

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor of 'BLACKFRIARS'

Dear Sir.—Your correspondent Mr Everitt expresses surprise at the inaccuracy of my statement in an article of BLACKFRIARS, in the January number, p. 14, to the effect that 'the Church of England is a state department and its bishops and clergy are government officials drawing their revenues from the state'. Now I freely admit that these words are not intended to have a technical or specialised meaning, but I venture to think that the sense which I wish to convey by them is sufficiently clear. When I say that the Church of England is a state department I have the authority behind me of Cardinal Newman who in his 'Anglican Difficulties' wrote: 'The National Church is strictly part of the Nation . . . it is simply an organ or department of the State, all ecclesiastical acts really proceeding from the civil power'. The Anglican bishops may well be described as state officials inasmuch as they are nominees of the Crown, and exercise what authority they are allowed, at the bidding of the civil power. Even 'the Clergy in Convocation assembled has no power to make canons or constitutions whatsoever in matters of doctrine, discipline or otherwise to bind the Clergy and laity of the land without the common consent of Parliament'. (Resolution of the House of Commons, 16 December, 1640.) Although the Anglican clergy do not receive their emoluments directly out of the State Treasury, they receive their incomes from sources which have been ultimately put at their disposal by the Crown. Mr Everitt must know quite well that Henry VIII possessed himself of a vast amount of ecclesiastical property, and though much of it was squandered and diverted, some portion of it found its way back to the church, taking the shape of endowments for bishops and chapters.

Yours truly,

AMBROSE FARRELL, O.P.

REVIEWS

WELSH POETIC DICTION. By T. H. Parry-Williams. (Geoffrey Cumberlege; 5s. 0d.)

The Sir John Rhys Memorial Lecture delivered before the British Academy in 1946 by Professor Parry-Williams has a much wider interest than its academic credentials might suggest. It is, one need hardly say, a learned and carefully argued study of the verbal content of Welsh poetry from the earliest written fragments of the ninth century to the poetry of today. But for the English reader with only a general interest in poetry it provides a clear guide to unfamiliar territory. The mysteries of *cynganedd* and other features of traditional Welsh poetical diction and metre are indicated and illustrated by quotations (with intelligible translations). Even so