

His amanuenses were aware, I know, of whole tracts of thought stretching out behind the dictated words, and by process of major logic Hugh Kenner has discovered this. Man is a rational animal, says Aristotle. Man is not a reasoning animal, but a seeing animal, says Newman. Hurrah, says Chesterton, and Hear-hear says the present volume. Incidentally many good aphorisms may be noted. What is reasoning, anyhow, but a hop from the self-evident to the less obvious by ladders of analogy?

JOHN O'CONNOR.

SELECTED ESSAYS OF HILAIRE BELLOC. With an introduction by J. B. Morton. (Methuen; 10s. 6d.)

In his introduction to these essays Mr Morton finds their merit to lie in the variety of subjects about which Mr Belloc can write and criticises those who want their favourite authors to do the same thing over and over again. He says Mr Belloc has done so many different things with his pen. True in one sense and yet in another we may say that in these essays he has done one thing only that matters and that is to write English which will be read with joy both by those who are repeating the experience and by those who come to it for the first time. Mr Belloc is read and will be read for the sheer joy of it regardless of the subject on which he writes. It is true that the style as well as the wide variety of themes could come only from a vigorous and well stocked mind, but that we realise only by reflection. It is the writing itself which possesses that quality of fullness which gives such satisfaction to the mind; so often and rightly compared to the pleasure afforded to the body by good wine. It has been said of Mr Belloc that he wrote prose that could and should be spoken. Often the full flavour of his style can only be enjoyed to the full by hearing it. In these days when almost everyone can read it can be forgotten that words are primarily for the ear and not for the eye. There is no one left to listen.

Mr Morton's introduction is itself an admirable piece of work and it is difficult to refrain from quoting from it at length. He is especially good on the elements of lucidity and vitality in Mr Belloc's writing. No doubt it is the sympathy which exists between Beachcomber and Belloc in the mutual 'hatred of pretentiousness hypocrisy and priggishness' and their common desire to use the power of words against these things which make the one write so well concerning the other.

The selection of essays is arbitrary, as by the nature of the case it must be. It is a good one. The juxtaposition of the essay on 'Irony' and that entitled 'Achmet Boulee Bey' is a delightful touch. Still, we miss others, such as 'The Good and the Bad Poet'.

Those of us who recall the joy and satisfaction we had on reading the volumes from which these essays are culled will rejoice for our

own sakes that we are reminded to read them again, and also that the attention of later generations of readers will be called to them by the appearance of the volume in the shops and on the bookstalls.

DAVID DONOHUE, O.P.

POEMS OF GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS. Third Edition revised and enlarged. By W. H. Gardner. (Cumberlege, Oxford University Press; 12s. 6d.)

It is a great pleasure to receive this new edition of Hopkins. It has been revised in the light of the latest chronological research, and there have been added poems in English, Welsh, Latin (these including one in honour of Father Tom Burke, O.P.) and Greek which have not previously been published, or at any rate not in a collected edition; and the print is no longer of the microscopic size which made previous editions so trying to read.

The new editor has added an introduction: a piece of literary criticism which is far less valuable than his scholarly editing. To use the terminology of one art to explain another is always a dangerous expedient; but to speak of a poem of Hopkins as 'a triumph of impressionistic art' seems extraordinarily inexact.

The notes contain much biographical, personal and rhythmic material, and take full advantage of the work that has been done since the last complete edition.

LUKE TURNER, O.P.

NOTES TOWARDS THE DEFINITION OF CULTURE. By T. S. Eliot. (Faber; 10s. 6d.)

In the past six or seven years the word *culture* has grown more and more popular and its place in the journalistic vocabulary is now well established. Mr Eliot's attempt to define the elusive thing for which this word stands is therefore opportune and his precise scholarship is well dedicated to such a task. Culture is an elusive thing because it is not susceptible of definition in one category of life, 'it includes all the characteristic activities and interests of a people'. It is necessarily 'of a people', for the culture of an individual or a class depends upon the culture of society as a whole and this permeates all levels of social life. There is the culture of the cobbler and of the physician; there is the culture of Greece and of Central Africa. Moreover while one may be more primitive or advanced than another it is never possible to say that one is higher than another in the sense that one reaches the 'ideal culture' more nearly than another. We are reminded of St Augustine writing of the Mystical Body, and Mr Eliot would certainly agree with this because he holds that there is a close relation between religion and culture. The word *relation* troubles him. 'The way of looking at culture and religion which I have been trying to adumbrate is so difficult that I am not sure that I grasp it myself except in flashes,