But the picture that emerges is clear enough. Henri Perrin was a native of the Vosges, level-headed yet obstinate, a born leader of men. His early life and priestly vocation followed a very normal course. Ordained in 1938, he joined the Jesuits in 1940, after a brief spell in the army before the fall of France. The months he spent in Germany working on a special mission revealed to him the immense problem of the dechristianization of working-class France. At the end of the war, together with other Jesuits, he became a priest-worker in the East End of Paris. Though he never lost his great love for the Society, both he and his superiors came to realize that his strong individualism was not compatible with the Jesuit concept of obedience, and in 1951 he became once again a secular priest, incardinated for the sake of convenience in the diocese of Sens, with full liberty to pursue his vocation as a priest-worker. He started work as a mechanic at the construction of the Isère-Arc dam, in his native Vosges mountains. There his gifts of leadership soon became evident, and when a strike broke out over wages and conditions of work he was soon appointed secretary of the strike committee. During this strike and others which were to follow he revealed himself

as a trade-union leader of unusual ability and drive, and when he was eventually victimized by the contractors his comrades made up his wages to enable him to continue his work.

At the end of 1953 came orders from Rome which meant in practice the discontinuance of the priest-worker apostolate. In March 1954 Henri Perrin obtained six months' leave of absence from his Bishop and took up an electrician's course, thus giving him time to reflect on his future. He had envisaged asking for reduction to the lay state, but God decided for him in the sudden death he met with in the following October, as he was driving to the training centre.

The whole tragedy of the priest-workers is summed up in the life of Henri Perrin. Whatever may have been the mistakes, the illusions and the inadequacies of these pioneers, no one can deny their enthusiasm and their heroism. If it was the scandal of the nineteenth century that the Church lost the working class, surely it is the scandal of the twentieth that the clergy has been so little prepared for its reconquest. None of these men were really trained for their mission—how can they be blamed for the mistakes they made? As Père Congar once said, one can suppress abuses, but one cannot suppress a problem; all one can do is to try and solve it. The problem still remains, and, as Henri Perrin said in the last letter he wrote, we must feel 'an immense suffering at the great divorce that exists between the Church and the world of work. In time God will bridge the gulf with us, or without us, or against us; may we not throw too many spanners in the works.'

EUGENE LANGDALE

DOCUMENTS OF MODERN POLITICAL THOUGHT. Edited by T. E. Utley and J. Stuart Maclure. (Cambridge University Press; 22s. 6d.)

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS AND CIVIC MORALS. By Emile Durkheim. Introduction by Georges Davy. (Routledge and Kegan Paul; 30s.)

The collection of texts to illustrate the chief social and political philosophies at work in the contemporary world invites comparison with the one made by Professor Michael Oakshott just before the war. Both are divided into five parts, but whereas the earlier work could show three clearly-defined party lines the only compulsory orthodoxy which is today the basis of a régime is Marxist Communism. Fascism and Nazism are doctrines no longer embodied in power: the editors consider it would be an error to treat General Franco's Spain as a working model of a Fascist State. Nevertheless they still respond to emotions by no means extinct, and these are summarized in six pages under the heading of Romantic Authoritarianism, ending with a note on that racialism of *apartheid* which claims to obey God's will as manifested in the Bible.