

Book Reviews

faculty, as such, has little or nothing to do,' might prove misleading and should be read with what is said of the act of faith on p. 229. It is accepted (pp. 120, 146) that the Apocalypse was written at about A.D. 95; but we are also told (p. 144) that 'we may be sure that the book was written by St. John somewhere about twenty years before he wrote his Gospel and Epistles,' which seems to give a very late date for them. Finally 'not' has been omitted from the quotation in line 1 of p. 23. The book is clearly printed and the price is very reasonable. We wish it had allowed a more attractive binding.

A.E.H.S.

BROADCAST MINDS. By Ronald A. Knox. (Sheed & Ward; pp. 275; 7/6.)

Father Knox, in his latest diatribe against the press-mindedness of our intellectuals, has administered an ever sharper rap over the knuckles than usual. In *Caliban in Grub Street* he proved that our little specialists did not really believe in what they said; in *Broadcast Minds* he is afraid that they do; and for the sake of their souls he proves them wrong. He has an answer for all their panaceas—from Lord Russell's 'How to cure the Blues' to Mr. Heard's 'Let's play hide and seek with History.' 'Off with his head,' roared the Queen; Father Knox is not satisfied until he has knocked the head through the hoop with a croquet-mallet made from the rest of the victim's body. And this game is naturally entertaining for everybody except the mallets. Mr. Mencken, the American humorist, perhaps comes off worst; Father Knox disarmingly congratulates him on his exquisite wit, and proceeds to explain the more humorous passages for the benefit of those readers who might have been led to take them seriously. 'Poor Pagliacci, has not a clown a soul as well as other men?' Professor Huxley is treated courteously but firmly; Mr. Davies is trampled upon for dealing the death-blow to Aristotelian ethics, without showing any signs of having consulted them. Perhaps the best thing in the book is the *reductio* of Professor Huxley's Nicene Creed to the delightful *absurdum*, 'I believe in three Persons—and no God.'

Mr. Gerald Heard in a recent newspaper article makes the illuminating statement: 'Before psychology was discovered, man relied wholly upon reason.' I presume that Mr. Heard means 'psycho-analysis,' for a knowledge of psychology is, and always has been, one of the most important attributes of a Catholic priest. It is perhaps a pity to be forced to jilt our

Blackfriars

Reason and court the ultra-modern Muse of delightful Speculation, but meanwhile let us thank our stars that Father Knox is at hand to remind us of our old allegiance.

S.G.U.

CRUMPLIN'. By Mary Sturge Gretton (Mrs. R. H. Gretton, J.P., B.Litt., Oxon). (Ernest Benn, Ltd.; 7/6.)

The fascination that the end of the fifteenth century presents to the historical novelist is the thoroughly romantic fascination of a period of lost causes.

' . . . The straining game
Of striving well to hold up things that fall '

—a game immortalized by William Morris in *Sir Peter Harpdon's End*—monopolizes not only Red Rose and White Rose but the very civilization in which both roses burgeon. And the approaching submersion of the largely decayed faith and almost wholly decayed chivalry of the Middle Ages, the rapid approach of the flourishing era of sophists, economists and calculators initiated by the Tudors, has inspired Scott, Lytton, Miss Yonge and Father Benson with some of their most characteristic work. The historical novel is nowadays a more exacting feat, fuller knowledge and a greater degree of sophistication having to a certain extent stifled artistic liberty; and that is why Mrs. R. H. Gretton is to be congratulated on having invented a new technique, which incorporates fragment on glittering fragment of historical certitude and speculation with the cumulative effect of a fine mosaic.

Drawing on an unrivalled knowledge of that Cotswold history and tradition which centre round the Burford of the fifteenth-century wool-staplers, Mrs. Gretton has discovered (it jumps to the eye, of course) that, after the battles of Bosworth and Stoke, the Burford merchants were heaven-sent agents between the defeated Yorkist party in Oxfordshire and their exiles and sympathisers in Bruges. Lord Lovel, the escaped adherent of King Richard, has the name of haunting his manor of Minster Lovel on the Windrush. Tradition says he died in the secret room there. But here he is depicted exiled in Bruges, where Margaret of York, Duchess Dowager of Burgundy, kept up the Yorkist end and furnished the sinews of war for 'Perkin Warbeck' who was (or was not?) the younger of the 'Princes in the Tower.' It was with the Yorkists and their hopes, and these hopes as making perturbing music on the tranquil strings of 15th century Cotswold life, that Mrs. Gretton is deftly and beautifully