

EXTRACTS AND COMMENTS

THEOLOGY AMONG THE PROLETARIAT. "Think, think, think, and keep on thinking. It'll hurt you like hell at first; but go on thinking and you will get used to it." Thus Big Bill Haywood, American Labour leader, used constantly to address the crowd; and G. D. H. Cole has commented: "Good and prudent counsel for Socialists . . . indispensable counsel for anyone who sets out to apply Marxism to the conditions of the modern world." Christians are too often less wise in their generation. The Marxist knows that there can be no workers' revolution until the workers are first aroused from their mental torpor and set *thinking*. They must face facts; they must think them out for themselves—"dialectically"; assimilate the revolutionary dialectic; make it part of themselves. Revolutionary action follows naturally on revolutionary thinking. Action without thinking will get nowhere. Similarly, Catholic Action without Catholic Thinking will get nowhere. It will be ineffective, even as action. Unless our minds are in it, our hearts will not be in it either—and all this quite apart from the inherent value of knowledge. We may "know" our religion—our catechism or even our *Summa Theologica*—as something external to us. But unless we have thought it out for ourselves it will remain something extrinsic, impersonal, something which can never be the mainspring of action. If, for the Marxist, the Revolution is Dialectic in action, for us Catholic Action and the Christian Revolution are Theology in action: they presuppose and are the external expression of the *Fides quaerens intellectum* which is Theology.

The Jocists have thoroughly imbibed these truths. In *REVUE DOMINICAINE* (June) Père Chénu, O.P., Director of the Dominican House of Theological Studies at Le Saulchoir, Belgium, gives some account of the work which is being done there by Dominican theologians for the J.O.C. by means of theological retreats. Le Saulchoir has become, almost spontaneously and necessarily, a home for the spiritual and intellectual formation of Jocist leaders and of the young workers themselves:

It is not just a matter of receiving a few who are fond of the silence and the emotional atmosphere of the cloister, but of en-

EXTRACTS AND COMMENTS

abling groups of laymen to share effectively, through the liturgy and teaching, in the spiritual life—that is, in the *whole life*—of a Dominican priory. . . . It would be to misunderstand completely the character of these retreats to regard them only as another addition to those which have existed in the past. Their organic character, the intense interest in *doctrine*, both on the part of Jocist chaplains and the workers themselves, the direct and fearless realism of their inquiries—all this shows, besides the ordinary fervour of a retreat, something quite new and original. What is particularly remarkable is that the establishment of contact between Le Saulchoir and the J.O.C. has been quite spontaneous, unplanned and unpremeditated. This particular type of apostolate, which is typical of Christendom in a state of transition for a new conquest of the world, has found one of its most favoured centres in a Dominican house which might be thought to be cut off from contemporary life by its mediæval constitution and divorced from the practical problems of the apostolate by its bookish preoccupations and its concern for supra-mundane theology. . . . At the recent world-congress of the J.O.C., a curé, finding four or five white habits among a group of young workers, remarked naively: “Oh, you intellectuals . . . you are far away from the J.O.C.” It was the Jocists themselves who undertook to disillusion the good bourgeois.

By their recognition of the relevance of theology the Jocists have again earned the gratitude of Catholics generally.

PRINCIPLES OF CATHOLIC ECUMENICISM. An indication of the slowly awakening interest among English Catholics is given by the good résumé under this title in the July CATHOLIC GAZETTE by Emmanuela Polimeni. After giving some account of the movement on the Continent she writes:

Now it is most important that Catholics in this country should be more alive to this movement which is attracting the attention of an ever increasing number of our separated brethren. Clear and definite ideas, however, are necessary on the subject, for there are certain principles governing the idea of Catholic “oecumenism” that under no consideration must be betrayed. *Outside* Catholicism the movement is largely regarded as an effort on the part of all Christian bodies to agree on sufficient Christian truths, so that they can unite in common worship. To do this, there must be readiness to admit of failure in the past, and a willingness on the part of all to make certain doctrinal sacrifices in a contrite and humble spirit.

We see at once that the Catholic point of view is fundamentally different. Unity in the Church is not a future hope, nor has it

BLACKFRIARS

been lost in the past. It is a present, permanent and supernatural reality, and so "Reunion" can only mean in her eyes union of the various dispersed Christian sects with the existing undivided and universal Church of which Christ is the Head and Founder.

But the Church, like her Master, has power to sanctify, to incorporate and to unify all that is good and true in the world. This power has not lessened throughout the ages. She still is anxious to welcome back those "other sheep," who for various reasons are still outside her fold. No positive truth held by such souls need be denied. . . .

If we examine carefully the origin of the several Christian denominations, we shall see that generally it was in the too exclusive consideration of *one* Christian truth, or in an over-emphasis on one *aspect* of a truth that the trouble began. Heresy is born of the understatement or exaggeration of truths. Instead of holding each truth as an element of life within the Catholic whole, instead of developing it in harmonious conjunction with the rest of the deposit of faith, some single truth was set up as a fundamental principle and taken out of its setting. Thus it came to pass that the seamless garment was rent, the sacred Body dis-membered, the Christian heritage divided.

Catholics, therefore, are asked to pray and work for the re-integration into the Catholic whole of all those partial truths and aspects of truth which are sincerely and reverentially held by so many non-Catholics.

Thousands to-day unknowingly and implicitly are relying on Catholic tradition. But for this tradition the central realities of Christianity would no longer be held. Ignorance far more than culpability accounts for the heresy and schism in England and this fact duly recognized should largely influence the Catholic apologist. . . .

Stress must here be laid on the necessity not only of absolute orthodoxy on the part of those taking an active share in the work of reconciliation, but of the deep-seated, enthusiastic and disinterested love of truth for its own sake which should be theirs also. Only the man of strong personal conviction, sure of his principles, can communicate them to others. Only such a one can safely be trusted to interpret correctly the meaning and scope of that liberty promised to the children of God.

Another truth to be born in mind is the difference between the practical and the theoretical point of view when one is in contact with individual souls. Each of us after all has his own way of reaching conclusions and the very best and most logical of arguments often are of little effect. It is here that the precious qualities of tact and sympathy come in. The blossoms must not be shaken from the bough if the tree is to bear fruit.

EXTRACTS AND COMMENTS

A preacher remarked recently that integral Catholicism as contrasted with what may be termed sectarian Catholicism was much needed to-day. "How many of us," he exclaimed, "are content to live on a meagre portion of our magnificent inheritance!" It is in our own hearts in the first place that we have divided Christ. We have whittled down Catholic tradition to a few devotions and these not always conspicuous for that "sweet reasonableness" which those outside the Church have a right to expect of us. Our religion therefore does not enlarge and vivify us as it should.

The best contribution that Catholics can bring to the work of Reunion is to live their religion to the full, so that it may appear to others what it is in reality, the *plenitude* of Christianity. For it is only in this way that we can provide for others the tangible proof that the only true and desirable Reunion is the re-incorporation into Catholicism of those treasures which were scattered when Christian unity was lost in this land.

CONTEMPORANEA. CATHOLIC BOOK NOTES (July): A timely reprint on *Teaching the Child* by Fr. Bede Jarrett.

CITE CHRETIENNE (June 20): Enlarged number preparatory to the Catholic Congress at Malines: outstanding articles on phases of Catholic life in the modern world. (July 5): a valuable article by Don Sturzo on the rights (as distinct from the duties) of individual citizens with regard to war.

CLERGY REVIEW (July): An illuminating and vivid study of *The Gestures of Our Lord* by H. D. C. Pepler.

CRITERION (July): Fr. M. C. D'Arcy contributes an admirable and searching criticism of Mr. A. J. Ayer's *Language, Truth and Logic*.

DOWNSIDE REVIEW (July): *The Catholic Church and the Totalitarian State* by Edward Quinn: "In this modern conflict, we have not only principles to guide us but the examples of the past." An excellent up-to-date *Introduction to Theism* by Dom Illtyd Trethowan.

ENGLISH REVIEW (July): *Hitler and the Third Reich* by Anthony M. Ludovici: the "religious drive" which is the secret of the power of National-Socialism.

GREGORIANUM (Fasc. II): Fr. Boyer, S.J., in a article which should be read by all seminary professors, studies the practical difficulties in the application of the recent decrees of the Holy See regarding ecclesiastical studies.

HOCHLAND (July): Theodor Haecker concludes a profound essay on the nature of Christian art.

BLACKFRIARS

MONTH (July): *Two Spiritual Guides of St. Teresa* by Abp. Goodier: the relevance to us to-day of Peter of Alcántara and Luis of Granada. *A Shropshire Lad* by H. E. G. Rope: the art and ethic of A. E. Housman.

ORATE FRATRES (June 13): *Liturgy and Sociology* by John Buchanan. Two important recent statements from Rome: Of the Congregation of Rites regarding the Dialogue Mass, and of the Holy Father to Abbot Capelle on the true nature of liturgical revival.

PAX (July): Dom Columba Stenson explains how the Mother of God is truly the Mother of men; and Dom Bruno Webb writes of *Arms of Obedience*.

SOWER (July): *The Neglected Liturgy* by Ivor Daniel: a lively discussion of practical difficulties in liturgical revival.

VIE INTELLECTUELLE (June 10): *Non impediatis musicam* by Paul Claudel: the place of the poet in Catholic Action. *Empire* by P. Deman, O.P.: a theologian's misgivings regarding the New Roman Empire, followed by a useful historical study of Italian imperialism by Paul Catrice.

PENGUIN.