

however, on *Niebla* and the other novels he deals with. One would like to add to Sr Barea's perceptive account that the fundamental characteristic of Unamuno's characters and—perhaps—of Unamuno himself is self-absorption to a point little short of the pathological. This self-absorption is the root-cause of the blockage between Unamuno and Unamuno's fictional characters, and the Ultimate Reality which he and they yet seek so desperately. This is as clear in *Niebla* as in *Nada menos que todo un hombre*, which is a tragedy of two people, each absorbed in their self-love, rather than a tragedy of rationality, just as Joaquín's real sin (*Abel Sánchez*) was not that he did not love his wife, but that he loved only himself, and from that sprang the envy (no form of which, surely, can be noble) of which that novel is such a penetrating study.

Sr Barea is most interesting on *San Manuel Bueno*, Unamuno's dream of the secret unbelief of a priest who is a saint and of one, if not two, of his flock who come near him in goodness. This is a novel which must be approached only with the utmost charity: whatever Unamuno meant by it, it revealed a nostalgia for a state of religious reality which he deemed unattainable, but the very longing makes one ask whether it was not that Unamuno's own faith was not dissolved but deeply overlaid.

Sr Barea's views on Unamuno are more taken up with the weaker side of that great writer. Of his 'courage and integrity' there can, of course, be no doubt, but that he is 'a thinker who teaches how to turn conflict, contradiction and despair into a source of strength' can hardly be maintained. Unamuno could not really face death, and, as a spiritual influence, is weak and ineffectual. One regrets that, of set purpose, Sr Barea says nothing of his true worth for us, which is the fierce light and force with which he manipulated the ideas of being, life, reason, truth, reality and anguish, all the background of the work and outlook of a much subtler philosopher—of Ortega and of his school, none of whom, however—García Morente, Zubiri, Marías—plumb the poetic depths in which Miguel de Unamuno lived and groped—*que Dios haya*.

EDWARD SARMIENTO

THE LITTLE WORLD OF MAN. By J. B. Bamborough (Longmans; 20s.)

Since the appearance of Hardin Craig's *The Enchanted Glass* in 1936, there has been an increasing stream of books on the world-view of the Elizabethans. To single out only two, Theodore Spencer's *Shakespeare and the Nature of Man* and E. M. W. Tillyard's *The Elizabethan World-Picture* illustrate how in the last twenty years we have become aware of pre-Cartesian scientific and psychological beliefs, not in the merely piecemeal fashion which is applicable to the elucidation of texts, but as contributing to a total view of man and the universe very different from the mechanistic view of the post-Newtonian age.

It is natural for the reader to approach any new study in this field with

a double anxiety: lest the same well-worn track of exposition concerning hierarchy, order and so on, should simply be retraced, and lest that 'ideological' barrier, which some studies of this type erect between Shakespeare's mind and our own, should be strengthened.

It is the greatest compliment we can pay to Mr Bamborough's book to say that both these anxieties are soon removed. In the compass of a short book he has given a sober and judicious account of the ideas of the old psychology and their repercussions on the practical study of character as reflected in literature. His purely descriptive aim enables him to be more detailed than many previous investigators. Thus he takes stock of ticklish points like the confusion of the humours (choler with melancholy) and the operation of the bodily 'spirits'. Much room is given to illustrative quotations from a wide range of authorities, with a nice balance between literary references and medical text-books. Mr Bamborough has avoided the temptation to draw excessively on one or two rich sources like Burton and La Primaudaye, and the result is a truly representative account.

Finally, the author has carried out in a commonsense way his secondary object, 'to illustrate Shakespeare's characters by reference to contemporary psychology'. Few will quarrel with his general conclusion (pp. 147-8) that though Shakespeare did not 'read up' Bright and Du Laurens before writing *Hamlet*, he did take a general interest in the thought of his day.

ROGER SHARROCK

THE ITALIAN PAINTERS OF THE RENAISSANCE. By Bernard Berenson. (Phaidon Press; 30s.)

Fifty years have passed since the original publication of Bernard Berenson's four essays on the major painters of Venice, Florence, Central and Northern Italy. They now appear in an edition prepared in collaboration with the Samuel H. Kress Foundation as a tribute to the doyen of the historian of art; whose influence has done so much to determine the taste of his period. (It has done much, too, to enrich the immense American collections of Italian painting, and a recent biography of Lord Duveen reveals Mr Berenson as the highly-paid arbiter of authenticity, without whose aid the fantastic operations of the art dealers could hardly have been possible.)

It is scarcely necessary to recall the quality of Mr Berenson's criticism: his assured and eloquent judgments, his consistent application of a few sound principles (the famous 'tactile values' being a recurring theme), his slight condescension in assigning degrees of merit. His field is almost wholly religious in inspiration, but there is little to suggest the central Christian mystery these pictures were for the most part intended to serve. The setting is described with meticulous care, there is discerning evaluation of space-composition and movement. But there is not much evidence of an understanding from within, as it were: the painting is the sum of