

REVIEWS

dence by his recognition of the special conditions and needs of the present time, so different from those of the Middle Ages. Catholic critics of our social and political life, recognizing that the principles of reform remain the same, are especially apt to overlook the nature of the material of their art, but M. Maritain is far from doing this. He does not forget the loss of the unity of faith and the difficulties that oppose its restoration; the contrast, which the Reformers and all sorts of modern Manichees have made to appear a contradiction between Nature and Grace, the Temporal and the Spiritual; the feeling of despair which is apt to attack Christians when they discover that politics is a dirty game and begin to suspect that success can only be bought at the cost of soiling oneself. For these last he has both counsel and a message of hope, based on a clear insight into the supremacy of spiritual means over temporal ones, of the humble things of this world over the great, and into the importance of getting behind labels and words to being and action. He shows us the possibility of a new technique of revolution and social reconstruction, on the lines of Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagraha (Truth-force, Love-force or Soul-force). It will be a thousand pities if M. Maritain should here cry only in the wilderness he anticipates. There are now so many men of good will who cannot see the wood for the trees that one hopes it may not be so. The reader should remember that although the actual outline of the personalist, communal, authoritative constitution is but admittedly tentative, the principles there exemplified and the method by which they may be brought into acceptance and operation are of far wider application.

H. C. THOMAS.

FASCISM—MAKE OR BREAK? By R. Braun. Translated by Michael Davidson. (Martin Laurence; 2/6.)

A disappointing book, even when allowances are made for the difficulties of translation. How disappointing it is may be seen when it is compared with such a masterpiece of analysis as Lenin's *Imperialism* or even with Dutt's by no means negligible study of Fascism which is advertized on the wrapper and which was so studiously boycotted by the general run of political and literary weeklies.

That the effective power behind Hitler is that of German Finance—Capital—heavily buttressed, incidently, by the Bank of England—has been obvious from the beginning, and was to be expected by any Catholic who had studied *Quadragesimo Anno*, particularly that classic analysis of the modern economic regime which is contained in §§ 100-109 in the English translation published by the Catholic Social Guild in 1934.

Certain important points emerge from a study of the Nazi

regime. The discordant elements which go to make up the Nazi Party are, nearly all, radically opposed in theory to the domination of usury. The party itself is an amalgam of all the varied forces of revolt, mainly justified, in modern Germany. Hence its appeal, hence also—since it is an amalgam—its violence and its apparent irrationality. While all these discordant elements are in revolt against the liberal ideology and its accompanying economic exploitation, the philosophic basis of the revolt is insufficient. For while a policy of revolt against a dominant mood is sufficient to produce a revolution, it is insufficient to produce a new social order. This lack of a really effective philosophic basis explains two curious facts—the domination of the movement by finance *in practice* and the absorption of Socialists and Communists into the Nazi ranks—which is generally admitted. The distinction between two rival brands of totalitarian statolatry is, in practice, difficult for the masses. Incidentally, the Nazi agrarian policy is by no means the fiasco which the author suggests.

T. CHARLES-EDWARDS.

PHILOSOPHY

ETUDES SUR PASCAL : DE L'AUTOMATISME A LA FOI. By Georges Desgrippes. (Paris: Téqui. 14 frs.)

This is primarily an analysis of the doctrine of Pascal concerning the process of conversion—a design which leaves little room for originality, but supplies many opportunities for distortions and blunders of all kinds. “Nos instruments sont trop mousses” On pp. 53 and 81, for example, there are sentences which look as though Desgrippes has overlooked one meaning of the word “coeur” in Pascal’s vocabulary—a purely intellectual faculty, “le coeur sent qu’il y a 3 dimensions dans l’espace”; and it may be thought that Pascal’s reiterated and eloquent denial of the possibility of learning the Existence of God by reason has not received, in the fourth *Etude*, all the attention which the structural importance of this denial in the *Argument du Pari* demands for it. On the other hand, the whole theory of “l’automate,” as invented by Descartes and illustrated in the *Pensées*, is analyzed with excellent lucidity: this part of the book is perhaps the best work that has been done on the subject.

But there is discussion here, as well as analysis. The degree and manner in which Nature and Grace are inter-related in the life of man were matters upon which Pascal professed interesting opinions. He recognized a Christian ethos, which could be separated both in theory and in practice from Christian belief. He recommended the imitation of specifically Catholic behaviour