HUMANISM IN EDUCATION

Some months before the outbreak of the war, an American Jesuit published an educational study of considerable importance, which has been almost entirely neglected in England.[1] It is time that this work was more widely known, for it is a book for Catholics today and especially for all who teach in Catholic schools. It is the product of first-class Catholic historical scholarship, and is a fine example of a proper use of history. The author ends the book with an induction, from the wealth of historical facts which he presents, as to what are the essential factors in any education provided by the Society of Jesus and describes how these factors can be applied to schools today, particularly in the United States.

This work is remarkable for its dissimilarity to the productions of most secular scholarship and to most secular sociology today. In the first place it leads on, from a specialized and detailed historical research concerned with the foundations of the first Jesuit Colleges and the influences and historical processes leading to the *Ratio Studiorum* of 1599, to a broad outline of Jesuit practice up to the present day, instead of confining itself to a particular department of knowledge or history supposedly self-sufficient. In the second place the educational policy which is suggested by the final chapter is based on detailed practical experience, and long-founded tradition and depends on a Christian philosophy of life, specifically scholastic philosophy: thus it advises for present-day problems without allowing the solution to be dictated by and produced within the very causes of the problems themselves. The solution has been tried and tested by many centuries and could not be acclaimed as 'progressive' in the evolutionary sense; it is based on a logical rational philosophy instead of on the illogical so-called dynamic hotch-potch of gnostic religiosity and worship of the natural sciences which informs most sociology and educational theory to-day.

The book covers in masterly fashion whole tracts of the history of Jesuit education, dealing in detail with the humanistic side of the curriculum, which have never been described before. The book is divided into three parts. The first part extends from 1548 to 1584, tracing 'the establishment and scholastic organization of the first Jesuit colleges at Messina, Palermo, Rome and in other parts of Italy; in Spain and Portugal. The early school programs and ordinations formulated by Ignatius and Nadal are presented and reviewed

(1) The Jesuit Code of Liberal Education: The Development and Scope of the *Ratio Studiorum*. By Alan P. Farrell, S.J., Ph.D. (Bruce, Milwaukee, 1938).

in their relation to actual classroom trial.' Detailed description is given of the parts played by Ignatius himself (too often underrated) and Ledesma. The second division goes up to 1599 and extensive use has been made in it of unpublished material and primary sources to show 'that freedom in the expression of opinion, combined with a fine sense of co-operation which made it possible to mould one official system of studies applicable to Jesuit schools in every part of the world' (preface), that is, the *Ratio Studiorum* of 1599. The final division describes briefly the *Ratio* in operation up to 1772, when the Society was suppressed. It continues with the revision of the *Ratio* in 1832 and finally describes the permanent and distinctive qualities of the *Ratio*.

These qualities lie in its spirit and method. For the first, will and intellect must be trained side by side: 'the theology of sanctification and salvation is intrinsic to the system'; so also 'the Latin and Greek classics and scholastic philosophy are constants in any educational planning, because they offer abiding and universal values for human training.' 'Scholastic philosophy, particularly scholastic metaphysics, crowns the training in the liberal disciplines by laying a sound foundation for an adequate understanding, interpretation and application to human life of the sciences, both natural and social, and by providing a rational basis for faith—becoming the handmaid of religion, which is the proper and supreme integrating principle of knowledge.' (Page 403). For the second, 'this methodology meant a threefold process of stating a precept or proposition, which the teacher explained and illustrated with the co-operation of the class and which the pupils then applied in laboratory exercises. This method was the basis of all Jesuit teaching, whether of the languages, the sciences, mathematics, philosophy, or theology,' and 'is adaptable to the teaching of any branch in the curriculum and is extensively used in modern pedagogy' (Page 405).

Finally there are four most interesting appendices including an admirable bibliography; the whole book contains a thorough collection of notes, and references and an index.

This is a book for the times because it seeks to renew a particular branch (that of secondary and higher academic education) of the life of the Church by returning to principles tried by experience and based on Christian truth. Written by one of its members, it seeks to urge the Society of Jesus to return to the essentials of its own education with its own distinctive means and ends applicable to children at any time and any place and to turn away from the modern disintegrated method wherein the content, means and ends of education are largely determined by current problems of a superficial social or economic nature. The author seeks also to renew our appreciation of the art of teaching. The ideal which is held up before the Jesuit teacher, he says, includes the qualities of the apostle, the scholar and the gentleman. Fr Farrell ends: 'It would be possible to suggest a specific plan of studies, but it has been thought best not to do so lest the relevant point of the chapter be lost in the confusion of centrifugal discussion. . . . Certainly however the Jesuit schools will hold to their aim of furnishing their students with a supernatural philosophy of life, and they will continue to regard the classics and philosophy as admirable means to achieve this aim.' JOHN TODD.

REVIEWS

PHYSICS AND PHILOSOPHY. A Study of Saint Thomas's Commentary on the Eight Books of Aristotle's Physics. By James A. McWilliams, S.J. (The American Catholic Philosophical Association, Washington; $2.00).

This is the second volume to appear in this series of Studies, which aims at providing publicaton for noteworthy and philosophically important material which otherwise might not see the light of day. It is the 'instrument of further research, rather than a research itself.' The book is divided into two parts: the first contains an introduction to the Physics, with other sections on the laws of movement, and a translation of the first five *lectiones* of S. Thomas's commentary on the third Book. The second part contains a précis of the commentary on all eight books, a note on the sempiternity of movement, and an analysis of the commentary on the eight books. The work concludes with tabulated references to the *Contra Gentes* and *Summa*, a useful bibliography of more or less contemporary literature, and a not very ambitious index.

In general, the work is a useful one. The analyses help the student to obtain a bird's-eye view of what is a very extensive and complex work. The author recognises the pressing need for the *Philosophia Perennis* to get to grips with modern scientific thought. The chapter on the laws of motion contains a useful comparison of the views of Newton, Descartes, S. Thomas, and Aristotle, on the subject of Inertia. I think that if more space and ingenuity had been spent on extending this comparative study the book would have been enormously strengthened in its appeal. In particular, that part of the book which carries the independent conclusions of the writer seems weak. There is an 'Elenchus' of meanings of the word 'Infinite' running to half a page which is pedagogically a mistake as it leads the student to approach the Physics through learnt definitions instead of observed facts. This is a pity in view of the denial of many scientists that our Physics are inductive, and the more so because of the close connexion of this term with the doctrine of the Analogy of