

EXTRACTS AND COMMENTS

ERRATUM. In our last *Extracts and Comments* on page 222, line 23, *For Communism Read Catholicism*.

BLACK SHIRTS UNDER WHITE HABITS? Notwithstanding so lamentable a slip, and an inexplicable suspicion among more careless readers of some odd sympathy between BLACKFRIARS and Moscow, there are readers of no small critical ability who scent a Fascist wolf beneath the wool of St. Dominic. Some while ago, in an article in *THE SPECTATOR*, Dr. Joseph Needham found us as Rightist as any other Catholic periodical in our disapproval of the Spanish Popular Front, and saw a sinister significance in our phrase: "If the Left will not *have* God, it does not follow that He *is* on the Right." Now Mr. T. S. Eliot, in *THE NEW ENGLISH WEEKLY* (February 25), devotes considerable space to criticism of the attitude of a BLACKFRIARS contributor towards the abdication of Edward VIII. He is brought to the conclusion that we "point towards the identification of a Patriot King with a kind of Fascist King—with a conception of the Monarchy in which the hereditary claimant to our allegiance should double the role of *duce* or *fuehrer*," and that "the Dominicans for whom 'the visit to South Wales had symbolized the return in England of an older and to us a more democratic conception of Kingship' are enjoying the vision of an idealized past and preparing the way for a certainly not democratic future." As was to be expected, Mr. Eliot presents a strong case, which he states with unwonted vigour:

Blackfriars takes, on the one hand, a sacramental-legalistic position. It affirms that if King Edward was convinced "that it was impossible for him to be a real King without Mrs. Simpson," then "Catholics are the first to recognize that it would not have affected the reality of the royalty, any more than the morality of a Pope affected the reality of the Papacy." I am quite ready to admit that the morality of a Pope does not affect the reality of the Papacy. But I suggest that the morality of Popes did affect the dignity and importance of the Papacy, and did unfortunately forward the designs of those persons who, for their own ends, wished to bring about what has been called the "Reformation." *Blackfriars* thinks that the legal consequences of December, 1688, have long been forgotten: had James II been dismissed as an

athiest, instead of as a Papist, would *Blackfriars* be so ready to forget them? I should not take issue so violently with *Blackfriars* if it stuck to legalism and the "immemorial hereditary right" which has devolved in such devious ways during the last nine hundred years. But *Blackfriars* recognizes that "there was a growing divergence between the position held by the Crown in constitutional law in practice and in popular myth. The position in constitutional law and in practice has been unaffected by the abdication." It would seem therefore that it is the passage of a "popular myth" which *Blackfriars* regrets. Would this popular myth have endured with Mrs. Simpson on the Throne? King Edward's exploration of the possibility of a morganatic marriage suggests that he himself doubted it.

We would remark only that Mr. Eliot is mistaken in supposing that our contributor regretted the passing of the myth (though it is to be reckoned with as a serious historical development). Rather did he regret that the myth was no more than a myth, and a myth whose passing revealed its lack of substance. If we are "sacramental-legalist," we are sacramental first and legalist second: concerned with the law to the extent that it safeguards the inward reality of royalty of which kingly symbolism should be the outward visible sign. We precisely deprecate the Whig constitutional practice if it empties that symbolism of meaning. Mrs. Simpson at the Palace might indeed have exploded the popular myth and have dimmed the glitter of the Crown; but the fiction were small price for the reality. We advocate no Royal Führer, nor an absolute monarchy in preference to a constitutional one; but we question a constitution which nullifies what it is meant to constitute. Indeed we are perhaps less committed to royalism than is Mr. Eliot; but urge that if constitutional legalism is to play ducks and drakes with the *res sacramenti*, then honesty suggests that we scrap the *sacramentum*.

CATHOLICS AND SPAIN. A friendly Anglican correspondent to *TIME AND TIDE* (March 6th), after quoting at length from our comments on the Spanish war, complains that *Penguin* "does not draw the obvious conclusion that both this mental deadness and the entry of Catholics into a unity of hatred for the Spanish Government are calculated to 'give scandal' in the original sense of the term, inspiring an increasing horror of the largest Christian Church in the world. That this is so is,

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however, indubitable." We are well aware of it, and the fact compels us to postpone consideration of other matters in order that we may occupy further space in which to refer to documents emanating from Catholic sources which conflict with the intensive propaganda which the English Catholic press is conducting on behalf of General Franco. In so doing, we do not for one moment seek to detract from the high heroism and idealism of the thousands of Spanish Catholics who (together with others with less certain motives) are risking everything for the cause which they believe can alone assure the practice of their religion and the preservation of their national culture. But we believe that more pacific and less partisan Catholic views of the situation deserve consideration if a balanced impression on the issues is to be formed, and if a correct picture of the reaction of Catholics throughout the world is to be given to our own fellow-countrymen. A comprehensive summary of the attitude of European Catholics towards the Spanish War by Miss Barclay Carter will be found in the *AMERICAN COMMONWEAL* (March 5th). Important commentaries on the Holy Father's address to the Spanish Refugees from *OSSERVATORE ROMANO* and *ILLUSTRAZIONE VATICANA* are quoted. The latter, in its September issue, "after stating that while various outrages before the insurrection may explain it, it is a very far cry to justifying a civil war involving such appalling slaughter," and recalled "the words of Benedict XV denouncing war, since the victory of one side sows in the hearts of the vanquished such bitterness as to lead inevitably to a future conflict." In countries outside the Vatican City "we find in each small but compact groups of Catholics explicit in their repudiation of the Insurgents and in their assertion of Christian values." Reference is made to the Belgian *AVANT-GARDE*, the French *ESPRIT*, *L'AUBE*, *VIE CATHOLIQUE*, *SEPT*, *VIE INTELLECTUELLE*, the Swiss *POPOLO E LIBERTA*, the English *DUBLIN REVIEW* and *BLACKFRIARS*.

A CATHOLIC "STOP THE WAR" CAMPAIGN which has been vigorously conducted by a number of prominent French Catholics has, however, received little publicity in this country. An appeal, among whose signatories appear the names of Fumet, Madaule, Maritain, Mounier, Simon and Vignaux, was issued in February in the following terms:

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De différentes provinces de la malheureuse Espagne, des voix catholiques se sont élevées pour crier la détresse d'un peuple victime de la plus atroce guerre civil. Comment ces voix douloureuses nous laisseraient-elles indifférents?

Comment, nous aussi, "devant Dieu et devant l'histoire," ne dirions-nous pas notre horreur des assassinats collectifs et des atrocités sans nombre dont l'Espagne est, depuis six mois, le théâtre?

Contre tous ces crimes inexcusables, d'où qu'ils viennent, nous devons à notre honneur de chrétiens d'élever une protestation indignée.

Et nous le demandons aussi: ceux qui se firent les initiateurs d'une guerre, civile ou étrangère, ne portent-ils pas toujours, quelles que soient les culpabilités ultérieures, une terrible responsabilité dans les maux et les désordres qu'engendre le conflit? Il faut tout faire pour arrêter cette guerre fratricide.

Que les hommes qui forment l'opinion publique comprennent leurs obligations. Qu'ici on ne donne pas le masque d'une guerre sainte à une guerre d'extermination! Que là on ne la double pas d'excitations ou d'excuses à la haine antireligieuse!

A l'heure où nous écrivons, Madrid est systématiquement détruite, sa population livrée aux angoisses de la mort. Les secours en hommes et en matériel fournis par l'étranger, les débarquements massifs de véritables unités militaires, les incidents navals qui se multiplient, donnent à la guerre d'Espagne l'aspect d'un conflit plus vaste.

Ce n'est pas assez qu'une nation agonise, la paix du monde est en péril.

Nous ne nous adressons pas seulement à la Société des Nations, comme le faisait, dans une de ses récentes résolutions, le Rassemblement universel pour la paix, nous nous adressons aussi aux gouvernements, à chaque homme de cœur les suppliant, au nom du Christ, de faire tout ce qui est en eux pour favoriser toute initiative de médiation et mettre fin à l'une des plus horribles calamités que l'histoire de l'Europe ait connue.

The principles underlying this conception of pacific Christian intervention were outlined in a fine article on *The Theology of Intervention* by "Christianus" in *LA VIE INTELLECTUELLE* (February 10). He condemns at once the principle of non-intervention (which, he points out, is formally condemned in the *Syllabus* of Pius IX) as a crime against charity and a denial of the solidarity of the human race, and at the same time the intervention which intensifies the slaughter by aiding one side or the other. He shows, finally, how the Christian must labour in the face of current isola-

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tionisms to foster a principled conscience of international responsibility.

CARDINAL GOMA'S LETTER—of which much capital has been made both by the enemies of religion and by those who interpret the Nationalist campaign as the *Gesta Dei per Franco*—is the subject of an appraisal in *LA VIE INTELLECTUELLE* (February 25) which demands quotation, if only à *titre documentaire*:

War has once again produced a literature. . . . Ink as well as blood is spilled. While men kill one another, others explain to the public why they cannot help killing one another. That is as old as war itself.

But we have here a document whose professed purpose is to provide an important section of the belligerents—our brothers in Catholicism—with the most powerful of weapons: the weapon of interior conviction vitalized by their Christian faith. We refer to the Letter of the Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo. This letter is eminently representative of a point of view legitimate in Catholic theology. It defines lucidly, and not without a certain greatness, the position which has received wide acceptance in Spain as in France (indeed, more in Spain than in France). . . Friends and enemies of the cause of the Cardinal of Toledo have seen to it that this document received the utmost publicity. It is significant that it was the Spanish ambassador at Paris who was the first to undertake its translation into French—and officially at that. The Catholic press was less discreet. It is necessary that all be reminded that the personal opinion of an ecclesiastic, even of the Primate of Spain, does not involve the Church in a matter of religious politics, still less in a purely political matter, and has no binding force at all if it be concerned with advice, however sound it may be, on the tactical conduct of war. The Archbishop of Toledo himself has taken care to eliminate any misinterpretation of such sort—which would have laid a heavy burden on many—by not endowing his letter with the value of an ecclesiastical document. Whatever may have been asserted to the contrary, this opusculum is not a pastoral letter. It is a provisional draft: "*Notre point de vue a peu de valeur: cet opuscule, qui l'expose, encore moins; aussi bien avons nous fait qu'effleurer le sujet, nous réservant de le traiter plus à fond avec plus de calme et de documentation.*"¹

The French reader who recalls a certain Christmas message, a message which also had a Prince of the Church for author, may

¹ Unable to compare this passage with the original Spanish, we have left it in the French of *La Vie Intellectuelle*.

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experience some embarrassment when, in spite of himself, he compares the two documents. On the one hand are words of peace; on the other words of war. A holy war, it is true. But if we recognize (as the Christian conscience of the Archbishop of Toledo certainly does) the paramount necessity and spiritual value in our day of a *religious* crusade, it is precisely this that leads us, in France, to tremble with misgiving at such redoubtable words as these.

Père Pie Duployé, O.P., the writer of this commentary, goes on to quote the Cardinal's remarkable assurance to the Spanish workers that "neither religion nor the sword are their adversaries: neither the sword whose function is to bring peace to Spain, without which tranquil and remunerative labour is impossible; nor religion, which has always been the rampart of the weak and the creator of charity and social justice." Père Duployé remarks:

It is difficult to see that the sword is being successful in bringing peace to Spain; what we do see is that, in order to forestall a revolutionary movement, it has provoked not only an atrocious war, but also a proletarian movement which is doubtless infinitely more deadly than what it sought to prevent. "They have sought to save Spain by the power of the sword. Perhaps there was no other remedy." But seven months of relentless struggle have aggravated the ill without bringing that promised remedy.

When will Spain revive from her present sufferings? Cardinal Gomá himself acknowledges that "she will emerge bloodless and impoverished." For long must she nurse hatred and be deprived of her joy. Too much fraternal blood has flowed. Is there still no other remedy? The Cardinal himself, at the end of his letter, seems to have had a yearning for a mood other than his own, a mood which, as much as his own, can make appeal to authentic Christianity: "There is no other remedy except Jesus Christ and the spirit of His Gospel." May God grant to this martyred people the peace for which it hungers, the justice for which it thirsts, and, especially to the Catholics under the guidance of their Bishops, the charity of which they stand in so great need.

CATHOLIC REPUBLICANS. Less easily intelligible than this pacific impartiality is the position of those avowed Catholics who actively support the Popular Front against what they regard as Franco's rebellion. Yet efforts should be made to understand their position too before a fair judgment can be passed. The position of the Basques involves particular complications: honour is due to THE TABLET for its fairness in

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publishing a statement by a Basque priest of the tragedy and the difficulty of the position into which the followers of Aguirre seem to have been forced as the alternative to individual and collective suicide. The Basque case may also be studied at length in the articles on *Euzkadi* which the Brussels Catholic daily *AVANT-GARDE* has serialized during the past few weeks. The leading Dutch Catholic daily *DE TIJD* (quoted by *CITE CHRETIENNE* of February 20), under the heading *Linksgerichte katholieken*, turns attention to the more difficult problem presented by those thousands of Catholics (or ex-Catholics) of Spanish blood who fight on the side of the *Frente Popular*; and draws an interesting comparison from Netherlands history:

It is only with difficulty that we can envisage such a situation in our own land and epoch, but we may find a parallel in the sixteenth century when the iconoclasts were devastating our churches. These iconoclasts were Catholics by birth and baptism. The priest-persecutor, Willem van Lumey, belonged to a Catholic family. The parishioners of Ter Heyde who could have ransomed their parish-priest—one of the martyrs of Gorcum—for a barrel of beer, and who refused to do so, were also Catholics. Clearly not good Catholics; but the fact that there were so many “bad Catholics” is one that has a history behind it. That should not be forgotten. Moreover there were many Catholics who, from the beginning, chose the party of William of Orange. They did not consider the revolt against the Spanish government as a Calvinistic religious war, and were opposed to the efforts of the Calvinists to make it such.

If one would understand the position of those Catholic Spaniards of to-day who side with the Government, we may compare it with this situation. Just as the Catholics of those times who sided with the States-General by that very fact withdrew from the political schemes of Cardinal Granvelle, so these modern Catholic Spaniards reject the admonitions of the Archbishop of Toledo and other ecclesiastical dignitaries, whose spiritual authority they nevertheless acknowledge.

It is not only a very problematic situation; it is for themselves a tragic one. On the one hand they have the exigencies of the justice of the Gospel, which they consider have been shamefully neglected in modern Spain since the restoration of the monarchy in 1876, and to which they wish to respond as quickly as possible. But on the other hand, they are the faithful children of the Catholic Church, whose hierarchic representatives have chosen the other side. For these men, which considerations should have

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most weight? It is a problem which involves an interior struggle of conscience whose solution is not easy.

All of which, as CITE CHRETIENNE remarks is not to approve such an attitude, but may enable us "to judge it, independently of political passions, with the spirit of justice and charity which Catholics should never be without.

A CONSERVATIVE TRADITIONALISM. The current **COLOSSEUM** presents a particularly strong list of contents and an unusually wide range of contributors. Positions adopted in the previous issue are maintained and clarified, and receive more considered statement in the process: they are important as representing a very strong body of intelligent English Catholic opinion on many of the chief issues of the day. The Editor says, "We are not in any sense Right or Left in our opinions, but eclectic. We would be grateful if our readers will not label us." But as he himself goes on to speak of "our conservatism" we may be allowed to describe these positions as generally though not exclusively conservative in tendency. **COLOSSEUM** stands squarely for "two basic principles: the primacy of spirituality and the need for preserving tradition." They are sound and indispensable principles; principles which may nevertheless come into mutual conflict if the second be not accurately apprehended and rigorously subordinated to the first. **COLOSSEUM** explicitly recognizes that tradition is "living and organic," but occasionally we seem to detect a tendency to regard it rather as something static to be "conserved" than as something dynamic to be "handed on," and there is a hint of a consequent equation of traditionalism with mere conservatism. At a time when terrible things are being done in the name of tradition, it seems particularly important not to restrict its meaning: to stress that tradition is for man and not man for tradition; that a generation is to be judged less by its conservation of the inheritance of the past than by what it does with it, less by the tradition it receives than by the tradition it leaves behind. It must be urged, too, that we do not continue a Catholic cultural tradition which has become devitalized through the decay of its informing supernatural principle by "conserving" the mummy, but solely by revitalizing it and reinforming it—or rather, by co-operating with the divine Grace that will do so. These observations are not strictures

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ON COLOSSEUM, which has far too firm a grip of its first basic principle to be led astray by materialistic interpretations of its second. But they are points on which we should like to see greater stress at the present time. Though conservative in principle, COLOSSEUM is nevertheless liberal in hospitality. Some thirty pages of the present issue are occupied with a *Symposium on Peace and War* to which contribute men of very varying outlooks and backgrounds. We would single out for special mention the contribution of Father Gerald Vann, O.P., who develops and clarifies the contentions of his article on *The Ethics of Modern War* in our December number. He insists that the difference between ancient and modern warfare is not of degree but of kind, since it arises from a diversity of object, intention and result. His contention that the latter calls for the application of a different set of ethical principles cannot therefore be dismissed by Mr. Christopher Dawson's jibe at "the romantic fallacy which idealizes the past, as though wars were just when knights were bold and ceased to be so when they ceased to be picturesque." It is not altogether easy to acquit Mr. Dawson himself of an idealization of the past in his historical approach to the problem, but his argument is one that could hardly be developed adequately in less than a large volume; and his conclusion is our own when he writes: "What we want are not pacifists but peace-makers, and peace is made by 'agreeing with your adversary while you are in the way with him,' and by doing one's best to understand the minds and traditions of other people." Mr. Douglas Jerrold's very candid contribution is revealing of a state of mind representative of many who are confronted by the spectre of the next war, and are faced with the hideous problem of reconciling their part in it with their Catholic conscience. As such it is important; but it is not altogether reassuring.

CONTEMPORANEA. AMERICAN REVIEW (February): *English Monarchy: The Significance of the Abdication*: Hilaire Belloc's view: the exposure of the sham preludes the decline of the usurping plutocracy.

CATHOLIC ACTION (Bombay) (January): Fr. J. H. Lobo gives a useful summary of our Peace Number with pertinent comments of his own.

CATHOLIC WORKER (March): assumes a more convenient format and includes excellent contributions; notably S. Pearson's *Communism* and Fr. Drinkwater's *Religion and Politics*.

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COMMONWEAL (February 12): A suggestive reevaluation of Francis Thompson by G. N. Shuster.

GK's WEEKLY (February 25): Text of debate on *Communism or Distributism* by Mr. John Strachey and Fr. Vincent McNabb, O.P.

LITURGY AND SOCIOLOGY (February): *The Theology of Sociology*: A Sociology based on Revelation: mechanistic and organic conceptions of human society inadequate and misleading: the true Type of Society is the Life of the Trinity and its realization is in the Mystical Body. An article whose importance it is hard to over-estimate.

ORATE FRATRES (February 21): *The Function of Liturgy in establishing Christian Social Order* by G. E. Ganns, S.J.: some practical applications of that theological sociology.

ZEIT IM QUERSCHNITT (March 1): *Englands Rüstungssorgen*: the Franco-Soviet Pact blamed for our monstrous rearmament burden.

PENGUIN.