

any suggestion of what is known as clericalism, had a fertile mind and acted as he thought fit in temporal matters, Mr Colquhoun obviously has difficulty in reconciling the Italian writer's religion with his own preconception of orthodoxy.

As this book is a biography, we have no right to expect critical analyses of the works. Thus, Mr Colquhoun is no doubt justified in making his chapter on *I Promessi Sposi* purely peripheral, more or less devoid of any discussion of the novel itself. Some readers may feel, however, that the omission is damaging, as *I Promessi Sposi* is really the most complete manifestation of Manzoni that there is. It is a great work. While it is lacking in power and intensity, the power and intensity of a Dostoevsky or a Bernanos, it has what their work has not: serenity and as perfect an equilibrium as I think can be found in imaginative writing; it unites a deep Christian feeling with a fine humanity. It is essentially a work for those approaching or achieving middle age. On the adolescent it is unlikely to make much impression; he will probably be bored by it and think it oversentimental and unrealistic. Perhaps too many English people try to read the book too early in life and are thereby deterred from making a further attempt in maturity. Perhaps, too, only those who know and love Italy and the Italians can thoroughly understand and appreciate it.

ERNEST BEAUMONT

ESSAYS WITH A PURPOSE. By Salvador de Madariaga. (Hollis and Carter; 15s.)

This is a volume to be tasted from time to time, and not digested at one sitting. It comprises seventeen articles, lectures and broadcast talks, all prompted 'by some event or some requirement or some commission', and here collected under four headings: Political, Linguistic, Spanish and General. Five essays treat of urgent political problems of the present-day world: the martyrdom of reason and liberty, the decline of the Liberal spirit, the true nature of national sovereignty, the place of the artist in society, and the relation between freedom and science. Of the essays on Spanish themes, 'Spain and the West' analyses in a few masterly and telling pages the chief contribution of Spain to the increasingly mechanized West—the predominance of the human: in 'Spain and the Jews' the author dispassionately examines the nature and causes of anti-semitism in Spanish history, and in the remaining two essays defends bull-fighting (a *spectacle*, not a *sport*), and reflects, rather discursively, on the influence of Virgil in Spain. Other essays are concerned with language and linguistics, the written, spoken and broadcast word, the weaknesses and potentialities of broadcasting, leisure and the

Englishman, medicine, and (with gentle irony) the contention that the British are a practical people.

The essays are marked by the wisdom, profundity and wit which we have come to expect of Sr Madariaga. The most substantial are the five political essays (in which the author opts for an organic and qualitative, as against an inorganic and quantitative, conception of life, and maintains that the 'civilized world must have the courage to think out afresh its basic political rules and standards'), together with 'Spain and the West' and 'Spain and the Jews'. Many judgments are couched in arresting, aphoristic form—'The work of art does nothing. It has nothing to do. It is. That is its virtue', 'The discovery of America was a major disaster for Spain', 'The best form of propaganda is life itself'. Sr Madariaga is rarely dogmatic: the advice of Liberalism, he says, is 'rather than submit to dogma, risk error and seek truth'. There is much truth within these pages.

RICHARD J. A. KERR

THE EARLY VICARS APOSTOLIC IN ENGLAND, 1685-1750. By Dom Basil Hemphill, O.S.B. (Burns and Oates; 18s.)

The story Dom Hemphill tells is one of fortitude under a persecution which, being no longer unto death, has probably never been sufficiently appreciated by us who reap in comparative freedom and comfort what these very undemonstrative heroes, the Vicars Apostolic and their devoted clergy, sowed in such bitter trials. Bishop Bonaventure Giffard of the London District, who was still active up to his ninetieth year, confessed that in the space of *nine days* he had to change his lodgings *seventeen times*, and in 1715 when he was in his seventy-fourth year he wrote: 'In one prison I lay on the floor a considerable time; in Newgate almost two years; afterwards in Hertford jail; and now daily expect a fourth prison to end my life in.' Referring to his poor abode he said: 'One poor garret is palace, cathedral, table of audience, dining-room, bedchamber and often kitchen too. I thank God; this is my glory and my joy. I would not change my condition for that of the greatest cardinal.'

When Elizabeth imprisoned the whole body of Catholic bishops in 1559 it meant in the result that no Catholic in England received the sacrament of Confirmation until 1623 when William Bishop was appointed the first Vicar Apostolic. He died within a year and his successor Richard Smith went into exile in 1629 and there then ensued another half-century without the sacrament being administered. Dom Hemphill begins his work with the appointment of Bishop Leyburn in 1685, who in his second year confirmed no fewer than 20,859 Catholics in the north alone. Giffard was appointed in 1687, sharing