

'diplomatic' history of the Patriarchate of Constantinople—its relations with the Moslem authorities and its negotiations with Christians in the west. He is also excellent on the intellectual background and the state of learning in the Church. By comparison he has far less to say about popular piety and the religious life of the Greek people as a whole—about such matters as conditions in ordinary monasteries and parishes, the daily relations between Christians and Moslems, or the frequency of apostasy to Islam. As a result of these omissions his narrative, for all its brilliance, possesses a somewhat formal and even external character. But when he has offered us so much, it is certainly ungracious to ask for more.

*The Great Church in Captivity* ends by describing the position immediately before the Greek war of independence. It was not a situation which boded well for the future of the Greek Church. The Church, it is true, occupied a central place in the national life, for it was the Church which had enabled the Greek people to endure as a distinctive unit through four centuries of alien rule. Yet the men who planned the rising of 1821 tended to despise the Church as backward and obscurantist, and they looked for guidance to secular and humanistic movements in the west, such as the French revolution. Evidently matters were not going to prove simple for traditionalist Orthodox in the restored Greek kingdom.

Professor Frazee, in his fascinating analysis of Church-state relations during the first thirty years of Greek independence, depicts these emerging difficulties with a painful clarity. King Otho's Bavarian advisers, in particular von Maurer, imposed an Erastian system whereby the Church was treated virtually as a department of the civil service. The conservative party in the Greek Church, along with the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, protested vehemently against these arrangements, but with very little success. This unresolved tension between Church and state has continued in modern Greece up to the present time: Professor Frazee's book has thus a sharp contemporary relevance and will help the western observer to appreciate many

developments in Greek Church life since the colonels' *coup* in April 1967.

*The Great Church in Captivity* is written with all the stylistic elegance and narrative skill that we have come to expect from Sir Steven Runciman. Professor Frazee is dealing with a more restricted topic—Church-state relations—and with a much briefer span of time; his book, in consequence, is more heavily loaded with detail than Sir Steven's and makes heavier demands on the concentration of the reader. Yet he also has told his story well. Both books are provided with copious footnotes, of great value to the specialist; and both contain admirable bibliographies, although Professor Frazee has made fuller use of modern Greek works.

When these two books are set side by side, there emerges from them a somewhat unexpected moral. *The Great Church in Captivity* shows a Christian community outwardly in a state of grave decadence, with startling corruption and dishonesty in the upper hierarchy of the Church, and narrow ignorance among the lower clergy. Yet despite all this, and despite the demoralizing status of social inferiority which the Christian *rayah* endured under the Turks, the Church survived and retained the loyalty of the people. Simple men and women preserved a persistent confidence in the promises of the Gospel. This stable perseverance of Orthodoxy under Islam, while externally unheroic, is in reality one of the most remarkable chapters in the history of Christendom. In *The Orthodox Church and Independent Greece*, by contrast, we see the same Church, now no longer under infidel oppression but in a position of apparent privilege. Yet paradoxically the result is not religious revival but rather a progressive decline. As each decade passes in the new Greek kingdom, the influence of the Church diminishes; and it fails signally to offer that spiritual leadership which it had provided in less prosperous days.

It is an interesting cautionary tale. As Origen remarked, times of peace are favourable to Satan rather than to Christ.

KALLISTOS TIMOTHY WARE

**CELTIC NATIONALISM**, by Owen Dudley Edwards, Gwynfor Evans, Ioan Rhys and Hugh MacDiarmid. *Routledge & Kegan Paul*, London, 1968. 358 pp. 45s.

Irish, Welsh and Scottish nationalism are not new to us. The publishers of this volume are chiefly to be congratulated on their attempt to present a picture of a nationalism not merely

'regional' but Celtic. The assumption is that the Celtic peoples in these islands have more in common than a common heritage of suffering at the hands of the English; the theme is

what Hugh MacDiarmid has called elsewhere 'the ancient dark-red flame'. 'Yet today we laugh gaily and show our healthy red tongues,/ Red flags to John Bull—the Celtic colour flaunting again. . . .' The question to be asked is how far the book succeeds in this purpose and offers more than just three unrelated essays.

At first glance the contributions are ill-assorted: there are 202 pages on Ireland, 84 on Wales and 57 on Scotland. Owen Dudley Edwards, most of whose working life as a university teacher has been spent outside Ireland, writes what he would like the reader to regard as 'a conversation with a working historian'. It is an interesting and scholarly conversation, lightened by wit, but there is reason for regret that, although Plaid Cymru and the Scottish National Party must have much to learn from Irishmen, he deliberately avoids comments on how things have been since the treaty of 1921. Beginning almost where the essay on Ireland leaves off, Hugh MacDiarmid, a practising poet, veteran patriot and member of the Communist party says less than he might of Scottish history before the nationalist movement which had its origins in the 1920s and in which he himself has played so great a part. Perhaps it is because the essay on Wales has two authors, who can bring both parliamentary experience and historical scholarship to bear on their subject, that it is, in scope, the most successful in the book. Gwynfor Evans, M.P., and Ioan Rhys describe with precision the origins and history of the nation as well as the present political scene.

What gives this collection coherence is that all the contributors write as men conscious of belonging to a race and a tradition which extends beyond the boundaries of their own countries. Indeed all are ready to discuss the philosophy of nationalism itself. Hugh MacDiarmid describes Celtic nationalism as a phenomenon which exists alike in Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Brittany, Cornwall and the Isle of Man, the countries in fact where either the Brittonic or Goidelic languages are spoken, or have been spoken in comparatively modern times.

There is the common language, there is in common the passionate intellectualism of the old bardic schools (how different, as Hugh MacDiarmid points out, is the 'authentic classical Celtic genius' from the misapprehensions of the 'Celtic Twilight'), and there is also a common Christianity, a distinctly Celtic

Christianity on which, through the accidents of history and geography, the influence of Rome was late and uncertain. The Welsh contributors quite properly stress that 'the idea of Welsh nationality has from the very beginning been bound up with Christianity'. It was Tertullian who remarked, '. . . *Britannorum inaccessa Romanis loca, Christo vero subdita . . .*', and in this book Owen Dudley Edwards concludes a dry and complicated, very Celtic joke thus: 'But all this proves is that the Pope is a Protestant, which has been suspected in Ireland for quite some time. The Irish have always been Catholics, however disgruntled they may have become from time to time over Rome's heretical tendencies.' When St Augustine founded his See at Canterbury, the tradition of the disciples of St Martin of Tours was unbroken in Wales, Scotland and Ireland, and the eremitical and peregrinatory character of Irish monasticism already founded. The common view of the matter is that the Roman Church triumphed over the Celtic in 663, but we find here that Wales probably remained officially independent of Rome until 768. The Celtic spirit and even practice can in fact be found at a much later date. We read in Turgot's life of St Margaret: '. . . *in aliquibus locis Scottorum quidam fuerant, qui contra totius Ecclesiae consuetudinem, nescio quo ritu barbaro, missas celebrare consueverant.*' And in Ireland the supremacy of Rome was accepted less willingly after the Synod of Whitby than after the Council of Trent; at the Reformation Rome seemed at last, if only seemed, to be on the side of the Irish Catholics.

More recently, religious movements, from the Cornish Pilgrimage of Grace to the Disruption in the Church of Scotland, have frequently been concerned to resist foreign interference, whether from English Churchmen or from the British Government. In fervent religion, the Celtic spirit is Bishop Colman's still: 'We dare not change it, for our fathers' sake, nor do we wish to do so.'

It is true that since the Reformation varieties of worship in the Celtic countries have been as disparate as anywhere: the heritage of the Celtic saints has passed to seemingly divided heirs. But differences in spirit may be slighter than they appear. It has been remarked that Irish Catholicism has more in common with Scots Presbyterianism than with the Catholicism of Spain or Italy, and it is at least arguable that the religion of *la petite Bretagne* occupies the same place in regard to French Catholicism

as Welsh religion does to English Nonconformism. Owen Dudley Edwards sets the prevailing temperament within its historical context: 'That Jansenism and Gallicanism may have played their part in shaping the harshness and isolation of Irish Catholicism today is a reasonable thesis; but both qualities had been present in Irish Catholicism for a thousand years before Jansenism and Gallicanism existed.'

This will be a valuable text-book for the converted and the student, and may serve also as a manifesto to those whose minds are open to conviction. Criticisms which may be made are that an index would have been a great help, and that Owen Dudley Edwards and Hugh MacDiarmid might usefully, like the Welsh writers, have appended a short book list.

RUTH MCQUILLAN.

**SELECTED POEMS**, by Yves Bonnefoy, translated by Anthony Rudolf. *Jonathan Cape*, London, 1969. 127 pp. 21s. and 7s. 6d.

There are philosophers who take death seriously. Heidegger is one of the most striking, Heidegger, for whom we exist towards death, we are Being-towards-Death: our life-curve is an elaborate high-dive with somersaults into death. Death watches us, waits, ultimate condition by which all our works are judged.

But there are philosophers who observe a thousand different kinds of mental and spiritual death around them every day of their lives. For them, death is not so much something towards which we are tending as something in which we are already sunk. Such a philosopher is the poet Yves Bonnefoy, whose *Selected Poems* add their sombre weight to the enterprising collection of small brightly-coloured editions from Jonathan Cape. Beautifully and sensitively translated by Anthony Rudolf, who won for this translation a special Scott-Moncrieff citation, these poems operate within technical bounds so limited as to be austere. The poems build up a dead, a still and silent world, a world of stone. This world is the poet's, he who experiences the world as death and as various kinds of immobility.

Indeed, the opposition of immobility and movement is so important to Bonnefoy that he incorporates it into the title of the volume of poems with which he made his poetical debut in 1953, *Du mouvement et de l'immobilité de Douve*. Versed in existentialist lore, a disciple both of Hegel and of Kierkegaard, a student of the dialectic of the spiritual life in its alternate phases of experience and comprehension, Bonnefoy takes as his problem the problem which absorbed the ancient Greeks, the problem of the flux which moves so fast that it appears to be motionless.

Bonnefoy regards all as dead in this flux which moves faster than sight or intuition can follow it. All the poet can do is to open up for us the sense of the presence of death within life, of death's moulding and creative power. Indeed, a citation from Hegel at the beginning

of the volume shows us how earnest is his belief.

Who, then, is Douve? A beautiful and evocative name. Amongst other things, Douve (one dare not suggest a sex) is *le verbe*, the Word. Bonnefoy's concern, like Eliot's, is with 'the dialect of the tribe', and he too meets 'a compound and familiar ghost' in Douve. Douve is the possibility of getting something said, of *naming*:

Douve, I speak in you; and I embrace you

In the act of knowing and of naming. (p. 25.)

Very often it seems as if Douve is failing him, has failed him, will fail him again (*Douve speaks* III, p. 28). What poet has not complained about the crude technical means of language and rhyme open to him? Yet *naming* is something that Douve can do well. One thinks of those beautiful lines from Rilke's ninth *Duino Elegy*:

... Are we, perhaps, *here* just for saying: House, Bridge, Fountain, Gate, Jug, Fruit tree, Window,—

Possibly: Pillar, Tower? . . . but for *saying*, remember,

oh, for such saying as never the things themselves

Hoped so intensely to be.

This *saying* seems to be the central concern of Bonnefoy's naming too. Douve names: desert, absence, night, nothingness and war in *True Name* (p. 22). It is clearly evident in this contrast of the two poets how much Rilke's naming has to do with images of life, how much Bonnefoy's naming is a dialectical appreciation of death in life: but the *lived* experience of death as a reality in the spirit. It is no empty abstraction.

The words *mort*, *morts* resonate through section V of *Threats of the Witness* like a southing wind, like a Dantesque soul in limbo (p. 46). This poem illustrates Bonnefoy's extraordinary technical ability to work with one *rimeriche* throughout four stanzas, giving a more emphatic return to each use. This austerity of