

neo-classical element in Elizabethan criticism can be rightly understood.' There would be little profit in attempting to summarise here the intricate account Professor Atkins gives of the development of the subject-matter of his book; a few points however call for comment. St. Bede's critical activities, for example, have in one instance much more than a merely historic interest: we are told that in the approval he gave to the accentual verse of Ambrosian hymns 'he was incidentally recognising an important literary development of his age—the establishment of a versification which was ultimately to play a great part in modern poetic expression.' Here we might recall a remark of Mr. Eliot's: 'the rudiment of criticism is the ability to select a good poem and reject a bad poem; and its most severe test is of the ability to select a good *new* poem, to respond properly to a new situation.' The space devoted to St. Bede's exposition of tropes in the Bible might have been shortened in favour of that rare exercise of critical evaluation contained in the saint's remarks on certain Ambrosian hymns which Professor Atkins is content to mention and not to illustrate. Finally, though we may agree that 'of that speculative criticism which deals with literature in the abstract, its nature and functions, but few traces are to be found' in the medieval period, we were not prepared for the conclusion that 'this, however, is not surprising, since the philosophical equipment for such treatment was lacking; and practical, rather than speculative, interests have always been characteristic of English thought.' The remark just quoted, and a further one to be found on page 64, suggest that this book is on safer ground when it deals with the literary effects of medieval Scholasticism than when it is forced into some appraisal of the speculative value of Scholasticism and its relations with Humanism.

DOM HILARY STEUERT.

CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL PRIORY. A Study in Monastic Administration. By R. A. L. Smith, Ph.D. (Cambridge University Press; 15s.)

The story of England since the thirteenth century gives abundant evidence of that tendency in human history whose fruits are now becoming so apparent. As soon as men's energies cease mainly to be directed towards the interpretation of the material in reference to the eternal, the force of human aspiration, urged onward centrifugally over an ever-widening area, comes by degrees to take on a new character. Organism develops fast into organisation, function into mere utility; the balance of human life is upset and privilege grows to lack the responsibility that is the justification of its existence. As a result, reconstruction has revolution as its sole means of expression, conservatism means nothing more than a return to a previous counter-revolutionary settlement; attempts towards recovery, because necessarily baseless experiments, become foredoomed

to tragedy, while a visionary credulity in the catch-word of the moment brings inevitable disillusionment in its train.

English monasticism was not exempt from this decline. By the end of the thirteenth century its arteries were becoming hardened and its outlook had imperceptibly shifted, just as the slow grate of the weather-cock may be the sole indication that the wind is now blowing from a new point of the compass. The hard days of endeavour and re-fashioning were over and, amid new and magnificent buildings, the monastic life began to acquire a fresh character. Its interests were now more externalised, its activities more widespread; and, with its augmented estates and numerous officials, it bore much the same relation to its earlier self as the great Whig landlords of the eighteenth century bore to the old-fashioned squires and small-holders of their own time.

Dr. Smith's book is a most valuable record of some phases in this development, and his study of the financial growth, efflorescence and stabilisation of the great Cathedral Priory of Canterbury is significant as being typical of so many other monastic institutions. It is by no means a dull tale. The author has made a most detailed survey of all the available sources and he enables us to trace the record with ease, aided to a large extent by quotations from original documents. The growth of the estates themselves is briefly told in a preliminary chapter; then follows the story of the increasing importance and, at one period, the almost omni-competence, of the central financial system of the monastic exchequer—the common link in the persons of its treasurers between the Obedientiaries and the monk-wardens of the manors. In the following pages the complex relationship of the financial machinery to the ordinary organs of jurisdiction is described. The whole central system had however the weakness begotten of the strength of its chief creator, Prior Henry de Eastry; since successfully to maintain it a ruler of like ability was required. It is not therefore surprising that, as the fourteenth century made way for the fifteenth, weaknesses appeared which ultimately destroyed the carefully built up central system. From this time onwards the energies of the Priors were rather devoted to converting this method of administration into one where cash-rents took the place of kind and where responsibility fell more and more into the hands of the Obedientiaries. In final chapters Dr. Smith deals with the manorial administration, the growth of pasture farming and the great work done, as at Croyland, in reclaiming waterlogged soil.

At Canterbury, as at Glastonbury under Adam de Sodbury, an era of magnificent building projects coincided with a period of decay in economic organisation; and from the turn of the fourteenth century onwards the final down-hill process continued. Both financially and religiously a level, competent rather than inspired, was reached; and, though the magnificent 'Angel steeple' of Canterbury was rebuilt

during these last years, the great Appledore marsh was reclaimed and pilgrims still flocked to the shrine of St. Thomas, the foundations had grown too weak to bear unwonted strain. The dissolution in the early days of 1540 caused few tears and little disturbance. The December evening of 1170 could now no longer be re-enacted.

*Canterbury Cathedral Priory* tells us far more than its modest sub-title would appear to indicate. The lengthy foot-notes are packed with information, historical and topographical, while the appendices add weight and authority to the arguments presented in the text. Finally there is an excellent bibliography and a perhaps not quite so satisfactory index.

ÆLRED WATKIN.

PHYSICS AND PHILOSOPHY. By Sir James Jeans. (Cambridge University Press; 8s. 6d.)

One of the great needs of current intellectual life is that philosophy and natural science should be studied by the same people, so that the likenesses, differences and mutual influences of the two disciplines should be better understood. For the method of natural science is not the only version of rational method, as many people suppose, but is one version among many. Sir James Jeans has read the works of certain philosophers, and thus far has rendered a service to the cause of the re-integration of knowledge. He has, however, misunderstood and underestimated his philosophical authors in many ways, and has failed to recognise the limitations of the methods of physics. For example, he cites the principle of excluded middle incorrectly (because incompletely) and claims that modern science invalidates it. He confuses the philosophical discussion of free-will with the question of prediction in physics—a discipline which deals with dead matter and therefore excludes consideration of all specifically human acts, including moral judgments. He proposes some 'new principles' for philosophy which will not be regarded very seriously by those accustomed to philosophical problems; they are concerned partly with reforms which are not in fact necessary, and partly with extending the method of natural science into fields where it is not applicable. Sir James's book may thus mislead scientists; however, he provides clear summaries of the twentieth-century advances in physics, which may be of use in showing philosophers how remote are these problems from their own preoccupations. The main value of the book is perhaps to show once more that distinguished philosophers and scientists may have widely differing habits of thought (corresponding to their differing specialist interests) while using languages similar enough to cause great confusion.

E. F. CALDIN.

RELIGION, SCIENCE AND SOCIETY IN THE MODERN WORLD. By A. D. Lindsay. (Oxford University Press, Humphrey Milford; 3s. 6d.)

In this series of three lectures Dr. Lindsay discusses the great Protestant movements of the 16th century as the basis of modern