

*Back in Anger*. This is the crux of the modern dilemma: are we to say, with Sartre, that the world is senseless and that ours is a derelict existence; or are we to say that our relationship to the world, in knowing, is a way of love? Our idea of what it is to be human turns decisively on whether or not we see the world as *created*. If we do, the way lies open to making the world the place of our encounter with the living God. The fact is that in an important sense values *are* to be had for the asking, and *only* for the asking. It is in the light of lives lived transparently in the life of grace that the painful search for values must find its sense.

This is of course an ephemeral and perishable book: most of the names and data will be different in a few years. But the function of this kind of literature is to efface itself when its discernments have once been made. There is no doubt that Mr Coleburt sees what the important things are.

F.K.

SAINT IGNATIUS LOYOLA—LETTERS TO WOMEN. By Hugo Rahner, S.J. (Herder Freiburg and Nelson, Edinburgh-London; 63s.)

In this excellent book, which one cannot recommend too highly, Fr Hugo Rahner portrays a little-known Ignatius Loyola. It is Ignatius seen through his correspondence with women of all classes. The twelve volumes of Ignatius' correspondence contain some seven thousand letters; amongst these are eighty-nine which he wrote to women and fifty which he received from women. Fr Rahner uses this block of one hundred and thirty-nine letters to discover the 'complete, real unfalsified Ignatius' (p. 3). For Ignatius was not the stern, impassive 'soldier-saint' he is thought to be. His letters to women, though comparatively few, reveal a more human and a more real personality. They show Ignatius' sanctity under a different light and demonstrate how he applied his spiritual teaching in the direction of women.

The book is divided into six main sections, each one of which investigates a different aspect of Ignatius' dealings with women. The titles of these sections explain their content: (1) The Courtier of Heaven (correspondence with royal ladies); (2) God's Cavalier (correspondence with noble ladies); (3) Begging for the Kingdom of God (to benefactresses); (4) The Inexorable Comforter (to spiritual daughters); (5) Father in Christ (to the mothers of fellow-Jesuits); (6) Friendship in God (letters to women who were his friends). But this is no mere compilation and classification. Each section and each letter is situated in its historical context so that the personalities involved live again and Ignatius' laconic phrases take on their full meaning.

As the author remarks, there is nothing sensational in these letters.

Ignatius was thrifty with his words and was never swayed by sentiment alone. But it is precisely for this reason that his letters are valuable. Every word is chosen with care, expressing the real depths of the man and not any superficial effusion of the moment.

The result is a living portrait of Ignatius. With royalty he is courteous, dignified and diplomatic, but never servile or ingratiating. Even when compelled to admit a royal princess to simple vows in the Society of Jesus (the unique 'Jesuitess'), he knows how to make the best of an embarrassing situation. Confronted with over-enthusiastic piety he can be firm and even immovable without being harsh, for he is never oblivious of the sensibilities of those to whom he writes. Here is an Ignatius who is full of sincere compassion for the difficulties and trials of his spiritual daughters, but who is never afraid of leading them gently and wisely to face up to their problems with honesty and courage. An Ignatius who can be tender without sentimentality; who attracts women but maintains always a certain aloofness which is as spiritually beneficial to his spiritual daughters as it is to himself.

But the book is not only valuable for the light it throws on the character of Ignatius. It is also a study of the principles and methods of a master of the art of spiritual direction, and, as such, is an important contribution to ascetical theology. Fr Rahner uncovers these principles throughout the book, and especially in his introduction, which is a study of Ignatius as a spiritual director of women by one who is an authority on Ignatius and Ignatian spirituality. Ignatius' attitude towards women shows a profound knowledge of their psychology and it is interesting to see how his understanding deepened as he progressed spiritually. A comparison between the early letters of his pilgrim days and later ones reveals this progress clearly. Ignatius was a man of his times and his limitations are those of his age, but the principles upon which he worked are enduring even if the practical applications are no longer the same. Ignatius' own suppleness in dealing with individual cases reveals how he was able to adapt himself without sacrificing principles. The fourth section of the book which deals expressly with the question of spiritual direction merits careful study.

An exhaustive index and abundant notes, which, happily, do not distract from the text, and aptly chosen illustrations complete the presentation. The translators are to be complimented on their work which does justice to Fr Rahner's fine German.

WILLIAM YEOMANS, S.J.

A ROCKING-HORSE CATHOLIC. By Caryll Houselander. (Sheed and Ward; 10s. 6d.)

Caryll Houselander's intention in writing this partial autobiography