

CORRESPONDENCE
ARE WE "HARMLESS"?

To the Editor of BLACKFRIARS

SIR,—As a priest in the Church of England who has for many years regularly read and profited by BLACKFRIARS I feel that I must raise a protest against Mr. Hilary Pepler's article *In hoc Signo*. The writer seems to be suffering from a very childish, though natural in the circumstances, phantasy in thinking that he belongs to one of the oppressed ecclesiastical classes. It is ludicrous to imagine that everybody regards the (Roman) Catholic as harmless, and therefore tolerates him. If among the educated there is a lack of respect for Rome and an idea that she is a mixture of contradictions and extravagancies, such is not the attitude of those who, though disagreeing with the Roman position, understand her and her theology. It is without doubt true that at no time since the Reformation has Rome been treated with such respect by members of the Church of England, and to regard Rome as being peacefully picketed or quietly ignored is nonsense. One seriously doubts Mr. Pepler's historical knowledge of the first centuries of the Christian faith if he can compare Catacombs-tunes to (Roman) Catholicism in this country to-day. Again it is not true to say that the Truth as taught by Rome is utterly "suspect" by all non-Romans. It is possible to find many Anglican scholars who eagerly read, not in order to criticize but in order to learn, the publications of such firms as Sheed & Ward, Herder, etc. Such writers as Maritain, Fathers D'Arcy, Garrigou-Lagrange, Sertillanges—to name only a few—are respected by and familiar to any well-read Anglican.

In England "Catholic Emancipation" has not resulted in a veiled toleration, capable at any moment of an outburst of hatred and attack, but in a more sympathetic comprehension of what (Roman) Catholics teach and practise. The belated revival of Thomism among Anglican philosophers is additional denial to Mr. Pepler's opening sentences. Yours, etc.,

(Rev.) PATRICK COWLEY.

ARISTOTLE AT THE INNS OF COURT

To the Editor of BLACKFRIARS

SIR,—In his article in the April number of BLACKFRIARS entitled *The Mysticism of St. Thomas More*, Mr. O'Sullivan suggests that the "Aristotelean tradition" was taught at the Inns of Court when St. Thomas More was a student, and in support of this he invokes the high authority of Maitland. If by "Aristotelean tradition" Mr. O'Sullivan means that there were lectures on the philosophy of Aristotle in the Inns, then I venture to suggest that no authority can be found for this view. It is true that the legal exercises necessary for call to the Bar were to a

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large extent conducted in the scholastic method, i.e. by means of formal disputations, but that was all. And the phrase "Scholastic Exercises" in the quotation from Maitland surely means no more than this.

As Sir William Holdsworth says in his *History of English Law* the authority on legal education at the Inns of Court is Fortescue, *De Laudibus Legum Angliae*. In Chapter 49 of that work Fortescue gives us some details. I quote from an eighteenth century translation:

There is both in the Inns of Court and the Inns of Chancery a sort of Academy or Gymnasium fit for persons of their station; where they learn singing, and all kinds of Music, Dancing and such other Accomplishments and Diversions (which are called Revels) as are suitable to their Quality, and such as are usually practised at Court. At other times out of Term the greater Part apply themselves to the Study of the Law. Upon Festival Day and after the Offices of the Church are over, they employ themselves in the Study of sacred and prophane History."

In all this there is not a word about studies in philosophy, and surely Fortescue would have mentioned such an important subject if there had been. Besides, the students had too much to do in the way of legal exercises—moots, disputations, boltings—to spare time for lectures on Aristotle. Nor does Sir William Holdsworth include the subject in his description of the curriculum.

It seems to me that Mr. O'Sullivan tries to prove too much and to push Maitland's words beyond what they are intended to bear. Yours, etc.,

J. C. T. RAINS.

FAIRNESS THROUGH LOGIC

To the Editor of BLACKFRIARS

SIR,—In answer to your request for information I can do better than offer a mere text-book on apologetics: I can offer the Pope's own recent words: "But tear the very idea of God from the hearts of men, and they are *necessarily* urged by their passions to the most atrocious barbarity" (*Divini Redemptoris*, Sect. 21; italics my own).

In regard to the Spanish question generally may I appeal to the Master-General himself as strong support for our attitude. No doubt you went to press too early to be able to refer to his letter. Yours, etc.,

MICHAEL DE LA BEDOYERE.

["Penguin" writes: "While the Master-General's Letter sternly condemns the anti-religious atrocities and stresses that religious issues have in fact become staked in the Spanish conflict, I am unable to find therein any *approval of the war*, still less any condemnation of Catholics generally who decline to involve themselves in it. Indeed, the Master-General's assertion that "Each time that Catholics in history have preferred force to persuasion, religion has marked a set-back" (*Tablet*, 2.1.37) hardly encourages such an attitude.]