

REVIEWS

destiny from which we have neither ability nor right to escape. The 'idealization of the past' is as futile as it is false and cowardly.

The problem of technique is ultimately the problem of its repercussions on the spirit of man. In itself technique is, from this angle, neutral. Its direct attack is, not on the human mind and spirit, but on 'the heart . . . the centre of emotional life . . . which can scarcely bear the contact of cold metal . . . Technique strikes fiercely at humanism, the humanist conception of the world, the humanist ideal of man and culture.' Hence it strikes at human integrity and therefore, indirectly, but no less effectively, at the human spirit itself, the image of God, which it threatens to obliterate.

M. Berdyaev believes, no less than Spengler, in the power of mechanical technique to destroy its creator. Like Spengler again, he considers this to be an imminent menace. But, unlike Spengler, he does not consider it an inevitable fate nor urge us pitifully to stoic inertia and acceptance. On the contrary: 'We cannot admit an autonomous technique with full freedom of action: it *has* to be subordinated to spirit and the spiritual values of life—as everything else has to be. Only upon one condition can the human spirit cope with this tremendous problem: it must not be isolated and dependent only upon itself—it must be united to God. Then only can man preserve the image and likeness of his Maker and be himself preserved.'

This new problem which faces man in his perennial struggle for self-liberation and assertion demands new methods and a new approach. On the Christian, in particular, it makes imperious demands of courageous thought and action, of both of which M. Berdyaev gives our age a striking example. 'The way of man's final liberation and realization of his vocation is the way to the kingdom of God, which is not only that of Heaven but also that of the transfigured earth, the transfigured cosmos.'

VICTOR WHITE, O. P.

DIE DEUTSCHE KOLONIALPOLITIK UND DAS ZENTRUM, 1884-1914.
von Dr. Hans Dehl, unter Benützung von Akten des Reichsarchivs und Kolonialamtes. (Limburger-Vereins Druckerei).

An important contribution to a little-known chapter of colonial history and to the part played by the Catholic Party in the Reichstag, the so called 'Centre.'

For one thing this careful little study proves conclusively the mass of corruption, oppression and misarrangement, which seem inseparable from the beginning of any colonial venture: for another, that it was only the democratic method of bring-

BLACKFRIARS

ing to the light and ventilating these abuses and atrocities in Parliament, that led to a complete cleansing of what at the time had become a veritable Augean stable.

Up to the time of this vehement parliamentary campaign, undertaken by the Centrist deputy Erzberger in 1905, the Centre party had on the whole supported Government in its colonial adventures : half-heartedly and with many reserves, but still it had supported them, when it came to the point ; and it had done so, because it had pursued a strictly limited ecclesiastical policy, and had chattered its parliamentary support for governmental concessions regarding the status of Catholic missionaries in the said Colonies and, obliquely, for a revocation of Catholic disabilities at home.

Erzberger's onslaught on general lines changed all that : it turned the Centre into an Opposition Party, it prepared its co-operation with the Socialists, which found its fulfilment in the Republic, and it led to a splitting off of a Right Wing in the party itself under Spahn—a tendency, of which to-day the figure of Franz von Papen is representative. Plucky Erzberger, whose action led to a complete regeneration of the German Colonial Service, was of course the *bête noire* of all the super-patriots of the time ; and eventually in 1921 he died, murdered by two nationalist fanatics.

H. C. E. ZACHARIAS.

NOTICES

THE WAYSIDE. A Priest's Gleanings. By Vincent McNabb, O.P. *New Edition.* (Burns, Oates ; 3/6.)

Father McNabb has the heart and pen of a poet, and many of these priestly gleanings are poems in prose. But they are not just word-paintings ; like all true poems, they are big with truth and understanding, alive with vision. The present edition is a reprint of an earlier work, first published in 1915, one of several others by the same author that we would gladly see given a second time to the world in its present hour of need. There is not, as the author himself admits, any obvious intellectual or logical unity in this collection of gems, yet it shows a more important unity of principle and motive. ' Its standard and measure of everything from primordial ooze to the mind of man is " THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH." It finds in the Incarnation the key to history, psychology, political economy, literature, art.' Using this key to unlock for himself new visions, the author shows us Rome of the Pagans and Rome of the Christians in a fresh and vivid light ; an essay on Candlesticks reveals to us ' God the Theologian ' ; while we wait with this restless mind for the arrival of an early cross-Channel flyer, we