

## CORRESPONDENCE

sinia, Spain, Fascism, social injustice, etc. *An Irishman in Spain* by Peadar O'Donnell: an Irish Catholic's impressions of some church-sacking.

NOUVELLE REVUE THEOLOGIQUE (November): Canon Brohée, pioneer apostle of the cinema, comments on the Encyclical *Vigilanti Cura*.

THEOLOGY (December): *The Parish Priest and the Life of Prayer*: an admirable lecture by Evelyn Underhill to the Anglican Worcester Clergy Convention; much to be taken to heart by others. *November the Fifth: A cold Plunge into the Bath of History, recommended to brace the Nerves of Whigs and to cleanse the Cant of Prigs*: Guy Fawkes as Fascist, by G. L. Prestige. Also, an inside account of the German Faith movements.

VIE SPIRITUELLE (December): *Une expérience de retraite active*: some account of an entirely new type of retreat in which, so far as possible, the participants give themselves the retreat collectively, which has been found highly successful in meeting the spiritual needs of moderns.

PENGUIN.

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### PROGRESS AND PROCESS

*To the Editor of BLACKFRIARS*

Sir,—In respect of "Penguin's" note in the November BLACKFRIARS, with its interesting and on the whole helpful comments upon an article of mine which appeared in *The Cross and the Plough*, a word in reply may perhaps be looked for. I might call attention, for example, to the highly honoured name at the head of your contributors and say that I am more than content to be in the same company and condemnation. Another point has escaped you; Father Tindal-Atkinson, after a very beautiful tribute to the old peasant culture, dogmatically denied the possibility of return, even, it would seem, for individuals, and then poured ridicule on those individuals (and even families) who, with eminent courage, and under great hardships, and in the face of heartless ridicule, in spite of his theory, returned, and, not surprisingly, in doing so developed something of the feature and manner of the old peasantry. Why in this world should they not? Why should they obey his (unforeseen) veto?

As to the general question, "running away" is an easy accusa-

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tion to hurl; but is it, in this case a just one? St. Basil and St. Benedict were in that sense runaways. It is not (that I know of) recorded that they offered any other solution of the urban problems of their time beyond setting the example of leaving the cities and helping to build up a God-fearing, healthy life and people outside. Let those who believe in industrialism and urbanism solve its problems as well as they can. To demand that those who, with Dr. Carvel, see in industrialism a blind alley, should find a cure for its difficulties does not seem very reasonable. But why brand with dishonour those who believe that the best thing is for all who can to leave industrialism and build up from small foundations outside. The greatest obstacle to this is the throttle-hold which the Money Power has on England's throat. The problems of Babylon will never be solved by contempt of Broodfield, however much we may be prevented from going thither.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

H. E. G. ROPE.

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*To the Editor of BLACKFRIARS*

Sir,—May I express my thanks to you for the opportunity of a brief comment upon points raised in Father Rope's letter? From the kind tribute he pays to the substance of my article there may be possibly more ground for agreement than would appear from the strong exception he takes to its closing paragraphs. These were trenchantly expressed as the conclusion to a paper written and read to arouse discussion. Their tone was provocative rather than pontifical, with the touch of caricature rather than portraiture, ill-drawn, it seems, but not ill-intentioned.

As my words stand, I doubt whether they go quite so far as a dogmatic denial of any individual's right to return to the material conditions of the pre-industrial era. The point is rather that such a *modus vivendi* is not the solution to the problems discussed. Where a virile peasantry to-day is knit into the social fabric we do not find it rejecting the amenities and culture common to that society. Does not the Tyrolese or Canadian peasant use agricultural machinery and electric power where it is available? The peasantry of England formed an integral and vital part of an agricultural people and its external "features and manner" were the spontaneous expression of its nature and living tradition. The seeker to-day for this primitive contentment does so at present in the face of society, and is thus tempted to identify himself with the old peasantry by adopting its external characteristics and habiliments, not by natural development so much as by a self-conscious and deliberate gesture. The external features of a culture flow from its essence and its living spirit; if they are