

But if he has worked out his own relationship and integrated it into his being, he is most likely to come through unscathed and most likely to leave a name of greatness. All these three men under discussion had much virtue, ability and influence. On the moral plane there is no reason to give them an order of precedence. But when Mr Bevin was asked by King George VI where he had acquired so much knowledge he replied: 'Your Majesty, I plucked it from the hedgerows of experience'. Who shall say which of the three was most fortunate in his opportunities? But Mr Bevin had certainly acquired from his a greater strength in politics than the others.

## PERSONAE

### 4. The Rahner Brothers

IN the course of the decade which preceded the Second World War a new trend in theological thinking became evident. The impetus came from Innsbruck with the appearance of an article by Father Jungmann in which he demanded a theology that would keep pastoral needs in view. Soon this became a movement known as kerygmatic theology. The name implied a desire to link theology with the 'kerygma' more closely, for our Lord and the Apostles had not separated theology from their preaching. So this new movement wished to end the divorce which had arisen between personal love of, and belief in, God and the dry formality of 'school dogma'. A discussion developed as to the advisability of making this kerygmatic theology a separate subject, but everyone was agreed on the general need. For it was part of a general tendency towards a fresh approach, which has been called by R. Aubert '*un désir d'un "ressourcement" de la théologie au contact de la source toujours jaillissante qu'est la Parole de Dieu proclamée et commentée dans l'Eglise*'. (*La Théologie catholique au milieu du XXe siècle.*)

This desire, manifested in a biblical, liturgical and patristic renewal, was then in evidence in Innsbruck and particularly in the work of Hugo and Karl Rahner. Born in Freiburg im Breisgau in 1900 and 1904 respectively, these two brothers joined the Society of Jesus in the South German province, but later transferred to Austria. Here they became professors in the University of Innsbruck, in which they have both in turn since held the office of Rector Magnificus.

The elder of the two, Hugo Rahner, specializes in the fields of

patrology and early Church History. Amongst the first to enter the kerygmatic theology discussion, he has made a great contribution by his effort to demonstrate the mind of early Christianity: the value of such an understanding is obvious considering the closeness of these early Christians to the sources of our religion. He has also made a special study of Greek myths and their Christian interpretation, and in general of the allegories used by the Fathers, which are often a source of puzzlement, if not amusement, to the modern mind. His Ignatian studies show another side of his work, and there is his interesting book of the letters of spiritual direction written by this saint to women (recently translated into English). Apart from this literary work, he is, as professor of Church History, busy with lecturing and also much in demand as a preacher.

His brother, Karl, is similarly engaged in the work of writing, teaching and preaching. He is professor of Dogmatic Theology, and if Innsbruck has one of the most frequented theological faculties in German-speaking lands, it must be due to a large degree to the attraction of this profound mind. As a lecturer and as a writer he is not easy to follow; and with his constantly preoccupied look he is rather like the absent-minded professor. In fact it has been said of his German students that the less they understand him the more enthusiastic they are. However, it must be stressed that the difficulty in understanding him arises from the depth of his thought; and it was one of his favourite sayings that, if anyone said that a theological problem was quite clear and simple, it merely proved that he had not understood it at all. For K. Rahner has a gift for opening up hitherto unsuspected vistas in theology: lesser minds can glimpse the depth and riches of these but can only penetrate to the end with difficulty. What a reward, however, for the careful reader or listener! He has brought biblical and patristic learning to stimulate the appreciation of theology from the personal point of view, not merely from the academic side. One has only, for example, to read his essay on 'The forgotten truths of the Sacrament of Penance' to see how he brings out the importance of the prayer of the Church in this sacrament. And his two-volume work, *De Poenitentia* (issued in manuscript form to his students), will soon be published. It will be a great contribution to our knowledge in this field as well as an example of kerygmatic theology. Not that it would serve as a sermon text-book, but it offers an explanation which must lead to a deeper appreciation of it, with all the consequent benefits for the spiritual life.

There is another trend by which he has been influenced, for he studied philosophy under Heidegger. And whatever may be said of Heidegger's philosophy in particular and of Existentialism in

general, it cannot be denied that they have exercised a considerable influence on philosophical (and theological) thinking, if only by causing a reaction. Insofar as Existentialism can be characterized as a protest against a lack of interest in the person in philosophy it has been a valuable influence. Rahner's interpretation of St Thomas' theory of knowledge in *Geist in Welt* has been called by Hans Urs von Balthasar 'perhaps the deepest' on the part of modern scholastics, because it is an 'immanent systematization' after the manner of Hegel and Heidegger. As for his approach to theology, it is described in the first article of his *Schriften zur Theologie* (now being translated into English) and demonstrates the emphasis on the person. He shows clearly that the study of God in himself (theological theology) and that of man in his relation to God (theological anthropology) are only inadequately distinct. On account of the Incarnation and the calling of all men to the beatific vision all theology becomes anthropology and *vice versa*.

All this can give but an indication of the work of Karl Rahner—a bibliography drawn up by his students in 1954 listed 299 articles and books. In addition he has edited Denzinger and at the moment he is co-editing the *Neues Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*. But the outstanding characteristic of his work, as also of that of his brother, is its capacity to stimulate. It can be called a *theologia cordis*.

## EDUCATIONAL SURVEY

### The Crowther Report

THOSE who write to *The Times* deploring the regrettable habits of the majority of their fellows are sometimes reminded that the kind of offender mentioned is of course singularly unlikely to be a *Times* reader, and will continue cheerfully in his offence. The Crowther Report is being much discussed, but for the most part by the faithful; a report on the education of young people between fifteen and eighteen does well to begin by saying roundly, 'Most of them are not being educated at all', but it will be read by few who are not already well aware of this. There is room for a series of discussions on the subject in what are called the two serious Sundays papers, but also for a free translation in a *Picture Post* form.

Our tragedy is that the small proportion of adolescents under educational tutelage till eighteen are the very people whose natural