

This dream, of a Christian-Mongol alliance to destroy the power of Islam, crops up again and again in both books. The mutual embassies from Pope and King to the Khans entertained it; Louis IX is receiving Tartar envoys on the same theme while on his Crusade; and a King of Armenia had made himself intermediary. Mr Dawson's introductory chapter carries the history of this dream to the point at which, towards the end of the century, Edward I of England is the only Western leader in whom the dynamism survives to go on hoping for it. And even he is distracted away by the 'domestic' feuds that were then weakening Christendom, to its own disedification and the glee of its enemies.

A. C. F. BEALES

THE COUNTRY YEAR. By Jorian Jenks (S.P.C.K.; 3s. 6d.)

Mr Jorian Jenks, well known to readers of *The Tablet* and to all interested in country things as Editor of *Mother Earth* and *Rural Economy*, has written the letterpress of this little book beautifully illustrated with photographs of the English rural scene. Coming from an Anglican, it must make many Catholics envious. For though we share with the Church of England the sad fate that most of our people have been urbanized for so many generations that they have lost all touch with natural things, yet the English Church has still a strong background of simple rural life for millions of its members, while we have scarcely any.

Plough Sunday through Lent to Mothering Sunday and Lady Day, Easter, May Day, Rogation Sunday, when God's blessing is asked for crops, St John's Eve (when the calves that had been put to graze down the young wheat must be turned out on the leys, as the leases granted by the old Abbeys dictated) through High Summer to Harvest Thanksgiving, and Michaelmas, when contracts terminate, to the Christmas festivals that mark a time of ease and rejoicing for farmer and helpers, 'the Real and the Ideal are inextricably blended in a natural catholicism of faith'.

The author has no silly nostalgia for a rural Merry England that has been destroyed and will probably never be restored. Mr Jorian Jenks, without drawing a top-line salary in high places, is one of our soundest agronomists: that is to say he knows the countryman and he knows economics. The solutions he offers to remedy the divorce of men and women from elemental things are hinted at in this booklet and may be found *in extenso* in his other writings, notably in *Feeding the Fifty Million*, report of the Rural Reconstruction Committee, under his editorship (Hollis and Carter). To check the drift from country to town, and even to reverse it, he has suggested better rural housing and amenities, encouragement to smallholders, a new system of taxation

for the farmer, and, *pace* Mr Colin Clark, stabilization of prices for the producer of the food stuffs this country needs and is able, in great proportion, to grow for itself.

A good deal depends on a new outlook, away from the meretricious attraction of 'spending-money', cinemas and dance halls, back to a more sound and healthy way of life. It is one of our Catholic tragedies that our immigrant and settled Irish, peasants often by tradition, could scarcely care less about the land. While many others spend their spare time on allotments, few of our town Catholics are found to do so. Possibly centuries of repression and rack-renting have made them sick of the land and its labours. This book, if only they would read it, is calculated to make some of them change their minds.

DR A. G. BADENOCH

THE MYTH OF THE ETERNAL RETURN. By Mircea Éliade. (Routledge and Kegan Paul; 18s.)

SPIRIT AND NATURE. Papers from the Eranos Year Books. Edited by Joseph Campbell. (Routledge and Kegan Paul; 35s.)

It is curious how often fresh fields of study are opened up in which it is prophesied that Christianity will sink to destruction, and then it is discovered that those very fields provide a rich harvest for Christians. Comparative religion, in the days of Frazer, was thought to be a threat to Christian claims. In the age of Éliade comparative religion is found to be a boon to Christians, not only in apologetics but in the more important matter of enabling them to appreciate and live their own faith more profoundly. This should certainly be the case with the first of Éliade's books translated into English.

The myth of the eternal return is shown to be the means by which archaic man protects himself from the 'terror of history', a terror to which modern non-Christians are increasingly exposed, and which drives them in increasing numbers to despair. It is from the contrast between these two responses to the 'terror of history' that the uniqueness and originality of the Christian's response springs to light. Seen in this light the Christian faith is displayed as a great adventure in freedom, a source of power and exhilaration. I cannot imagine any educated Christian who would not grasp the implications of his faith more firmly through studying this fine work of Éliade's.

I wish I could speak with equal warmth of the Eranos volume as a whole, but I cannot do so; for although the individual contributions are, for the most part, excellent, they do not constitute that 'Shared Feast' which the Editor claims them to be. This is not surprising, since the meanings attributed to 'spirit' are so various—I am by no