

A HUNDRED HOMELESS YEARS. By Godfrey Anstruther, O.P. (Blackfriars Publications; 22s. 6d.)

In this valuable work Father Anstruther has collected together many interesting facts about the English Dominicans who lived between the years 1558 and 1658, and has added the names of a number of friars hitherto unknown, thereby earning the gratitude not only of his brethren but of all lovers of the Dominican Order. Some readers however may be puzzled by the generous space afforded to the careers of three apostate friars, Alexander Bailey, William Sacheverell and the infamous Thomas Gage, but considering the repentance of the first two, and the alleged penitence of Gage, we can sympathize with the author's desire to leave nothing unwritten that could add to the completeness of his study; and we must admit that he gives pride of place in his history to the story of that most courageous of martyrs, the Venerable Robert Nutter, who before laying down his life in 1600 spent no fewer than fifteen years in prison, being tortured unmercifully for weeks on end in Newgate in 1584. Justice is also done to the holy life and marvellous patience of Father Middleton, for thirty-three years superior of his brethren in England, ruling them for a considerable period from his prison cell. Only by the merest chance was he robbed of the martyr's crown. To obtain some idea of what he and his fellow Dominicans had to suffer it suffices to note that in his index Father Anstruther lists sixty-five references to various periods of imprisonment endured by them before 1658.

That is the closing date of the author's period, but it would have been a welcome gesture to have noted the truly extraordinary sanctity of Father Robert Armstrong, founder of the Hexham mission, who died five years later, whose holiness seems to have been such as one finds in the lives of the canonized. The contemporary obituary notices refer to him as 'Renowned amongst the people for his sanctity, terrible to the demons, he brought back many families from heresy to the Catholic faith'. Fifty years after his death the Catholics in those parts still spoke of his remarkable holiness, as was witnessed by the provincial, Father Thomas Worthington, in 1710.

The book is excellently printed, but it is a pity that the ruins of the old Dominican priory at Rhuddlan pictured on the dust-cover are nowhere named in the volume.

WALTER GUMBLEY, O.P.

THE SPIRITANS. A History of the Congregation of the Holy Ghost. By Henry J. Koren, C.S.SP. (Duquesne University, U.S.A.; Cloth \$6.50, paper \$5.75.)

Once one has recovered from the extreme Americanism of the appearance of this volume, the book itself is admirable. Let him forget

the title of the book, the jacket, even the size (10 x 6 x 1½, pp. xxix and 641), and then will the reader on this side of the Atlantic be able to enjoy the complete story of the Holy Ghost Fathers—*Pères du S. Esprit*—as they are everywhere known in England and France, at least, as well as throughout the West Indies.

This meticulously documented history covers all the ground, describing the work the Congregation has accomplished, not only at home, but also in the colonies, using that term in its broadest sense. 1703, 1792, 1804 are dates to remember, when the Congregation was founded by Father Claude Francis Poullart des Places, when it was practically extinguished, and when it was restored to life. But not till 1848 did it really begin to flourish. That was when the Ven. Francis Libermann together with his followers, of the Holy Heart of Mary Congregation, threw in their lot with it, very much as St Bernard with his friends joined the early Cistercians, becoming their second founder, the title that is actually given to Libermann in the case of the Congregation of the Holy Ghost.

The value of the life and work of this servant of God, convert Alsatian Jew, cannot be overestimated. Among other things, he understood so clearly the difficulties under which ecclesiastically the colonies had been labouring. Local Governments had usurped and were exercising authority that was not theirs: local bishops, i.e. Vicars Apostolic, in some cases were submitting to this; while in other places, for want of bishops, Prefects Apostolic, or even merely Vice-Prefects, were supposed to be in control and yet were able to exercise very little authority indeed.

The Holy Ghost Fathers and Brothers have looked after leprosaria, prisons and houses of correction. They hoped, nevertheless, that one or other or all of these important works would be undertaken later on by other religious orders or institutes, because their great ideal was education, the education especially of the Negroes and of all backward and hitherto abandoned people in the colonies. The Fathers were also called upon to take over the work of training men for the priesthood, and actually still have the direction of certain seminaries. In point of fact, they were never intended to be missionaries pure and simple, for they have always had a mission to fulfil in the Christian countries of Europe and America. It is on record, however, as this history shows, that if there has ever been difficulty in finding subjects for particular work, it has not been for lack of men eager to go out to the distant missions.

In the vast continent of Africa, the mission field proved much too large for the Holy Ghost Fathers alone. Later on, the Society of African Missions in 1862, and in 1878 the White Fathers, were founded, and

went out to help in the work, as other modern Congregations have done in different parts of the world.

Lancastershire, on page 258, is surely only a misprint; but all the way through the bulky volume it is slightly irritating to the English reader, accustomed as he is to hearing of the doings of *Propaganda*, to see that Roman institution always referred to as *the Propaganda*. Such a tiny blemish as this, however, is immediately swamped by the absorbing interest of the book—in all that is given, for example, concerning the Ven. Libermann's spiritual teaching, which was essentially robust and practical; in what is recorded too of the opposition originally to the very idea of local, not to call them native, vocations, as well as of the difficulty experienced in trying to instill into the minds of Catholics belonging to African tribes, or people of African descent, the ideal of Christian marriage.

RAYMUND DEVAS, O.P.

MACHIAVELLI AND THE RENAISSANCE. By Federico Chabod. (Bowes and Bowes; 30s.)

Professor Chabod is one of the most distinguished of Italian historians and this volume contains the translation of four of his essays published between 1924 and 1952.

The essay of widest interest is that on 'The Concept of the Renaissance'. The nineteenth-century belief that there was a Renaissance, which followed abruptly on the Middle Ages and which may be sharply contrasted with it, is becoming very outmoded among professional historians. Those who still cling to it should be delighted with Professor Chabod's vivacious re-statement of their case. Those who, like this reviewer, consider that a Renaissance was a recurrent phase throughout the long history of medieval civilization will feel that Professor Chabod's enthusiasm has tempted him towards special pleading. Few medievalists would agree that in the Middle Ages classical antiquity 'was purely an ornament, a decorative foliage, a stylistic pattern'; from Aristotle to Ovid it had become integral to medieval thought. They will note that 'the excellence of man' was a theme in the twelfth century as well as in the fifteenth, and that the 'delight in living', Professor Chabod's other quattrocento 'novelty', was only a variant of the emphasis on the joys of heightened sensibility common in the 'Spring Songs' and in the 'Romans Courtois'.

The other three essays deal with Machiavelli. Professor Chabod is the Director of the Croce Institute at Naples. It was Croce who first wrote of Machiavelli's 'austere and painful moral awareness'. Those who consider that Machiavelli was frequently Machiavellian and that 'Il Duce' was the embodiment of 'Il Principe' will regret the Crocean