

BLACKFRIARS

especially valuable is the sermon on the chair of the Bishop. It is clearly shown that in matters of science as such, bishops and priests are simply members of a republic, with no claim to be heard other than personal capacity and evident achievement. But in matters of doctrine, 'that which has been handed down,' the Bishop by virtue of his office is above all men, and must be heard.

Modern Catholics have problems to face which were hardly alive when Bishop Hedley wrote. Precisely because they provide clear statements of those fundamental truths according to which such problems must be solved, these sermons are of lasting value.

I.C.

DAS ETHOS DER GEGENWART. By Dr Siegfried Behn. (Hainstein, Bonn; Km. 2.50.)

This is a fascinating experiment in constructive Apologetic, a critical study of the Modern Spirit maintained throughout on a strictly philosophical footing. No doubt the author has his own countrymen principally in mind, but if his essay finds less application outside Germany this is perhaps not entirely to the credit of other peoples.

He describes a generation animated by a *Lebensgefühl*, which I can only understand if that word signifies the experience I should call Pride of Life; impatient of academic debates and enthusiastic for only one Ideal—Nobility, as opposed to what is common, mean, petty.

Now Nobility is an ideal that can be exemplified in the elemental affairs of physical life, but its roots are not there; it is only an ideal, only productive of values, when it is related to the needs of the community, and every form of State has tended to produce a noble class with the qualities of Plato's Aristocracy not of Nietzsche's Blond Beast.

Dr Behn has packed his words with meaning, and it is impossible even to indicate the detail of the problems he has broached. He has aimed at exhibiting the good that can be hoped for from a youth inspired with this Platonic ideal, the urgent social and economic problems of to-day requiring all the qualities of the Noble Soul for their successful solution. But he insists also on the limitations of this natural nobility. At a time when Western Civilization is threatened with complete destruction, when prudent calculation is pitifully inadequate let alone instinctive guesswork, the qualities demanded—faith, courage, free obedience to an idea, self-denial—point to the Saint rather than the Noble. The Natural Ethic of Nobility is insufficient.

I have called this a constructive Apologetic. Dr Behn has exhibited the Ethic of Nobility as a healthy stock on to which to

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graft the Ethic of Sanctity; the economic and social aims he indicates as befitting a vigorous and noble nation are those of the *Quadragesimo Anno*—Utopias may be reached under its guidance allowing an intellectual and spiritual development too little desired to-day; and the Authority correlative with noble Freedom is shown to be Godsent.

Q.J.

BENEDICTINE HOURS. Terce, Vespers, Compline. (Ampleforth Abbey, York; 3/-.)

This new Benedictine office book contains the hours named, for Sundays and all feasts of the first or second class. With the exception of the Versicles at Terce, which are omitted altogether, they are given complete in Latin and English. The lay-out of the pages is extremely pleasing, and their appearance is not disfigured, as so often, by the indications for the pointing of the Psalms. For this the 'Universal' system has been adopted (described in *Music and Liturgy*, July 1933), and the rules are given at the end in a convenient folding table of reference.

The most interesting feature of the book, however, is the series of translations of the hymns. Of the forty-three included thirty are believed to be by Dryden, while the remaining thirteen (those of Benedictine and modern feasts) are from the pen of Mr. W. H. Shewring. These compositions of Dryden's here appear for the first time in their liturgical setting; their history is to be read in an article by Mr. Shewring in the *Ampleforth Journal* (Autumn 1933). This writer's own translations give us some happy antitheses and turns of phrase, which are none the worse for adding to the expressed sense of the Latin, and if not in the manner of Dryden as here exemplified, might be taken for samples of that poet's most characteristic style. In illustration of these two points we may cite the second verse of the hymn for the feast of All Monks (p. 221), and the single verse which concludes the Proper (p. 229). An especially striking verse is the following, for the feast of Christ the King:

May those who rule o'er men below	Te nationum praesides
Thee for their greater Sovereign know,	Honore tollant publico,
And human wisdom, arts, and laws	Colant magistri, iudices,
In thee repose as in their cause.	Leges et artes exprimant.

One can hardly ask for better translation or more elegant verse than that, and it is, besides, an epitome of Catholic political doctrine.

We have not the necessary 'book of reference' at hand, but the 'amphisbaena' (p. 222) is, rightly or wrongly, associated firmly in our mind with Mr. Belloc's beasts for bad children. If we are correct in supposing that it features these, and is