

boys of all classes which will not exist in their social outlook and habits.' Much remains to be done in ridding ourselves of complacency, and first principles in the matter of education are not as yet staled by familiarity. To take one point only—St. Thomas says briefly: *A patre filii accipere debent non solum esse per generationem sed disciplinam per instructionem.* What does that mean for us to-day? Is it not usually held that a Catholic father sufficiently does his duty if he chooses this school rather than that to educate his sons—in so far as politics and economics still permit any choice? And is this merely doctrinal development?

W.S.

THE SPIRIT OF FRANCE. Studies in Modern French Literature. By Wallace Fowlie. (Sheed and Ward; 6s.).

DE VILLON A PEGUY. By Wallace Fowlie. (L'Arbre, Montreal.).

A book like 'The Spirit of France' really does more harm than good. The title is promising, the subject is promising, the publisher's blurb is more than promising: the latter might be about a different book altogether, for it gives special mention to Léon Bloy whom the author does not mention at all. The book reads like a verbal translation of a jerky, hop-skip-and-jump conversation between a group of slick young Frenchmen rather impressed with their own cleverness. It contains information, but leaves no mark on the memory but irritation.

The French book has an endearing preface by Henri Focillon, and a disarming dedication in which the author's love of France is simply told. In these sentiments I am wholly with him. His French is very good indeed, not perfect: the effect is somewhat childish. It is a little surprising to learn that Péguy, the militant dreyfusiste, was 'exempt from political cares' until 1905. Good intentions are not a substitute for verification of facts, and approximations invalidate the good intentions and leave us unconvinced. What a pity.

R.B.

IRISHMAN'S DAY. By John Boland, M.P., South Kerry, 1900—1918. (Macdonald; 5s.).

This is a book which will be valuable in years to come. It is valuable now, for many of us will recall, if only from our newspapers, the persons and things which made news and history in our ears if not under our eyes. Newspaper-cuttings, Hansard, and several books more human still are used, the author tells us, as the hard bones of an interesting disquisition on Parliament and its manners, customs and daily business, witnessed at first hand by a Chief Whip of the Irish Party and filtered through a humane and temperate mind somewhat resembling the special calm of Maurice Baring. Front Bench manners seem admirably to disinfect the record from partisanship and give it the impartial tone of a good historian.

From the first mutterings of Protection and Tariff Reform to the dummy enactment of Home Rule, September 1914, we are escorted by a highly informed guide and even taken behind the scenes of many dramatic encounters. Yet sensation is avoided. Even Parnell's outrageous treatment of his followers in his last years is soft-pedalled, though he upset almost permanently the temper of a whole nation. In these days when the whole temper of Europe has been altered for the worse by a maniac's grievance it looks like a venial sin, but it is a good historian's part to use the scales of eternal justice and to point the right and wrong of events. There be historians who tell us that moral standards vary or soften according to the age. Not so, say we. The less historians they.

Manning and Gladstone are both at their best in their 'statecraft' correspondence, and it softens the asperities of partisanship to note how much the Liberal Party did in its great days for the progress of the nation. The great work came to a head after the Grand Old Man was in his grave, when Lloyd George in the great and acrimonious debate on the Welsh Church Bill presented us with the historic phrase that the Tory opposition (hereditary holders of Church lands) had *their hands dripping with the fat of sacrilege*. Screeching disclaimers were as summer wind in the faces of those facts which the author presents to justify the great Welshman's 'jewel five words long.'

Never to be ignored either is the account of what the Irish members did even for Empire Trade and Religious Education. The good that parties do is oft interred with their bones. So shall it not be while books like this are valued for their truth even more than for their arrangement or their style; both of these, in this neat five shilling tract, most clear and most alluring.

JOHN O'CONNOR.

PRINCIPLES OF PROSPERITY. By Francis W. Hirst. (Hollis and Carter; 8s. 6d.).

Among the more vociferous of our post-war planners there is a growing spirit of financial irresponsibility; due, no doubt, to the astronomical budgets of war-time. A tentative suggestion that their most hare-brained schemes are not economically practical, calls forth a tirade against 'vested interests' and 'forces of reaction.' Mr. Hirst cannot be said to fit either of these vague abusive terms, and the Utopians would benefit from a glance through his criticisms. The book is an attempt to translate the essentials of Political Economy into terms that will be readily understood by the ordinary citizen. It is, after all, the ordinary citizen who will be victimised by the lightning cures of the political quack; and his best protection is a knowledge of a more orthodox remedy. The theory that everybody and everything can be subsidised from a bottomless public purse is a prevalent one; the explosion of that theory by the author is timely, and amply justifies any recommendation of this publication.