

of ideas.

But Dulles seems to stop here, going no further, really, than taxonomy. He acknowledges the strong and the weak points of each of the models and the need to draw upon each for a balanced ecclesiology reflecting all facets of Christian communal existence. But how do these models begin to speak to each other and to interact? How does one sort out unacceptable models from acceptable ones? Dulles' criteria of some biblical and traditional foundation, inspirational value, and theological fruitfulness allow all but the most bizarre approaches their place in the sun. Dulles describes well the pluralist situation in ecclesiology. This is a great service in itself and will remain the value of his book. But he does not really move from description to living and working with that pluralism.

Rahner's book takes a different approach, asking what a pluralist existence for the Church might look like. The book grew out of a meeting of the German National Synod and is addressed to the situation within the German Church. Despite this, what he has to say will apply generally to most Western societies. He begins with an assessment of the current situation, moves to the tasks this assessment would call for, and then reflects on what this would mean for the Church in the long term. He is very cautious about such analysis and projections, but feels it would be irresponsible not to address ourselves to our future.

The Church Rahner sees will be very much that of a 'little flock'—drastically smaller than our current one. People will choose to be members rather than simply be born into it; and they will choose for

different and mutually irreducible reasons. This factor alone will be enough to demand our thinking about the Church pluralistically.

The Church of the future will have to be a very open and loose organisation. It will continue to have a core of committed Christians, but these will not be able to arrogate to themselves a position of superiority nor retreat into sectarian purity. Hard decisions will have to be made: whether to neglect two nominal Christians for the sake of gaining one more committed one (Rahner would favour this). Those who collectively call themselves Christians will find different common bonds than those they now have—they will have to be sought in a deep spirituality, a sense of moral imperative without a moralising based on institutional legitimisation by sets of rules, a willingness to compromise and gather behind concrete directives reached through consensus. Orthodoxy and authority will show themselves in service rather than formulae to be adhered to. The Church will have to respect its grassroots, allow for a variety of communal forms, be finely attuned to social issues and matters of justice.

Rahner does not presume this will all happen, of course. He is too cautious to become a Utopian and too realistic not to recognise the forces of re-entrenchment. But the future of the Church, he maintains, is pluralist and will probably have to take on these forms to survive. Old loyalties will mean less than new demands; we will need the courage to face these and the imagination to start thinking of how they will take shape. And as an exercise in that imagination, this book about a future, pluralist church is highly recommended.

ROBERT SCHREITER

LIBERALISM AND TRADITION: Aspects of Catholic Thought in Nineteenth-Century France, by Bernard Reardon, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1975, 297 pp + index. £8.50.

In his preface Bernard Reardon compares the nineteenth century in France with the seventeenth, "great alike in philosophy and in poetry; and perhaps for this very reason, in religion also, in the sense that religious questions were seen by both as of chief importance and by both searchingly explored from every angle." Remark- ing on the individual efforts for a new

Catholic apologetic and the reactions of authority he says: "It has been my aim in the present volume to trace the course of this tension between liberalism and tradi- tion, taking as it does a variety of shapes, political and social, philosophical and bib- lical." But, realising that a general survey cannot study the phases in depth, he then somewhat narrows the focus "to offer a

history of the age in respect of the development of Catholic religious philosophy, such as will bring to light a diversity and complexity that has not always been recognised or admitted by those who at least until recently have professed to represent the standpoint of ecclesiastical authority."

This laudable aim is efficiently carried out so far as the book is a survey of the views of a large number of writers of diverse kinds, including Chateaubriand, Laménais, Maine de Biran, Blondel and Loisy. Every author is dated and placed in context, his principal works summarised and assessed, and contemporary criticisms indicated. It will surely be useful to students; coming across some hitherto unknown name one could look it up and place the author from Mr Reardon's account. But as a history the work is something of a disappointment, after the promise of the preface. It has become very much a history of religious philosophies—even of Catholic philosophical *books*—and the political and social dimensions are only lightly indicated. The nineteenth century began in France with the traumatic events of the rise and fall of the Napoleonic empire; complex political revolutions occurred about every twenty years thereafter; the early seventies saw the disastrous war and the Commune, and the century ended with a rising tide of militant secularism and the reverberating explosion of the Dreyfus case. All this affected everybody, whether liberal, traditionalist or secularist, but one would hardly think so from Mr Reardon's account. Thus, in dealing with the phenomenon of Laménais, he says very little of Montalembert, the layman who carried on that kind of liberalism within the Church through the middle decades of the century, and chronicling that other great layman, Frederic Ozanam, he simply mentions the foundation of the St Vincent de Paul Society, without going into the field of social justice and labour relations; nor is there more than a bare mention of *Le Sillon* and the beginning of the social democratic movement which inspired Pope John in his youth.

My point is that having himself recognised that the tension between liberalism and tradition was expressed in political and social as well as in philosophical and biblical terms, Mr Reardon so concentrates on the latter that a figure like Lam-

énais is treated almost as if he were one of the seminary scholars who, towards the end of the nineteenth century, so alarmed the Roman Curia that an heretical conspiracy was suspected, labelled Modernism, and ferociously condemned in the first decade of the twentieth. However, I suppose that Mr Reardon wishes to show that the so-called Modernists did not spring out of the ground fully armed, and that most of them, like the earlier and very different writers, started with apologetic aims. In describing the views of all the diverse authors here surveyed this apologetic motive is always charted, and provides the most recognisable link between them. What, otherwise, have writers like Chateaubriand and Blondel in common?

I suppose it is true that the *credibility* of Christianity was the great question, from the Enlightenment onwards, for all thinking people, and that different parts of the Christian phenomenon struck different thinkers as in need of reinterpretation. The political aspect was most to the fore in the earlier part of the period, the dogmatic and social later. My disappointment with this book is that it deals piecemeal with the work of a great many individuals in such a way that it is quite difficult to relate them to what was happening in France and even to French intellectual life, and yet this is surely what a "history of the age in respect of the development of Catholic religious philosophy" ought to do. There is a brief account of the revival of Thomism and something about Bergson; Saint-Simonianism, the new ultramontanist and Ernest Renan are relegated to Appendices. If the philosophers were to be concentrated on, historians like Duschesne and biblical critics like Loisy should have been left out, to give room for *other* philosophers. If, however, the aim was to follow the fortunes of liberal apologists of all sorts, there should have been more about the traditionalists who opposed them within the Church and the rationalists without. But I must emphasise that this should be a useful book for reference for the many writers treated, especially the lesser known. The assessments are remarkably fair, moderate and cool, even as the Modernist crisis comes in view—that time of passionate clashes of conviction.

MERIEL TREVOR