

and an equally strong but slightly muted note of tragedy and despair which was the reverse side of the same life.'

The newness of surrealist poetry was 'automatic writing': but Apollinaire's theory is relatively conservative. He knows that 'the new spirit is full of dangers and snares', and he tries to find a link with French tradition—he himself often echoes Villon.

In spite of frequent profanity and coarseness Apollinaire has an understanding of the Church. In *Zone*, a tragic poem passing from nostalgic memories of pious boyhood through his wanderings to the sordid present, he writes:

*Religion alone has remained entirely fresh religion  
Has remained simple like the hangars at the airfield  
You alone in all Europe are not antique O Christian faith  
The most modern European is you Pope Pius X  
And you whom the windows are watching shame prevents you  
From entering a church and confessing this morning.*

The book is beautifully presented, though with quite a number of misprints. The painstaking Introduction affords a most useful insight into the application of surrealist principles. The translations are very helpful, but here and there are erroneous or miss a point.

We must dissent from our critic in his evaluation of the 'prophetic' quality he attributes to Apollinaire. The New Spirit of the period is really a reflection of its break-up of philosophy and faith, for it is not true that: *Only those can renew the world who are rooted in poetry.*

MARY RYAN

**FAMILY CASE-BOOK.** By Hubert van Zeller. (Collins; 12s. 6d.)

An altogether delightful book—if you are interested in family history and appreciate the delicate analysis of highly individual and original character. Such characters flourished still in the latter half of the nineteenth century and survived into the twentieth; it does not appear likely that our modern democratic way of life, whatever its advantages, will be a soil which can produce such markedly differentiated variety.

The van Zeller family and its connections was more than ordinarily prolific in them, perhaps because of its combination of continental blood with acclimatised Englishry. Dom Hubert's *Family Case-Book* makes fascinating reading not merely because the personalities about whom he tells us—father, mother, uncles, cousins and aunts—are themselves richly individual, not to say eccentric, but because he himself writes of them with nicely-proportioned humour, delicate analytical perception, family *pietas* and spiritual insight; and the result never jars, is of sustained interest and at points provides much food for reflection.

HENRY ST JOHN, O.P.