

REVIEWS

It is, nevertheless, a precious anthology which occasions these reflections. With its ideological classification of unfamiliar verse, much of which is of exquisite beauty, it may well prove to the ordinary rational animal a more illuminating guide to Parnassus than more conventional collections selected by more strictly poetic standards. Mr. Huxley reveals himself throughout as a competent, sometimes as a profound and wise, exegete. Though we are constrained often enough to reject his guidance on the 'art of living,' we are forced to acknowledge that, besides a 'modern paganism' which is crude and degrading, there is one which is noble and which compels our attention and admiration.

V.W.

THE MODERN DILEMMA. By Christopher Dawson. (Essays in Order, 8. Sheed & Ward; pp. 113; 2/6.)

Can the civilization of modern Europe remain faithful to its traditions, or must we scrap them as worn-out and valueless and start a new era of materialist civilization on purely economic principles? Mr. Dawson examines the modern dilemma with his wonted address in this short essay, and argues cogently that the solution of the problem in all its aspects, moral, scientific, political, lies neither in a revolutionary discarding of the past nor in a reactionary return to the past, but in the re-establishment of religious unity; the re-assertion of the principles of the spiritual order, in a religion not individualistic but social, 'embodied in a real society, not an imaginary or invisible one . . . an independent and universal society, not a national or local one,' the society of the Catholic Church, which, because it 'transcends political and economic categories and is indifferent to material results . . . has the power of satisfying the need of the world.' Mr. Dawson will not be a pessimist, and the conclusion of his essay is exhilarating reading.

L.S.G.V.

L'ETAT: CONCEPTION PAIENNE ET CONCEPTION CHRETIENNE.
By E. Magnin. (Paris: Bloud et Gay; pp. 163.)

State Absolutism is more than a danger. But affairs in England are not yet at the worst and vigorous minority

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criticism, especially when it echoes the inarticulate feelings of the majority, still has some effect. It is essential that Catholics should be clear as to the nature of the radical opposition between the Christian and non-Christian conceptions of the State. Canon Magnin has written a useful compendium, an historical tracing from pagan antiquity, through the revolution worked by Christianity, to modern times. Not of least worth is his study of the insufficiently known Encyclical *Immortale Dei* on Public Authority, which forms with the Encyclicals *Æterni Patris* on Thomism and *Rerum Novarum* on Social Justice a principal part of the magnificent doctrinal heritage left us by Leo XIII.

T.G.

THE COMING STRUGGLE FOR POWER. By John Strachey.
(Gollancz; 9/-.)

The end of that phase of the history of the peoples of the West which began five hundred years ago carries such enormous implications with it that nearly everyone stands too dumbfounded to admit what is happening. However that may be this brilliant convert to Communism is one of those who are certainly not afraid to admit it. He has written an account of almost every phase of the contemporary scene in the light of the Marxian view of history. Too much to be tackled in a short review, only its principal features can be indicated. The first part deals with the birth of capitalism in the struggle for the market. Then follow chapters on monopoly and on nationalism as a result of monopoly, on monetary instability as a permanent feature of capitalism, on the crisis and the capitalist remedy for it. The third part, of great interest, deals with the decay of capitalist culture as reflected in religion, science and literature. The remaining sections treat of the future of capitalism as imperialism, the servile state, or as fascism (which Mr. Strachey defines as 'one of the methods which may be adopted by the capitalist class when the threat of the working class to the stability of monopoly capitalism becomes acute'), of the political struggle in Britain and of the nature, the future and the desirability of communism. There can be no doubt about the book's