

THE IRISH IN ENGLAND

JOHN FITZSIMONS

FROM the beginning of the eighteenth century there has been a steady trickle of immigrants from Ireland¹ to Britain, so that by 1841 there were about 300,000 Irish-born men and women living in the country. Then, in 1846-7, came the failure of the potato crop in Ireland, and famine stalked the land. The immediate result was that the flow of immigrants became a flood. By 1851 the figure for England and Wales had risen to 500,000, and ten years later it had increased to over 800,000.

The vast majority of these immigrants had landed at Liverpool and then fanned out through the mining districts of south Lancashire to the cotton towns of east Lancashire, on to the woollen mills of Yorkshire, south to the industrial Midlands and London, or north to the coalfields on the north-east coast and Tyneside. At first they presented problems not unlike those of the *Diaspora* in Germany at the present day. They arrived in areas where there was little or no provision for Catholic worship, where the Catholics (what few of them remained) were emerging from three centuries in the catacombs, and where there was a great dearth of clergy. In the early days many thousands were lost to the faith due to their lack of opportunity to practise. For example, it has been estimated that had there been sufficient clergy the population of industrial Yorkshire would have been more than half Catholic instead of less than the third that it is at present.

These immigrants, living in frightful slums and hovels, provided the unskilled labour for the growing industrial towns and cities and, under the direction of clergy who joined them from their native land, began to build churches and chapels, thereby setting a demographic pattern of Catholicism that has endured to this day. The great flood of immigrants was contemporaneous with the Oxford Movement of Newman and his friends but, as Bishop Ward wrote, it 'affected the future of Catholicism in this country more even than the Oxford Movement, for it was the influx of the Irish in 1846 and the following years that made our congregations what they are and led to the multiplication of missions'.

From the turn of the century more and more of the Irish

¹ Throughout this article, Ireland, unless otherwise stated, is to be taken to mean the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland, i.e. the twenty-six counties of which the administrative metropolis is Dublin, and six out of the nine counties of Ulster of which the administrative capital is Belfast.

or another is at the bottom of all psychopathy. The graver the disease the less is moral responsibility involved. He does not, however, go so far as to exclude sin entirely as a source, in some cases of psychopathy.

As has been said already, this treatise is the outcome of wide personal experience over a number of years, and is independent of theories of a psychoanalytic or other nature. In a field where much diversity of opinion and theory prevails, this plain non-technical exposition of facts is very welcome.

AIDAN ELRINGTON, O.P.

THE DARK WHEEL. By S.M.C. (Sands; 6s.)

The author of *Brother Petroc's Return*, which had so well-deserved a success, has now given us a still more finished and still more important novel. *The Dark Wheel*, like its predecessor, asks credence for an unusual play with time, which once granted, the sequence of the story follows with masterly and compelling logic; for in both books there is a well-developed theological theme skilfully clothed in most interesting narrative. But from every angle *The Dark Wheel* shows a notable advance in technique on the part of the author. Brother Petroc's return to human intercourse depends upon four hundred years of suspended animation, a phantasy remote from possibility yet somehow easy of acceptance. But in the revolving of the Dark Wheel, Greville White, a modern professional man and an atheist who has suffered a breakdown from overwork, is carried through the tenuous veil that separates time from eternity in such fashion that from the Cornish garden whither he has betaken himself for a much-needed rest he sets out upon a strange journey through what can best be described as vignettes of time beginning in pre-Reformation days.

The notion of the re-enacting of by-gone scenes in the ever-present *now* of eternity, for the benefit of one who has been permitted by God to penetrate the veil of time while yet he lives in this sublunar world, opens a fascinating and by no means unprofitable line of speculation. The author presents it with a simplicity and sureness of touch that is characteristic of the whole book. The strange pilgrimage and gradual conversion of the hero is etched in with deft lines and a great sympathy; and in the course of it deep Catholic truths are expounded with the ability of a theologian and the finished technique of the experienced novelist, though the author is professionally neither the one nor the other. (Perhaps it is not indiscreet to reveal

Owing to the controls that were imposed during the war, it is possible to have some idea of the provenance of the immigrants. Thus, 68 per cent of those who came to England between 1943 and 1951 were from rural areas, but (repeating the pattern of last century) almost all of them settled in the towns and cities. The men were mostly unskilled labourers; the women, mostly under twenty-five years of age, came to work as nurses, domestic servants, or in hotels and factories. English hospitals advertise continually in Irish newspapers for girls who are willing to be trained in English hospitals, with the result that there is scarcely a large hospital anywhere in England which has not its quota of Irish nurses. More than half the hospital nurses in Britain are Catholics, and of these 75 per cent are Irish-born. Factories advertise, too, and there are even firms which maintain employment offices in Dublin. The tendency among the girls is to end up in factories, although originally they may have come to England for domestic or hotel service; and there are many who, coming in the first instance to hospitals, find the hours, wages and freedom of factories preferable to nursing. Very few recruits come to the professions from Ireland now, though this was not the case forty years ago. Then, many cultivated Irishmen were to be found in the Civil Service and the Law, some of them rising to high eminence. In latter years the medical profession is the only one that contains a large number of Irishmen, because the majority of those who qualify in Ireland must seek a livelihood abroad. It has been said that without them the National Health Service would be unable to function.

The continuing housing crisis has forced many of the Irish immigrants into living conditions which, while not perhaps as dreadful as the previous century, are still far from satisfactory. They fall an easy prey to unscrupulous landlords who exploit them in almost unimaginable ways. Several years ago the Y.C.W. in Birmingham made an enquiry into the living conditions of the 50,000 Irish workers in that city. They found examples of as many as fifteen young men being herded into one room. 'The bulk of the Irish', says their report, 'is to be found living in the inner and central housing rings of the city, which are in the main fifty to a hundred years old. Approximately fifty per cent live in groups of between fifteen and twenty—sometimes as many as fifty living together. A characteristic is the idea of keeping together—often they sacrifice comfort in good lodgings in order to live together in a group. . . . Their living quarters are grossly overcrowded, ill-kept, dirty, and the cost exorbitant.' One result has been the

increasing number who have to go into sanatoria with tuberculosis or into hospitals with gastric ulcers. The problem is increased by the new immigrants, who tend to go to the same places, for (as the Commission on Emigration noted in its Report)³ 'recent emigration to Great Britain is building up centres of attraction in that country'. Despite overcrowding and bad living conditions, the flow of new arrivals continues unabated because, as the Commission says, 'Emigration of some members of the family has almost become part of the established custom of the people in certain areas—a part of the generally accepted pattern of life'.

There was a time, not very long ago, when Catholicism in some parts of England was so closely identified with the Irish that a convert to Catholicism was referred to discourteously as having 'gone Irish'. By the time of the outbreak of the Second World War assimilation had progressed and, apart from sporadic outbreaks of bigotry in Liverpool and Glasgow, Catholic had ceased to be synonymous with Irish. The stage Irishman, that butt of the minor dramatist, was disappearing from the theatre and, perhaps because of the large number of Catholics throughout the Commonwealth, the loyalty or 'Englishness' of Catholics was seldom questioned. Another, not so happy, fact was that, because of falling away in previous generations, an Irish name by no means always meant that the bearer was a Catholic, nor even that his parents had been Catholics.

But what of the half-million Irish who have entered the country since 1939? Their religion and their national pride, for good historical reasons, are very much interwoven. So it will be found that those who cling to the one will cling to the other too. There are certain parishes, both in London and in Birmingham, which (partly because of their geographical position and partly because of the Irish clergy who staff them) tend to be the focus of Irish Sunday Mass attendance. Outside these churches Irish weekly papers are sold and in their profusion greatly outnumber the English papers. Apart from these papers there are Irish clubs—some of them begun by Communists for their own purposes—and regional associations, grouping together those who come from the same county in Ireland.

But clubs and parishes touch no more than a small minority of possible members. Nor can one say that a large number of them are politically minded. There exists an organization called the Anti-Partition League whose purpose is to protest against the

³ *Report of the Commission on Emigration and other Population Problems*. Dublin, 1954.

separation of the six counties of Northern Ireland under a separate government in Belfast. Not many of this new generation of immigrants are involved in this, and the work is left to the professional exiles, who are sometimes separated from Ireland by two or three generations. Most of these newcomers exist in a strange limbo where they have not been assimilated into their English surroundings, still look on Ireland as 'home' and yet have no intention of returning there until the Irish economy can provide them with as good a living as they find in England. They will probably never be assimilated, and it will be left to their children and their children's children, as in the last century, to settle down and belong.

Obviously such a large influx, coming as it does from a country which is almost entirely Catholic,⁴ must make some mark on the Catholicism of England. Already the face of Catholicism has been moulded to a large extent by the Irish Catholics of the last century. (It should be clear that I am here speaking of ordinary parochial life, not of the intellectual and literary Catholic life which unhappily is so far removed from it.) The first and most important point to make is that the enormous accession to the Catholic body in the past twenty years is not reflected in the official statistics. If one makes allowances for the number of European refugees (nearly 200,000 of whom are nominally Catholics) and for the regular leakage, the Catholic population has not increased as it should. One reason may be that so many Irish Catholics, in big cities like London and Birmingham, are continually on the move in an attempt to find some place which will combine being with friends, a minimum of comfort, reasonable rent, and proximity to their place of work. As a result the parish clergy rarely catch up with them. Recently however their presence has been reflected in marriage statistics: an analysis of the marriage records of the Archdiocese of Westminster carried out by the Newman Demographic Survey in 1955 showed that 52 per cent of Catholics marrying in the period 1948-54 had been born in Ireland. It is difficult to generalize about their religious practice, but it seems to be true that many of them, once the support of their community is removed and they are no longer subject to social pressure to conform, do tend to become extremely slack in their attendance at Mass and the sacraments. (Saturday and Sunday work, too, take their toll of the lukewarm.) Both the

⁴ For the purposes of this essay I have disregarded the small proportion of non-Catholics included in the figures of immigrants. It is more than likely, given the hidden and at times open persecution of Catholics in Ulster, that most of the immigrants from there are Catholics too.

Irish and the English bishops have been conscious of this, and through their efforts regular missions are preached for the Irish in all the large centres of population by a team of members of religious orders from Ireland.

The faith which the first wave of immigrants brought with them a hundred years ago was sturdy and simple. It was built up round the Mass and the Rosary and a devotion to their clergy at times not tinged with reverential awe. It was a tenacious faith, the kind which had survived persecution for centuries and which, perhaps for that very reason, was more individualist than communitarian. Hell was to be feared, heaven sought and the clergy obeyed. That was all they knew and, they felt, all that they needed to know. It was the kind of faith too that lent itself to incrustations of private devotions which might at times seem near to superstition. Indeed, survivals of pre-Christian beliefs still lingered among some of them. For the most part they were of peasant stock, and Christianity had not wholly, in all cases, dispelled the subconscious faith in fertility rites, the 'little people' and dark other-worldly forces.

Against such a background, it is easy to understand the late start and slow progress of the liturgical movement in this country. The people's religion has been firmly wedded to the silent Low Mass, at which they are onlookers, and to Rosary, Sermon and Benediction in the evening. There is not even a good tradition of hymn-singing—the commonly sung hymn to St Patrick provides an obvious proof of lack of interest. It cannot be said that the latest arrivals will bring with them any great demand for liturgical progress, for Ireland is, if anything, even further behind the times in this matter than England.

This sense of community is lacking too in other matters. It is a remarkable fact that in the struggle for the recognition of the trade unions in the late nineteenth century, despite the large number of Irish Catholics engaged in industry, none of them ever achieved any eminence as a leader. Among the new immigrants there is no interest in trade unions, or if there is it is antipathetic. Many of them refuse to join, repeating the parrot-cry that the unions are dominated by Communists. This lack of interest was so striking some years ago at one of the biggest car factories in England that appeal was made to a Catholic prominent in social action. He produced a leaflet with pictures of the Popes from Leo XIII onwards, and quotations from their exhortations to workers to join their unions. It was only then that the Irish workers consented to become members. In another factory, in Birmingham,

their refusal to join the union caused many others to resign, on the grounds that the Irish received the same benefits, wage increases, etc.: the result has been that unity among the workers has been broken and the Communists have moved into key positions. This lack of militancy, disregard of solidarity, and willingness to accept any kind of conditions does not cause much unrest now, in a time of full employment, but if a slump came it might very well cause grave disturbances, and have reactions very unfavourable to Catholics.

In politics the story is rather different. The majority, anything from sixty-five to seventy per cent, of Catholics in the large cities vote Labour. This provides one of the greatest anomalies in the Catholic life of England: a fundamental contrast between the Catholic working class, almost wholly Irish in origin, which votes Labour, and the largely English minority which controls the Catholic Press and organs of propaganda and which is Conservative. An acute American observer has pointed out that the 'social and political division of the Catholics in England has prevented the formulation of generally acceptable social and political programmes'. There is thus a gulf between the views and opinions of those who should be the leading Catholic laymen and the vast mass of the Catholic proletarian voters. The editor of *The Tablet* expressed this in a somewhat contemptuous judgment when he wrote, as recently as 1949, that the 'Glasgow and Liverpool Irish are not voting to express any Catholic social philosophy'. In that phrase is summed up a great deal of the tension and strain which lies below the surface of English Catholicism. Not all English Catholics were happy a century ago when they saw their religion becoming more and more that of the servants' quarters and of the slums of the great cities. Even today some of them look on the Irish as second-class members of the Church who, alas, do not always know their own place. On crucial matters like the defence of Catholic schools and of the rights of the family the Catholic body stands together, but in other matters its influence will not be great until it achieves a much greater internal coherence.

The official Commission already referred to pointed out in its Report that 'the majority of the emigrants are young and inexperienced and have lived comparatively sheltered lives before emigrating. An abrupt change to a new environment, lacking the discipline and restraint of home surroundings and the vigilance of parents, constitutes in itself a real danger. In receipt of relatively large earnings to which they are unaccustomed, and often living

in crowded hostels and lodging-houses, they may succumb to the temptations of city life.' The Commission did in fact make a limited survey in Britain, which established 'the fact that while moral and religious deterioration among emigrants may not be very extensive and may indeed affect only a small percentage of the many thousands of emigrants, nevertheless, the number of such cases was sufficient to be disturbing and to merit attention'.

It is obviously a minority which will earn a bad name for the rest. Thus in some centres where there are a large number of Irishmen, something like fifty per cent of the 'drunk and disorderly' cases on Saturday and Monday morning will be young Irishmen, sometimes mere youths of sixteen and seventeen. In fact, the marvel is that many more do not get into trouble, for their lodgings are unattractive, and in many cases they are not allowed to stay in after their evening meal, and so must roam the streets or go to public-houses.

Another aspect of the moral problem is the number of unmarried mothers who come to England. 'Many unmarried mothers', the Commission reports, 'find it preferable, for one reason or another, to emigrate rather than face all the circumstances of an illegitimate pregnancy and confinement in this country. . . . We suggest that the question of the welfare and care of unmarried mothers and the children should be fully examined . . . so that problems relating to illegitimacy in the Twenty-Six Counties might be dealt with fully in our own country, instead of partly in Great Britain as at present.' In one year recently the number of Irish unmarried mothers dealt with by Catholic diocesan organizations in Great Britain was 250. The total figure was probably twice this number, and should be compared with the average for Eire, which is about 2,000 a year.

One member of the Commission disagreed with the emphasis given to this matter in the Report, but said that the existing moral dangers 'call for a great deal more instruction than our young people receive before they emigrate'. This preparation, both in religious instruction and in moral ideas, would be designed to help them to withstand the pressures of a modern city in Great Britain, where Christian standards have so largely lapsed.

The solution to the problem is not easy. When children are at school—even towards the end of their schooldays—it is impossible to say which of them is going to emigrate in two, five, six, or even ten years' time. Children who are going to spend their days in a Catholic country, where the level of religious practice is extremely high (and the social pressures to conform are correspondingly

strong), and where the moral standards are Christian—such children will need a very different type of instruction from that given to those who are to go abroad to a country largely pagan in outlook. The problem is far from being solved, but the right questions are being asked and steps taken to come to grips with it.

When the thousands upon thousands of Irish people began to pour into England during and after the famine in Ireland, the modest resources, both in clergy and in churches, of English Catholicism were quite unable to cope with their spiritual needs. In the whole country there were not many more than 700 priests engaged in the pastoral ministry. When the Hierarchy was restored and dioceses established in 1850, there were 800 priests, of whom 150 were in Lancashire, sixty-nine in Yorkshire and seventy-two in metropolitan London. In an article on the Irish in London, an anonymous writer in *The Rambler* for April 1851 declared, 'Ten times the number of clergy that we now possess, with a proportionate number of additional churches, would scarcely suffice for the ever increasing necessities of Catholic London'. Gradually more and more priests came from Ireland, until in 1870 there were 2,000 at work. This phenomenal increase in twenty years was due almost entirely to those who came from the Irish seminaries and went to work in the industrial cities and towns where their fellow-countrymen languished for the lack of their ministrations. Thus the urban Catholicism which grew up was made up of immigrants ministered to very largely by Irish priests. This was inevitable, for the strongholds of Catholicism in the eighteenth century had been mainly rural, grouped round private chapels supported by the old land-owning families. Their Catholicism, both in externals and in spirit, had little in common with that of the newcomers, nor did the influx of the Oxford converts (apart from the Italianate devotions and influence of Father Faber) change the characteristics of their piety. The faith of the first and second generations of the Irish who formed the bulk of the Catholic body in England was dictated by the spirit which their clergy brought with them.

Their teaching had a strong moralistic tinge, for they came from seminaries which had been much influenced by the Jansenism of the French seminaries. Many of their flock were illiterate—it was not until 1870 that local government authorities in England were given powers to make attendance at school compulsory—and were ruled by moral exhortation. The Law, not the Prophets, was their staple spiritual diet. If the clergy were hard on their people, they were hard on themselves too, and many of them were

cast in the heroic mould. Let one example suffice. During the typhus epidemic in Liverpool in 1847 ten priests, of whom half were from Ireland, died through their untiring work for the sick and the dying. Moreover, the chief need was for schools and churches, and these pioneer clergy had to be practical men, planners and builders—and the buildings had to be paid for by the pennies of the poor. They did pay, and generously, but for the clergy there was the continual grind of raising the money and administering it.

The attitude of the clergy to their flock was frequently authoritarian, and the laity at times felt themselves ruled by stern, unbending tyrants. This was at the opposite pole from the position of many of the Catholic clergy before 1850. They were chaplains to the 'old Catholics', who sometimes considered them as high-grade servants and treated them as such.

The flock in the nineteenth century was not resentful of the way it was ruled, partly because this attitude was what it had been used to in Ireland, and partly because of a great love of and respect for the priesthood. But difficulties have since arisen through the spread of higher education, particularly since the beginning of this century. Those who have had a grammar school education and who have perhaps developed a heightened sense of personal responsibility do not readily accept an authoritarian form of leadership. Of course, this does not necessarily imply a disinclination to accept authority, especially in matters of doctrine, but a resentment at being treated in an authoritarian way. The latest wave of immigrants for the past fifteen years still accept the domineering attitude of some of their clergy, but their acceptance is now coloured by a mild and half-unconscious anti-clericalism.

Among the Irish clergy who came to England in the nineteenth century were many cultivated and scholarly men, who, despite the physical grind of their ministry, managed to preserve their scholarly habit of mind. At that time England was the principal country to which the surplus Irish clergy came, but in these days there are other mission fields which claim a large number: the United States and the foreign missions. This widening of scope has had its effect on the quality of the clergy coming to dioceses in England: they have not the same intellectual interests, and their conservative training has been such as to make them seem at times suspicious of intellectual pursuits, if not even anti-intellectual. When some new idea is adopted, the motive—indeed, the laudable motive—for its adoption is more often its apostolic value than intellectual conviction of its merits.

The background of these clergy is rural, as was that of their predecessors in the nineteenth century, and so, before their arrival in England, they had little actual familiarity with the problems of industrialism. The social apostolate in terms of a struggle for social justice receives from most of them no more than notional assent, although they have no equals in works of practical charity. Coming from an environment where justice has been interpreted for centuries in terms of throwing off England's yoke, combating the absentee landlords and getting a high price for their cattle, they do not take easily to the idea of a radical reconstruction of capitalist society. There is a tendency to retreat into 'angelism', to see as the chief merit of man the penitential acceptance of the ills of this world. There is something of the professional exile in the heart of every Irishman abroad, and this can lead to a confusion between the exiled sons of Kathleen na Houlihan and the *exsules filii Hevae*. As for the liturgical revival, it is probably true to say that despite the exhortations of the English hierarchy it will not become a great popular movement until it has already taken a firm hold in Ireland, and so become part of the ethos of Catholicism which the Irish clergy bring with them to their work in England. For the Irish clergy still form a large proportion of the total engaged in every diocese; even in a diocese with its own major and minor seminary it is as high as thirty per cent, while elsewhere it may well be half or more than half.

In the eyes of most Irishmen, the Church of England is associated with the ascendancy and the old unhappy days of persecution. Consequently, for the Irish clergy in England there is a temptation to be impatient with the clergy of the Established Church, to be a little dubious about their sincerity, perhaps even to be intolerant of their efforts. The problem of reunion is seen in black-and-white terms of submission to Rome, without sufficient account being taken of the psychological factors or of the necessity, without compromising in principles, of showing unflinching charity and understanding.

Although Ireland has supplied so many clergy to England in the past hundred years, the Irish have not been proportionately represented on the Bench of Bishops. In the hundred and ten years since the restoration of the Hierarchy, there have been no more than eight bishops who were born in Ireland, and even some of these had received their seminary training in England. At the time of the restoration in 1850 there was no bishop of Irish origin, and there was none until sixteen years later. From that time onwards there has always been at least one Irish-born

bishop—for some periods as many as three—until 1936. Now, with one exception, all the bishops of England (i.e. excluding Wales and Scotland) are of English origin, and the sequence which lasted ninety years has been broken.

What of the future? It is impossible to say whether the emigration of Irish men and women will continue at the same rate as in the past ten years. The Irish Government is concerned about this drain on its population, and is taking measures to induce its young people to remain. A great deal, too, depends on the economic future of Great Britain, whether it will be able to preserve its position in world markets and so maintain full employment and its high standard of living. (Incidentally, there is the anomaly that while thousands of Irish are coming to England, thousands of English people are emigrating to Canada and Australia.) We shall still need the help of Irish-born clergy for many years to come, and although there are signs of a decline in the recruitment for the diocesan clergy in Ireland, one may hope that they will still come as they have done for the last hundred years. At present, about one-third of the priests ordained in diocesan seminaries in Ireland come to England.

It is unlikely that there will be any great changes in the characteristics of English Catholicism if the immigration continues. The solid core of practising Catholics is made up very largely of the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the Irish men and women who came to England in the last century, who have become assimilated and who are now spread through all classes and all ranks in society.

The question of the assimilation of this century's immigrants presents another problem. Both by inclination and on account of the amenities provided for them, it would seem that their tendency was to remain apart from the life of the country, whether social or religious. In the short run this may seem an acceptable solution of the problems confronting them, but in the long run it may very well be mistaken. It postpones the movement towards inner coherence which is so necessary if the Church is to fulfil its missionary role in a largely de-Christianized England, and it is likely to perpetuate the legend that Catholicism is an Irish form of Christianity instead of the Universal Church of Christ. Without the Irish immigration of the nineteenth century, Catholicism in England, miracles apart, would still be the religion of a small and insignificant minority. Today its standard of practice, Mass attendance and reception of the sacraments will bear comparison with those of any country in Europe, and this is

largely due to the sturdy faith which the Irish pioneers handed on to their children. Their sacrifice has equipped England with thousands of churches, chapels and schools. (In the past hundred years the number of churches has been multiplied five times: the number of schools has increased from 350 in 1870 to well over 2,000 today.)

The new generation of immigrants presents a magnificent opportunity for the future: let us hope it will be grasped.

NOTE. This article is based on a contribution to *Catholicisme Anglais* (Editions du Cerf), of which an English edition is being prepared for early publication by Messrs Sheed and Ward.

OXFORD PHILOSOPHY

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MR GELLNER'S now celebrated little book¹ is an attack on a philosophical school, centred in Oxford, called 'linguistic philosophy'; in assessing it we have therefore to ask, 'Is there such a school?' The idea that there is, of course, is not original to Gellner. Professor Flew, for example, has long proclaimed the existence of such a school, membership of which apparently depends upon nomination by Professor Flew. Now it is certainly the case that there was before the war an identifiable and self-conscious group of *révoltés* among the professional philosophers at Oxford: men like Austin, Ayer and Ryle, who had been variously influenced by Moore, the Logical Positivists and Wittgenstein, and who formed a common front against Joseph and Prichard. Their cohesion derived from the contemporary Oxford situation: they could not even then be said by themselves to form a school against any wider background than that of Oxford. This group was so successful that after the war it captured almost all the philosophical posts in the University. Victory attained, its cohesion fell away; apart from certain publicists like Flew, philosophers at Oxford ceased to think of themselves as belonging to any definite group or party. This may, of course, be an illusion, or, as Gellner appears to think, a deliberate pretence: we have still to ask whether there are any tenets to which all the members of this 'school', and only they, subscribe.

¹ *Words and Things*. By Ernest Gellner. (Victor Gollancz; 25s.)