

institutions, but in Western society generally diversity is regarded as a necessity for the life of the state and there is a combination of faith in the general wisdom of mankind with doubt that its great limitations have been removed from any individual or group." Objections are boldly faced. What is the use of freedom, of the Press for instance, if only the wealthy can exercise it? Mr. Brogan at once probes to the roots of the question—"these criticisms are often covers for despair"—and contrasts Bismarck's "reptile press", which could still be attacked by the non-reptile journals and a variety of organs influencing public opinion, with Hitler's *gleichgeschaltet* newspapers. He admits that the democratic leader must flatter the mob, as courtiers flatter the tyrant; but there are always some sceptics among the crowd wanting to make themselves heard, the dictator dare not give expression to his doubts. But if we are concerned with concrete facts, was not negro slavery and is not the present racial discrimination a mockery of American democracy? Certainly it is ugly and it is only being eradicated with painful slowness, but in an unfree state it could not be eradicated at all; the Declaration of Independence, ineffective as it seemed, was always more than a mere form of words as long as independent observers could ask how it squared with slavery: "The words stuck in the throat till the great anomaly was extinguished in blood."

Mr. Brogan's capacity to see man whole, to draw on every aspect of history, saves him from many of the errors of smaller-minded empiricists, and he is justifiably opposed to doctrinaire politics; but his agnosticism carries him too far at times. When he writes of politicians:

Their pattern is not one laid up in heaven and the less they think of their own footsteps as resembling those of an audible divine purpose the better. Their duty is not to meet the specifications laid down by Plato or Hegel, but the endless, varied and unpredictable demands of situations created by varied human wills working with this recalcitrant material universe to produce improvement by tolerably honest and dignified methods,

we cannot but ask whether they are not expected to make at least a muddled attempt to approximate to a divine pattern of justice, feebly but adequately grasped by any human mind and more fully interpreted by the great thinkers of the ages. And have we grown so careless about truth that we can be content to recognise election promises as "merely formal hypocrisy", deceiving no one and puzzling only "the plain man"? EDWARD QUINN.

THE MYSTERY OF INIQUITY. By Paul Hanly Furfey. (Bruce Milwaukee; \$2.00).

This book by the Head of the Department of Sociology of the Catholic University of America is easily the most remarkable of its type this year. It is remarkable principally for its virility and can-

dour. It deals with the problem of evil in society—a problem which has never been satisfactorily solved (and presumably is not meant to be) but which Christian sociologists are too inclined to pass off in terms of obvious natural causes. It is the obvious thing to do; they follow the conventional, conformable, sociological pattern. Thus it is that the author, using if not inventing the handy term “conformism” shows himself to be very far from a “conformist”. When he looks further than the obvious natural causes of evil, it is to find himself face to face with that conveniently forgotten man of the many masks, the Devil himself. What Fr. Furfey sees he finds disturbing, for he sees the profound and powerful Mystery of Iniquity; and against it do not natural weapons sometimes seem pitifully inadequate? “The ills of society,” says the author “cannot be expressed in purely human terms” and consequently cannot be fought effectively with merely human weapons.

Fr. Furfey reminds us that the Christian social ideal should be completely satisfying. Yet it is flouted. Instead of peace: war. Instead of love: hatred. Instead of Christian hope: despair. “Why is this?” He answers the question by delving into that malign and mysterious force associated with events preceding the end of the world, yet operative at this moment in our familiar world.

Here is an example of Fr. Furfey’s frankness:—“A priest friend of mine, the pastor of a large Negro parish, once sadly remarked to me, ‘I spend about half my time trying to undo the harm which my brother priests have caused’. No one who knows the situation will think that this statement was much exaggerated. One common form of discrimination is to segregate Negroes in a few back pews when they come to a white church. Another priest friend of mine was once instructing a prospective convert. The man was a highly educated Negro; he was, in fact, a college professor. He was thrilled as the priest unfolded to him the great and beautiful doctrine of charity and particularly when the priest explained to him the Sacrifice of the Mass, the great source of charity. One Sunday the Negro determined to attend Mass, so he wandered into a Catholic church and took a seat in a pew in the middle of the church. He was lost in prayer when suddenly he felt someone touch his shoulder and looked up to see an usher standing there. ‘Niggers have to sit in the back pews’, said the usher. The Negro rose quietly and left the church; he has never been inside a Catholic church from that day to this.” This is an example of Conformism and its tragic effects. We come now to another. Having admitted that it is not possible for a Catholic to be an *absolute* pacifist (that is to say, one who refuses ever to sanction under any circumstances the use of force) Fr. Furfey then draws attention to a form of Conformism with which we have been acutely familiar during the past few years. “In the event that a Catholic knows . . . that a given war is unjust, he is bound to refuse to fight. Under these

circumstances one not only may, but must be a conscientious objector. It is strange that most Catholics are so reluctant to preach this doctrine, particularly in time of war when it is particularly relevant. It is a bit ironical that many Catholics hesitate to discuss the right of the human conscience to review the morality of a war, while the United States Government does recognise this right at least in some form by making provision for the exemption of conscientious objectors." We might recommend this to those in this country who have stated pontifically that "a Catholic *cannot* be a conscientious objector" or, in other words, that a Catholic can have an objection but not a conscience.

The above, however, are small instances of the dynamic of Fr. Furfey's writing and the balance of his judgment. I would like to have copies of page 62 on Christ, the social agitator, (though He was a social agitator of a very particular sort, the Redeemer of Mankind) in every church in this country. We recommend the book without reserve, but especially to writers and publishers of Catholic sociology in England, and to all who hitherto have thought blanc-mange to be fit food for the famishing. J. F. T. PRINCE.

#### PHILOSOPHY

THE NATURE OF METAPHYSICAL THINKING. By Dorothy M. Emmet. (Macmillan; 10s. 6d.).

Miss Emmet brings to her task a ready interest in widely varying views and great honesty in facing difficulties. Perhaps for these reasons this most interesting book leaves one with more problems than answers.

Her theme is that metaphysical thinking is analogical in character. Experience, she holds, is the "creation of form arising out of an initial situation of interrelated processes. The experiencing subject is a responsive centre within this nexus of relationships" (p. 189) being in *rappont* with the 'transcendent' or 'other'. There is a fatal vagueness in the author's use of "situations of interrelatedness". The symbolic forms of experience are themselves patterns of relational structure and correspond systematically to what most often seems to be the relation of the experiencing subject to the transcendent; but at times it seems to be rather a relational structure within the transcendent itself. Why we draw attention to this will shortly appear. The investigation of the patterns of our symbolic forms in their internal relations is the task of science; but metaphysics has to "elucidate the situations of relatedness both in respect of the character of the relations themselves, and in respect of what can be conjectured through these as to the nature of (the transcendent)". Here the vagueness already mentioned makes it difficult to determine whether the relations referred to are the internal relations again of the experiential symbols (whereupon metaphysics would be largely a generalised, synthetic science) or