

with modern horrors (it is one). We need a new aristocracy, a new 'élite.'

Elites are either 'directive' or 'permeating,' and the latter fills the ranks of the former. And the modern educator must try to fill the ranks of the latter. He supplies the permeators.

'Experiment' describes the author's twenty years' effort to do this: a rather noble story of a flexible mind, with very good intentions and dogged persistence. His warm and glowing enthusiasm for young human nature holds one's sympathy; despite the utter modernism of the religion. As a story its climax is the League of Honour and Service, a sort of modernist Grail (for boys) or Sodality which Dr. Happold founded in 1935 at Bishop Wordsworth's School, Salisbury. This is his nucleus, his 'order,' his new aristocracy which is to permeate England: a little cohort of leaders, of seers, of doers. What will they do? 'Possibilities' does not tell you precisely. In a general way it argues for this type of aristocracy and this kind of training, it gropes into the future, it urges the Higher Christianity. I am not jeering. Dr. Happold really thinks that Christianity must get 'higher' by passing beyond creed and dogma; and that *then* you can bring youth to the altar and dedicate it and sew the Cross of Sacrifice on its left shoulder (p. 69).

Well, this is happening. It is a fact and a factor in our world, perhaps a growing one, perhaps dynamic. What shall we say? I put only three questions: (1) Granted an undogmatic 'faith' in that 'World of Being,' from which moral values and the League of Service derive, will not Intellect strive to *define* this 'world'? (2) Can *human* energy persist at all if it does not define its absolutes, reach clarity of truth? (3) Can this be done except on a basis of dogmatic *credenda*? The history of European intellect suggests an answer.

KENELM FOSTER, O.P.

EDUCATION THROUGH ART. By Herbert Read. 106 illustrations. Faber; 25s.)

Mr. Read considers this 'by far the most important book he has yet written'; it seems to me much inferior to his *Politics of the Unpolitical*, of which parts at least could be praised unreservedly. Here there are fundamental weaknesses throughout, and the book is so disjointed that my criticism of it must take the form of disjointed annotations.

(1). The book's thesis, allegedly Platonic, is that 'art should be the basis of education.' For Plato, see below. Art is in one place defined as 'mankind's effort to achieve integration with the basic forms of the physical universe and the organic rhythms of life,' though elsewhere the word has the current sense of visual art-works. 'Education must be based on an understanding of temperamental differences,' and 'the child's modes of plastic expression are the best key to the child's particular disposition.' The difficulty of cor-

relating language, music and visual arts appears to be neglected, though it is a serious problem both with children and with adults.

(2). As a means to the desired integration of the personality, education of the intellect through book-learning is to be replaced by education of the sensibilities through 'art.' The machinery invented for book-learning is nevertheless to be kept intact, in the sense that buildings called 'schools' are taken for granted, compulsory attendance seems to be taken for granted (though of course the *methods of teaching* are to avoid compulsion), and home and parents are to remain well out of sight. Though at present suitable teachers do not exist, a change of heart among teachers trained to the old system might fill the gap almost overnight (p. 286). But why not a change of heart in parents which would let them dispense with teachers and schools, and perform the function of educators in the quite different units of home and parish?

(3). Is the kind of education proposed thought necessary for the better society of the future, or is it a stop-gap until we reach the social goal? Clearly, nothing comparable existed in those pre-Renaissance societies whose integrated culture is recognised in some passages of the book.

(4). Mr. Read thinks of present-day education as subordinating sensibility to reason or intellect; by 'integration' he seems really to mean a mere reversal of this order. But he has no notion of the true function of intellect as defined by the Scholastics (not to speak of the subtleties of 'affective knowledge' recently treated by Fr. Victor White). From the Scholastic point of view, a chief fault of modern education is that it is *anti-intellectual* (cf. Dom Aelred Graham, *The Love of God*, pp. 68-74).

(5). In this matter of subordination, confusion is caused by failure to distinguish priority in time and priority in nature, e.g.: 'There is no genuine work of art which does not *primarily* appeal to the senses.' In the same way, 'basis' is used indiscriminately of a humble starting-point (such as the alphabet) and of a directive principle (such as truth). But like everyone else, Mr. Read is forced at times to make a final appeal to reason, if only to complain that 'the concepts of "good" and "bad" are arbitrary, and not established by any process of logical reasoning' (p. 271).

(6). Few men have been more sensitive than St. Augustine to the beauty of works of art or nature, or have more clearly seen the reflection in the visible universe of the beauty of God himself. Yet for Mr. Read he is a 'schizophrenic visionary' with an 'anti-aesthetic bias.' Is this because St. Augustine was aware not only of things but of the hierarchy of things? Or is it merely that Mr. Read has not verified his references? He is certainly given to rash pronouncements on men and movements of the past. His remarks on Aristotelian dominance of the Middle Ages (p.64) belong to a bad tradition of donnish ignorance (as two small pointers in a wide sub-

ject, cf. Vincent of Beauvais' *De Erud. Fil. Nob.* c. 7, and Gilson, *Dante et la philosophie*, p. 155).

(7). The same hasty reading of evidence is traceable in most of the references to Plato. Mr. Read does well to distrust classical scholars, but he should make his own investigations more carefully. The whole of the *Republic* implies and expresses a hierarchy quite alien to Mr. Read's beliefs; it is fundamental there that intellect has the highest place and the senses have the lowest, and the education here termed 'aesthetic' is the first step in a training whose goal is metaphysical knowledge. Plato insists that everything which surrounds the children should be good, beautiful, rational in its kind; but this implies also the removal of what is bad, ugly, irrational—hence a strict censorship, and the expulsion of disobedient artists (Cornford's *Republic*, pp. 87-88, 288, 329). And though teachers are to 'avoid compulsion' in mathematics and so forth (*ib.* p. 252), the activities of Mr. Read's syllabus would be considerably impeded by various precautionary measures (*ib.* pp. 81-2, 112-3).

(8). A final quotation from the *Republic*. 'Your lovers of sights and sounds delight in beautiful tones and colours and shapes and in all the works of art into which these enter; but they have not the power of thought to behold and take delight in the nature of Beauty itself . . . Now if a man believes in the existence of beautiful things, but not of Beauty itself, and cannot follow a guide who would lead him to a knowledge of it, is he not living in a dream?'

WALTER SHEWRING.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SOCIAL ORDER. By R. A. L. Smith.
(Longmans, 7s. 6d.)

DR. SMITH has written a stimulating and challenging book, which deserves to be widely read, and will certainly provoke its readers to discussion. Particularly valuable is his examination, in the light of the Papal Encyclicals, of the various Government Reports which still await legislative sanction and may be expected to determine the broad outlines of our national policy of post-war reconstruction. His views are stated with clarity and force, and are manifestly the expression of deep personal conviction and a sense of urgency. Considering the small space at his disposal and the largeness of the subject of which he treats, it is perhaps ungenerous to charge him with a tendency to over-simplification, and with an occasional excess of optimism which obscures his judgment. Since he wrote his chapter on education, for instance, the White Paper has appeared, and issue has been joined on the crucial question of denominational schools. The result has been to reveal on the one hand a total lack of that unanimity among Christians which he takes for granted, and on the other, the existence—despite a genuine re-awakening to the importance of spiritual values in education—of a deep-rooted aversion to the denominational principle, as representing a reversal of the whole