

L'AFFRONTEMENT CHRETIEN. Par Emmanuel Mounier. (Cahiers du Rhône.)

M. Mounier reflects the youthful enthusiasm of the new France. A France in the throes of rejuvenation, highly self-critical and militantly Catholic. If he has somewhat of the intolerance of youth, he has no less a large measure of its candour and generosity. In this provocative little book he goes to the root causes of the increasing European chaos of the past 150 years with a sure instinct for what is the fundamental weakness in the body politic, social and mystical. At the close of each analytical chapter he points to the sane teaching of the Church as the only remedy and norm. We have forgotten that the faith is a glorious adventure to be lived in the spirit of those crusading knights of old, or the even more ideal comradeship of King Arthur's table who went forth to seek the Holy Grail. We are a new creature in Christ and M. Mounier would have us remember it—and so would the Church.

L. L.

AFTER BLACK COFFEE. By Robert I. Gannon, S.J. (Declan X. McMullen Co.; \$2.00.)*

The wisdom of publishing one's collected *obiter dicta* is frequently questionable. Though the reviewer recently had one such compilation read to him (or as much of it as he could bear) that allowed of no question whatever: for the reason that, appearing stealthily week by week, while they had filled space they had escaped notice. Book-form revealed what was chiefly chunks of encyclopedic intelligence and a number of old chestnuts that one could have told more racy oneself. But Father Gannon made no mistake when he decided to publish his after dinner speeches. They contain much of the wit and wisdom of one of the youngest University Presidents known in the U.S.A. The book has been accurately described as light in tone, though not in content. It deals with such diversities as nursing, Peace Conferences, racial intolerance, science, education, the relation of Labour to the Priesthood, Christian humanism and the Monkey Business, the Chamber of Commerce, China, Russia and Poland.

J. F. T. PRINCE

R. A. L. Smith: Collected Papers, with a Memoir by David Knowles. (Longmans Green & Co.; 8s. 6d.)

One of the symptoms of the managerial age into which we have been plunged is the preoccupation with administration that has gripped the schools of history, and nowhere has it so manifestly become an obsession as in the accounts of monastic estates which diligent students turn out nowadays, accounts in which the ubiquitous bailiff figures just as prominently as God figured in the lives of the monks themselves. Not all students seem to be aware that of equal importance with the ability to distinguish the arable land from the pasture is the ability to see the wood for the trees; few historians have shown the faculty for doing this to such a degree as the late R. A. L. Smith, whose collected papers Longmans have now produced. Only

one of the essays, that on 'The Benedictine contribution to English agriculture', has previously been unpublished, and yet all the essays are worth re-reading if only for the sure touch with which Smith twists together the human motive and the firm continuity of landed life and, above all, for his illustrating that 'assarts' do not 'assart' themselves but are painfully cleared only by human labour and human forethought.

Smith had the happy knack, natural to a broad mind, of throwing light upon wider issues than those which he was dealing with immediately. Those, for instance, who follow Cardinal Gasquet's account of the dissolution of the monasteries are at a loss to understand why there was a dissolution at all; those who follow Coulton and Baskerville must be bewildered to explain why there were any monasteries to dissolve; to those who have read Smith's eminently sane work, 'Canterbury Cathedral Priory', both these facts become intelligible. It is this which marks him as the true historian. Similarly his 'Collected Papers' raise fresh issues, especially for the historian of the Church, which we may humbly regard as his legacy to us, his 'fellow-wights who yet abide'. In the essay devoted to John of Tours, for example, he quotes the reply of the English bishops in 1097 to St Anselm: 'Nos autem impediti consanguineis nostris quos sustentamus, et multiplicibus sæculi rebus quos amamus, fatemur, ad sublimitatem vitæ suæ surgere nequimus, nec huic mundo tecum illudere etc'—one can almost hear the cry of condemnation from the secular historian—'unashamed nepotism!' Anyone who carefully follows John of Tours's life will straightway recognise the injustice of such a cry, yet until there are more people of Smith's insight prepared to see in the work of these 'worldly' bishops a genuine, if inadequate, attempt to realise the Kingdom in their own way, and until such people publish their work, it can occasion no surprise that the history of the Church should be written in terms of nepotism. Even more interesting is a note of Smith's written shortly before his death: 'the line for me therefore is *thought and culture*', because it still remains true that, despite many interesting monographs upon the subject, the culture of 12th-century Europe and, even more, the culture of 12th-century England, has not been sufficiently synthesised for us to see the rich stores upon which the great architects of 13th-century philosophy, art and sanctity were able to draw. Smith had all the qualities needed for such a work.

But when all this has been said of Smith as a historian little enough has been said of what really makes this book such a worthwhile one to possess—that is, the short memoir of the man himself written by Professor Knowles. What an attractive and admirable personality emerges from these pages! His essay on the Church and Social Order had revealed to us how much nearer Catholic ways England had remained in its customs through a persistent attachment to the natural law than many nominally Catholic countries, and now we are able to see how, in his own daily round, Smith brought his Englishry

to fruition in his devotion to the Catholic centre. Thoroughly English yet thoroughly Catholic, he was privileged in his later days to live the little way of humility under the inspiration of St Thérèse, and to wear his learning with that lightness which, we pray, has been his passport to the society of the saints which he so admired on earth.

DONALD NICHOLL

BOOKS RECEIVED

- Arnodo*. P. Lumbieras, O.P.: *De Gratia*, VI, n.p.
Black. R. C. Mortimer: *Elements of Moral Theology*, 10s. 6d.; George Seaver: Albert Schweizer, 18s.
Blackfriars. S. M. Dominic, O.P.: *A Rosary Chain*, 5s. 6d.; E. A. Sideman: *With Fr Vincent at Marble Arch*, 2s.
Blackwell. N. Denholm Young: *Richard of Cornwall*, 15s.
Burns Oates. P. K. Bastable: *Desire for God*, 12s. 6d.; S. Shaw: *Salt of the Earth*, 8s. 6d.; Dyson and Jones: *The Kingdom of Promise*, 6s. 6d.; *The Spear of Gold*, 16s.
Cambridge University Press. F. Brittain: *A. Quiller-Couch*, 15s.
Collins. H. J. Massingham: *The Small Farmer*, 8s. 6d.
Desclée et Brouwer. A. Bea, S.J.: *Le Nouveau Psautier Latin*, fr. 54.
Economie et Humanisme. P. Desroches: *O, Terre, Enfin Libre*, fr. 225; P. Hautmann: *Marx et Proudhon*, fr. 115; L. J. Lebre: *De l'Efficacité politique du Chrétien*, fr. 276; *Propriété et Communautés*, fr. 200.
Editions du Cerf, Blackfriars. Hilaire de Poitiers: *Traité des Mystères*, 10s.
Epworth. W. L. Dougherty: *Studies in Religious Poetry of the 17th Century*, 7s. 6d.
Faber. E. Pfeiffer: *The Earth's Face*, 12s. 6d.
Gollancz. I. F. Mackenzie: *Social Health and Morals*, 7s. 6d.; *Haldane Society Committee: Law Reform Now*, 9d.
Hollis and Carter. Christopher Hollis: *Letters to a Sister*, 8s. 6d.; F. van der Veldt, O.F.M.: *Exploring the Vatican*, 12s. 6d.
Irish Rosary. S. M. Joseph, O.P.: *The Message of Fatima*, 3s.
Kegan Paul. Ann and Julian Green: *Charles Péguy: Men and Saints*, 10s. 6d.
Longmans. Daniel Sargent: *Mitri*, \$3.50.
Mercier. M. Philipson, O.P.: *The Spiritual Doctrine of Sister Elizabeth of the Trinity*, 21s.
Methuen. Evelyn Underhill: *Concerning the Inner Life*, 5s.; A. H. Armstrong: *An Introduction to Ancient Philosophy*, 15s.
Muller. H. N. Wetherhed: *The Four Paths of Pilgrimage*, 10s. 6d.
National Council of Social Service. T. Simey: *Salaries and Conditions of Social Workers*, 2s. 6d.
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Ratazzi. Arthur Ball: *Sea Acres*, 2s. 6d.
S.P.C.K. H. R. T. Brandreth: *Episcopi Vagantes and the Anglican Church*, 6s. 6d.
Sword of the Spirit. *The Catholic Church in Poland*, n.p.

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