

chapters are intended at the most as illustrations of the thesis advanced earlier in the book. But does this justify a criticism that elucidates themes without reference to the quality of their expression in the work of literature?

R. W. GASKELL

AN INTRODUCTION TO RELIGIOUS SOCIOLOGY, by F. Boulard, translated by M. J. Jackson; Darton, Longman and Todd; 21s.

The recent translation of Canon Boulard's '*Premiers Itinéraires en Sociologie Religieuse*' by the Revd M. J. Jackson coupled with the trial parochial surveys up and down this country in February by a method devised by the Newman Demographic Survey are not unrelated events in the development of religious sociology.

Canon Boulard's work was first published in Paris in 1955, and the present translation of this book represents the first detailed summary in English of the work which has been accomplished in France since the Second World War. The detailed references to contemporary work at the end of each chapter will make this book a valuable aid to those who need to have a specialized knowledge of this subject, but the abundance of good maps, and the copious supply of detailed charts and diagrams enable the general reader also to follow the methods described with absorbing interest.

From surveys carried out in the main by diocesan authority, but under the direction of specialists in religious sociology, the whole of rural France can be divided into three kinds of areas as to the religious practice of its baptized Catholics, who are estimated to form 94 per cent of the total population. There are areas of majority practice where 45 per cent and over of adults (over 21) attend Sunday Mass and their Easter duties. Other parts are areas of minority practice, where 45 per cent of the adults practice their religion by only seasonal conformity. Lastly, there are areas where a minimum of 20 per cent of the children are not baptized, the mission areas. It becomes quite clear from a map of these areas that not only individuals but whole regions are characterized by their religious practice. The north-west is a large region of majority practice as are also most of the areas down the eastern border. The heartland of France is a vast area of minority practice stretching in some cases along the principal rivers to the coast. The mission areas are also concentrated in particular localities, one very large one is centred upon Sens, two more are around Limoges, and another is to the south of la Rochelle.

Canon Boulard has shown that the explanation of these clear-cut patterns is not exclusively to be found in industrial development. From diocesan records going back to pre-Revolutionary times, and still more from the records of missions in certain areas in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it is clear that certain of the areas of minority practice to-day were in the same position three hundred years ago. And even the regions of high religious practice to-day

cannot in all cases be explained by a lack of contact with industrialism. There are, for instance, large regions in the dioceses of Rouen, Quimper and Lille where advanced economic development coexists with high religious practice, as is also the case in other parts of Europe.

Turning from the religious practice of the country as a whole to studies in depth undertaken in particular regions, valuable information has come to light on the effect of social class and occupation on religious practice. A definite pattern of Mass attendance can be discovered from studies undertaken in a number of French dioceses, ranging from the high attendance rate of professional and business men to the, in many cases, complete non-attendance of industrial workers. 'We can no longer speak of special cases', writes Canon Boulard, 'we are confronted by sociological behaviour'. And he concludes that the ministry of the clergy, if it operates without differentiation upon all social groups within a given area, will inevitably fail in its mission to one or more of the social milieus within the area of its ministry.

The implications to be drawn from these conclusions on the organization of parochial life are far reaching. But clearly a great deal more needs to be known, not only about the situation in France but also about the relation of occupation to religious practice in other countries. Canon Boulard was able in 1955 to appeal to the work of Don Aldo Leoni who discovered the same basic pattern of religious practice in the diocese of Mantua in Italy. The last six years have brought to light more and more information on this question, both from Europe and from America, but so far little information is known about the situation in England.

The Newman Demographic Survey, centred in the premises of the Newman Association in Portman Square, has been studying the various methods of parochial survey in use abroad for a number of years, with a view to preparing a method adapted to the needs of this country. Much of the preparatory work is now happily completed, and at the time that this review is going to press, a number of trial parochial surveys are being organised up and down the country. The information gained from these trials will, of course, take some months to analyse. But all those who have been concerned with them have learned much from the pioneer work, extending in particular over the last ten years, of Canon Boulard and his associates.

DANIEL WOOLGAR O.P.

THE UNMARRIED MOTHER AND HER CHILD, by Virginia Wimperis; Allen and Unwin; 35s.

Miss Wimperis, supported by an experienced body of assistants, has made an exhaustive study of the problem of illegitimacy, but the problem is so vast and has so many aspects, religious, social and economic, that it is small wonder that in 'The Unmarried Mother and Her Child' she can suggest no immediate solution.

To those who appreciate statistics the first part of this book will provide