

Were the matter merely academic, one could well say in charity that his works were an exercise in intellectual gymnastics. But considerably more was at stake: the foundations of an old established order were severely shaken, as a result partly of legitimate doubts concerning some basic tenets, partly of the Aristotelian-Thomist advance, partly of the increased lay education, partly of the growth of national constitutionalism and institutionalism—and to operate with Pseudo-Isidorian views, to take the empire—in the fifteenth century—as the *mensura omnium secularium rerum*, a characteristically German standpoint, and to argue with theses, however time-honoured they were, shows a wilful disregard of the exigencies of the time. It is not so much eclecticism that produces the artifact of Cusa's theories—and he is only one example of the 'progressives' at the time—but an inability to free himself from the incubus of tradition and conservatism. The conciliarists had not the courage of their convictions to transplant their own theoretical views onto the plane of reality: they themselves were frightened of the consequences of their own theses and therefore either adopted a *via media* which in the circumstances could be nothing else but tight-rope walking—and assuredly the time called for constructive and positive and realistic proposals, and not for theories which on the surface manipulated the new themes, but hedged them so much in by exceptions, qualifications and conditions that their irrelevance to the agonising contemporary problems became exposed as soon as they were made public—or having admitted that this was a fruitless exercise returned like repentant sheep to the old monarchic papal standpoint. And for both Cusa serves as an illustration. The responsibility of the conciliarists for the subsequent cataclysm is indeed great: had they had the intellectual stamina and the necessary *magnitudo mentis* the world would have been spared, so shortly afterwards, the 'reformers' who did destructively what the conciliarists failed to do constructively.<sup>2</sup>

WALTER ULLMANN

EUROPEAN UNITY IN THOUGHT AND ACTION, by Geoffrey Barraclough; Basil Blackwell; 7s. 6d.

Geoffrey Barraclough gives to the problem of European Unity a new historical dimension in this extended version of a lecture delivered in Holland last year. He enables us to see it as a focal concern of the civilisation which emerged

<sup>2</sup>The share of the secular governments in this development is equally grave: the fifteenth century shows a singular harmony between the papacy and the pronouncedly theocratic kings, as is evidenced by the conclusion of concordats. The explanation is, not that there was no longer possible any friction between the two, but that they saw themselves threatened by the same elements and therefore combined against the rising forces of the educated laity and lower clergy—hence the royal aversion from implementing representative proposals and constitutionalism, in fact exactly the same picture which the ecclesiastical party presented.

is the way in which the essential but too easily forgotten fact that the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation were two aspects of one movement is emphasised and illustrated. Inevitably and rightly, since he is writing for Englishmen, the English Reformation is in the foreground against the background of the Continent. At the same time the Continental Reformation is never allowed to be merely a background. It is shown as being, again and again, the decisive field. One is glad, too, to see both Eastern Europe and the Orthodox churches brought fully into the picture, though one would have liked an explicit account of that more civilised and tolerant moment in the Polish Reformation when conflicting divines were able to debate keenly during the day, and then to dine together as gentlemen in the evening.

Again, Professor Chadwick has to a notable degree what Chesterton called the Higher Impartiality 'which can speak passionately on behalf of both sides'. For example he makes the perfectly valid point that whether the Elizabethan priests 'were executed for high treason or martyred for religion since the two had now become identified' is impossible to say. High Treason is, after all, primarily a topic on which the lawyer has the last say. Then, in order that his readers should not suppose that this is the end rather than the beginning of the matter, he gives them the intensely moving altercation at the July Assizes at Durham in 1594 between the President, the Judge and the priest, Ingram.

Are there any reservations? The Catholic reader will, of course, be ready for, and will take in good part, the author's ambivalent use of 'The Church'; he will probably suspect and, I think, rightly the author's estimate of the number of Englishmen at the end of the sixteenth century whose personal allegiance would still by preference have been to Rome; and he will feel that the price for reform—theology apart—was quite unnecessarily high. Was Thomas à Kempis ever officially declared a saint? Borromeo was 'austere', but was he 'grimly' so? Finally and perhaps more important, the clash at Dart between Calvinism and Arminianism is insufficiently treated. And orthodox Calvinism was to find better and less repellent exponents than Gomarus, men closer to the moderate Augustinian tradition of St Thomas. After all, subsequent history did much to justify the Calvinist suspicion that beyond Arminianism, there lurked Pelagius, and that the conclusion of the matter would be Socinianism. Englishmen in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries who debated so hotly the famous Five Points were not wasting their time.

T. CHARLES EDWARDS

ROGER ASCHAM, by Lawrence V. Ryan; Stanford University Press and O.U.P.; 45s.

Roger Ascham, who died in 1568, has lacked a full biographical study until now. This in some ways is surprising, as he has long been included in the school-boy's compendium as a scholar who knew Lady Jane Grey, coached Elizabeth I in Greek, and believed that Eton boys were too much whipped. He wrote a