

REVIEWS

He insists that art is a creative activity, and in so doing contrasts his opinion with that of Schopenhauer and Bergson. The point he makes is important, but the contrast is unnecessary and possibly unjust, since they are not talking of the same thing, at least not in the same language. The "donnés immediates" and the "direct vision" of Bergson do not necessarily exclude from artistic production the idea of creation. It is, however, his anxiety to speak of art in terms of creation that reveals his dissatisfaction with the escapism of purely idealistic conceptions and manifests the desire for his thought to be real and to be governed by experience. This realism shows itself frequently throughout the book. On page 178 he adequately distinguishes between rational and intuitive knowledge: page 186, the True suddenly becomes for him objective and a transcendental, and he distinguishes between logical and ontological truth, etc., all of which notions are beyond his original terms of reference.

It is, however, difficult to see what permanent purpose the book will serve. It will be clear from what has been said that under the surface at least, it is confused and inconsistent. The uninformed enquirer will find it difficult to keep track of his thought, and to those not in danger of falling foul of what must be considered false, his solutions will appear flimsy and insufficient, and they do not advance what has been stated more clearly and competently elsewhere. Its value lies in the apparently spontaneous break from his traditions, a break that says much for his sincerity and insight. MARK BROCKLEHURST, O.P.

MISCELLANEOUS

CATHOLICISM IN ENGLAND 1535-1935. Portrait of a Minority: its Culture and Tradition. By David Mathew, Litt.D., M.A., F.S.A. With Appendices on the English Dominicans, by Gervase Mathew, O.P.; the English Benedictines, by Adrian Morey, O.S.B.; the Religious Orders of Women, by M. Mary Paul, S.H.C.J. (Longmans; 9/-.)

This book will have a lasting place beside the volumes of the Catholic Record Society and of Bishop Ward, all those blue-bound books that form the English Catholic historical section of a library. Half the excuse for a review six months late; the other half is the reviewer's paralysis: how indicate the richness of fact, allusion, hint, the nice range of generalization, without quotation after quotation? Surely the author will miss this or that, the Abbé Strickland, the Highland regiments, the elder Brunel; but no, the list is astonishingly complete; though Mr. Bryant has shown us a more interesting Cabal Clifford than these pages would suggest and for flecks there are a misprinted date (page 81), *Ne Temere*

BLACKFRIARS

promulgated a year too late, and punctuation to be supplied here and there by closer proof-reading.

Yet the style of circumspection and candour, sympathy and detachment, makes a book for the hammock and fireside as well as for the library. A quiet, unforced humour flows from such objective consideration of persons and causes. To adapt the epitaph on Sir Thomas Gage: enthusiasm and delicacy are blended in a manner as happy as unusual . . . tact tremblingly alive to the beauties of art and the charms of creation. However, there is no suspicion of the vapours so punctilious and clear. Despite the compression, Dr. Mathew usually manages to give us a glimpse of the personalities behind the names. He must write a commentary, not for elucidation, but to give us the joy of having more. "The intrepid Bishop Wilkinson of Hexham and Newcastle, profoundly apostolic, deeply interested in shorthorns, a North-Country Tory. . . ." Such touches abound.

This sketch begins with the sixteenth century, when Catholicism diverges from the general life of the country, a steadily narrowing but deepening tradition, intensely English, stubborn and devoted, having little to do with the growing Empire, the Universities and Services, yet not inconspicuous in letters, music, and the stage; living mainly round the country houses and the gentry until the Industrial Revolution and the Irish Immigration shifted the preponderance to the slums and the proletariat, and then later and inevitably, to the suburbs and the bourgeoisie, though of itself cutting vertically down through all the social layers. Always the tough, resilient core of English Catholics is seen to absorb the successive influences from outside, and always, except perhaps in the time of Manning, the absence of leadership is marked.

THOMAS GILBY, O.P.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF ASCETICISM. By Johannes Lindworsky, S.J. Translated by Emil A. Heiring. (H. W. Edwards; 5/-.)

The scope of this little book may be best stated in the words of the author himself, namely "to give some hints and suggestions culled from the domain of modern psychological knowledge, by way of contribution to the problem of ascetical training. The school of ascetics is the training ground of the *mites Christi*, but it is possible that ill-directed training may result in the production of the lay-figure type of ascetic, who thinks he has fulfilled all justice if he can find some more or less seemly garment wherewith to cover himself as he sets out on life's journey. The psychologist believes that he can prevent such misdirection."

Asceticism is a field for psychological study which may however be prejudiced by a superficial conception thereof, such as is put forward for instance by Prof. E. Kretschmer, to the effect