

BOOK REVIEWS

CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION, 1829-1929. Essays by various writers with an Introduction by His Eminence Cardinal Bourne. (Longmans, 10/6 net.)

Thirteen writers have contributed essays to this truly interesting volume commemorating the Centenary which Catholics are keeping in this month of April, 1929. The story of a glorious hundred years is too full of things worth telling to fit nicely into less than three hundred pages: of necessity, not every event is recorded, not every name is praised; yet prudent editorship has arranged that, with so much to say in so little space, each contributor shall keep to a particular aspect and not stray into his neighbour's department. In a collection of papers which could not possibly cover all the ground omissions may be noted; but overlappings there are none. It is only necessary to pair off some of the titles and writers thus: 'Education' by Sir John Gilbert, 'Literature' by Algernon Cecil, 'Church Music' by Ernest Oldmeadow, 'Catholic Laywomen' by Margaret Fletcher, to show what is meant when we say that we do not think that the essayists and their subjects could be more admirably matched. Music, Literature and Science are honoured, but not Art. Is this a confession that English Catholics have, during these hundred years, deserted the finest of those Arts whose nursing Mother the Church is claimed to be?

The first essay in the book, by Canon Barry, that veteran who has kept his pen fresh and lively for so long, is entitled 'Joy in Harvest, A Sequel to the Second Spring,' and it is not unworthy to be placed side by side with Newman's historic masterpiece. It is a graceful summing-up of the story of a hundred years, the ripe harvest of joy that has followed from Newman's Second Spring. Archbishop Goodier, in his essay on 'The Church and Spiritual Life,' reminds us that, although we have achieved much, 'there are still many things of which English Catholics are scarcely yet able to speak or write, and which must be sought abroad.' Sir John Gilbert's paper on 'Education' is admirable and eminently practical, as is only to be expected from one who is an admitted expert in the extremely complicated matter of Catholic education. We are glad to see that he finds room for mention of the Federation of Catholic University Societies which has been so nobly urged and established by Father Martindale. The subject of University education and the *Pax Romana* might have very suitably received a special article in this volume.

Blackfriars

Algernon Cecil's essay on 'The Catholic Church and Literature' is pleasing because of its shrewd philosophic reflections and because of its style (it is itself literature); but we found it disappointing and we expected a longer list of literary names even from so fastidious a taste as his. We should have expected him to mention Michael Field. He names only seven contemporary Catholic writers worthy of rank among makers of literature; he grants there are many others he would have liked to name, but how dangerous to make any selection, and how he will be reviled for his sins of omission! Perhaps Abbot Butler and Madam Maud Monahan are courting the same danger because, in their accounts of the Religious Orders of Men and Women, respectively, they have gone in for the enumeration of particular items of living history and selected some for special praise. It may be noted that Madam Monahan, among other omissions, makes no mention of the Cloistered Dominican Sisters, who have a foundation in this country dating back to 1661; and is she rightly informed when she states that the Dominican Convent of Stone had twenty-two convents under its rule in 1911? Abbot Butler's excellent account of the Monks, Friars, Regular Canons and Clerks who have worked in England is as full and exhaustive as his space allows. Is he right in his statement that the English Dominican house on the Continent during the penal days was at Louvain?

One of the most inspiring articles in this collection is Miss Fletcher's study of the influence of 'Catholic Laywomen,' not only in establishing Catholic works, parochially and sectionally, but in the more apostolic action of permeating the national life and leavening English society, which is now more than ever exposed to disintegrating and pagan influences. Her account of the sane and wholesome influence of Catholic laywomen should be read carefully by those who are tempted even to a mild attack of pessimism at the thought of the extension of the suffrage to all women.

Father Thurston is in his element dealing with those interesting facts called statistics. He calculates our total Catholic population as close upon three millions; but he admits that of these not all are practising Catholics, and if we mean by a Catholic, one who fulfils his Easter duties and hears Mass on Sunday, then he thinks the estimate of 2,156,146 in the *Catholic Directory* excessive. It seems to me that Father Thurston makes insufficient account of 'marriage converts.' There is a type of 'marriage convert' who needs to be considered when lapses and leakages are in question.

Book Reviews

Mr. Oldmeadow is equally in his element and undeniably competent in his 'Hundred Years of Catholic Music.' 'In 1829,' he says, 'Catholic Emancipation was won by a light-shunning little community which had neither a hierarchy nor any cathedral churches.' To which it ought to be remarked that the six million people in Ireland, with not too bad a hierarchy, had something to do with winning emancipation.

Mr. Chesterton winds up this most readable book with a thoughtful article, and it is reserved to him once more to hit the nail on the head when he points out the 'one influence that grows stronger every day, never mentioned in the newspapers, not even intelligible to people in the newspaper frame of mind. It is the return of the Thomist Philosophy, which is the Philosophy of Common sense.' It is the recapturing of this wisdom which will bring English Catholicism out of the rut into which the penal code drove it, lift it above the status of an obscure sect and put it in the main stream of the ancient culture of Europe and the Church.

B.D.

A HUNDRED YEARS OF CATHOLIC EMANCIPATION (1829-1929).

By Denis Gwynn. (Pp. 292. 10/6 net. Longmans.)

A lively and famous story is told by Mr. Denis Gwynn. Once more we are recalled to the work of mighty men—Wiseman, Newman, Ullathorne and Manning, pre-eminently. Past follies, wrought not without mischief, are also recalled. Delane, of *The Times*, at his worst on the setting up of the episcopate, in 1850; Lord John Russell shouting 'No Popery'; Anglican bishops denouncing 'foreign intruders'; Conservative Catholic peers joining the enemy in the chorus of disapproval. Later follies, no less mischievous, of Conservative Catholic peers—in especial a Catholic duke presenting a sword of honour to the champion of Protestant Ulster. But the follies are but minor matters. They have their place in this story as in every story of a hundred years of human endeavour.

Mr. Denis Gwynn has done his work so well that it is ungracious to complain of omissions. But something more might have been said of the re-building of religious life in the Victorian age, and the new birth of the Dominican Order in the 'fifties. Historically, the dates of the revival of the regular clergy and the new foundations of nuns are of interest.

The note of congratulation on the excellence of our modern Catholic Press is, perhaps, just the least bit too emphatic. Are our Catholic newspapers really quite so good as Mr. Denis