

not so over-endowed with riches that we can afford to reject largesse from across the Channel. It was therefore painful to find our leading Catholic weekly, in so many respects appreciative of what is best, lending itself to an ill-considered attack upon a distinguished co-religionist. We have more than sufficient to occupy us in bearing witness to the truth without picking an idle quarrel with a man better qualified than most to further the common cause. Good taste alone should have prompted a different treatment of the French Ambassador to the Holy See, who has merited, from so discerning an observer as Etienne Gilson, the honour of being described as "the living incarnation of Christian France" (*La Vie Intellectuelle*, March, 1945, p. 38).

Whatever the gifts of our English Catholic writers, none of them, if a personal opinion may be allowed, can approach Maritain for depth of insight and sustained intellectual power. His capacity as a philosopher, which has gained him high esteem in the world of contemporary thought, combined with an assured grasp of the great principles of the Church's theology, enable him to throw a light upon many of our most urgent problems to which only perversity could close its eyes. His elucidation of the relations between the individual person and society as a whole, of the interplay between the spiritual and temporal spheres, of the nature of Christian philosophy, not to mention his occasional essays on ascetical and mystical theology, have no parallel in our native Catholic literature, clerical or lay. We have our own traditions and processes of thought; that is why many are now turning for guidance—though perhaps a little too much in the spirit of *laudatores temporis acti*—to Cardinal Newman. But, if reliance is to be placed in a single writer, it may be doubted whether even he is as illuminating a guide to the world-view of Catholicism as Jacques Maritain.

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NOTE—Dom Aelred Graham's article was sent in for publication before M. Maritain's own reply appeared in *The Tablet*, 13:xi:45.

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#### ERRATUM

In the last issue of **BLACKFRIARS** (October) p. 383 line 6, for "inductive" read "reductive"