

Blackfriars

religious idea in the history of the Religious Orders has followed a progressive evolution which has not required the old to die in order to give place to the new. The golden epistle, the product of monasticism, is a fit guide for friars and other religious, who are but monks turned apostles, and we may add for all faithful folk who range themselves under this banner or that or none at all if they will, yet truly claim to be children of the Church which is immeasurably greater than all its parts.

The translator's work has been done with distinction. The English runs easily and naturally with no after-flavour of the Latin. The editor's notes and preliminary essay bear those marks of scholarly care which we expect from an acknowledged authority on the spiritual literature of the past.

B.D.

THE CATHOLIC DIRECTORY, 1931. (Burns, Oates and Washbourne; 3/6.)

There are some books which from their very nature will circulate without any artificial stimulus from reviewers. Breviaries, Prayer-books, Hymn-books, and Bradshaws, like tools, furniture and clothing, will inevitably be bought by those people who need them perhaps more than they want them. Among the Breviaries and Prayer-books there is, of course, a certain range of choice, and the buyer might be advised to select this one or that from the different styles offered; but *The Catholic Directory* has no rival, and the reviewer has but to say, Here it is. It still remains an indispensable guide for anyone needing information about the institutions, activities and personnel of the Catholic Church in England, Scotland and Wales. Its general accuracy is creditable to the painstaking industry of its compilers. The general statistics at the end are always of immense interest. To those who wish to compare this year's figures with last year's, it would be a help if the two tables were printed facing one another. This is not a serious criticism, but only an aside which we hope the editors may overhear.

THE CATHOLIC WHO'S WHO, 1931. (Burns, Oates and Washbourne; 5/-.)

Star differeth from star in *The Catholic Who's Who*. With diverse claims to distinction the three or four thousand people whose embryonic biographies are collected within these dark-blue covers, are all at one in professing the Catholic faith. Alfred Noyes in his Preface describes the book as 'a muster-

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roll of men and women who, whether you agree with them or not, have definite opinions on the meaning and purpose of life, . . . no one here will advocate compulsory lethal chambers for the old, facilities for suicide, polygamy, or even that "removal of the nots from the Commandments" which commanded so much applause for its "courage" from the Press a few months ago.' And the same writer reminds these worthies of their responsibilities, and he suggests that the intellectual and spiritual future of England depends very much upon the use that is made of their opportunities by the men and women whose names appear in these pages.

THE DEATH OF ENGLAND. By Egerton Clarke. (London: Cecil Palmer; 3/6 net.)

A few years ago I read with admiration *The Death of Glass*, a volume of poems by Mr. Egerton Clarke. *The Death of England*, apart from the title poem itself, wins my prompt approbation. There are no more than thirty poems in this book but they cover a wide field of observation and experiment.

In fact, observation is the author's strong point; and, if one of the duties of a poet is to delineate the things of every day we commoner mortals miss, then Mr. Egerton Clarke at once puts us under a debt of gratitude. For he discovers for us poems in such diverse things as five-barred gates and freshly-made beds.

The bed is made : white Tidiness
Resumes her sleep
And, all day long, till we undress,
Will tidy keep—
What are the dreams of Tidiness?
She says no prayers
Before she lays her gentleness
All day, upstairs.

But that is only one of the poet's whims, showing that nothing is too small for his notice.

His power of expression is equal to his vision. With an ease that might deceive even the elect he avoids the obvious in word and phrase. His images are always unexpected, satisfying, and he can paint a complete picture in a couple of lines. The shorter poems, as is so often the case with modern poets, show him to better advantage than his longer efforts.

There is a subtle flavour about the poem under the title 'Ah, qu'elle est belle, la Marguerite' that makes it different from everything else in the book.

E.E.