

indicate the essential underlying unity of his work," he writes, "I shall be content." This unity lies in Belloc's Christian humanism, which is "founded upon the stupendous fact that God himself is a humanist since he paid man the supreme compliment of the Incarnation." A vivid understanding of the Incarnation and the sacramentalism of created things runs through Belloc's thought and determines his attitude to history and sociology. The objects of his studies are people who breathe God's air and live by divine grace, not so many specimens laid out for dissection in the laboratory—or rather slaughter-house—of "exact science" history. His essays see the reflection of the Creator in creatures, and the joy and the verve of the poetry come from the same source as that of Chaucer and Shakespeare. For this reason Belloc will always be recognized even by those who disagree with his principles as one of the greatest writers of the century. His humanism makes his style concrete, factual, visual—qualities which great literature must possess.

All this is Mr Hamilton's thesis which he expounds neatly in fifty-odd pages. Occasionally however he lapses into the fault of which Belloc himself has been accused, unverified assumption and failure to probe evidence to its roots. It is the defect of the humanist's qualities. He sees creation in three dimensions and that, quite rightly, satisfies him. Unfortunately it does not satisfy the academic mind, and however impatient we may feel with the pedantry of professors we have to admit on our humanist principles that they are God's creatures and do command a hearing. So it is dangerous to say 'I quote from memory,' or to suggest that William Walton's *Façade* is a piece of music unique in so far as it produces laughter. This may be true, but some readers may refuse to accept it without proof. These are tiny matters, but such things have been the cause of much misunderstanding of Belloc, and it is only confidence in the agility of the humanist's mind which bids us ask him to try to understand the pedant rather than vice versa. These and one misprint are small defects in a well-planned monograph. It now remains for someone to write the life.

GERARD MEATH, O.P.

HOMER: THE ODYSSEY. A new translation by E. V. Rieu. (The Penguin Classics; 1s.).

This volume inaugurates a new Penguin series—a library of classics chosen from many languages and freshly translated for the occasion. Some dozen works are already advertised as in preparation—from the Greek, Latin, Italian, French, Russian and Norwegian. The most spectacular choice of a translator is that of Miss Sayers for the *Divine Comedy*.

Mr Rieu's *Odyssey* deserves longer consideration than can be given here. Briefly, its English is more specifically and more consistently modern than that of its predecessors. The translation is well thought out and has many incidental felicities, but one may ask if it is not pitched in too colloquial a tone. After all, modern English has many varieties, and insistence on one of them may sometimes produce

effects of incongruity. On p. 105 we read: 'They too are heaven-born, but Artemis overtops them all, and where all are beautiful there is no question which is she.' Excellent. But then on the same page: 'What is this shrill echo in my ears, as though some girls were shrieking? Nymphs, I suppose . . .' Not so good. W.S.

**THE COSMOLOGICAL EYE.** By Henry Miller (Poetry London, 10s.). 'I want to be read by less and less people,' says Mr Miller. In which case one may wonder why he is not content with the reputation of being the least-read but most-quoted or paper-backed, Paris-published Americans. The present selection (with a generous inclusion of asterisks) of Mr Miller's writings is valuable when words are linked to experience, as in an extraordinarily vivid piece of autobiography, 'Via Dieppe-Newhaven,' or (freed from an inexcusably earnest obscurity) in 'The Tailor Shop' (from *Black Spring*), where the seedy, sweaty world of New York's Bowery comes painfully alive.

A film scenario, literary criticism (including a valuable analysis of Lawrence, Proust, Joyce), fragments of autobiography, chapters of novels—*The Cosmological Eye* is really a writer's bazaar, with a fearless contempt for fashions in literature, politics and the world at large as the trade-mark of all the merchandise. And how he hates industrial capitalism, and America as its incarnation! 'Until this colossal, senseless machine which we have made of America is smashed and scrapped, there can be no hope.'

Often muddled, violent, ugly, Mr Miller is never mediocre. He is never taken in, and behind the phantasmagoria of myth and symbol and esoteric nattering there remains a man who certainly speaks for himself—something in a gramophone age. I.E.

**EASTWARD OF ALL.** By Frances Wynne. (Dublin: M. H. Gill; 6s.).

*Eastward of All behold the true level of Mankind.* The title of Mrs. Wynne's book comes from Claudel, and that is as it should be. Accounts of conversion can too often be merely reminiscences with a moral: they end up with the reception into the Church instead of with the Order of the Bath, so to say. But the classics of conversion—St. Augustine's *Confessions* or Newman's *Apologia*—transcend the occasion and the man. And *Eastward of All*, while making no pretensions at being more than a simple record of how one person came to an unconditional surrender to the demands of Truth, has a sustained strength which springs from its single purpose—"nothing short of the Whole Christ will ever satisfy us."

Within this context, Mrs. Wynne's narrative emerges as a delightful account of childhood in an Irish country-house, of life as an art-student in London, of marriage into one of the oldest of Welsh families—and, finally, through the conversion of mother and son, of the restoration to Garthewin of its ancient Catholic heritage. Several "period" photographs, and two of the author's own pictures, add to the interest of a graceful and intelligent book.

ILLFUD EVANS, O.P.