

point that there is a special obligation on Catholics for constructive action in solving the problems of the abnormal child whom we have refused to destroy by abortion. He finds the 'negative law, thou shalt not kill' an appeal 'to initiative and to liberty', but unfortunately the initiative necessary to help the mother has not always been shown.

The remaining papers do not score more than a 'near miss': they are too slight or too general to add much to the average layman's knowledge. There is still room for a brief up-to-date book on the subject of abortion on medical grounds based on British conditions.

*Letitia Fairfield*

THE MYSTERY OF MORAL RE-ARMAMENT by Tom Driberg. *Secker & Warburg, 35s.*

Mr Driberg has obviously been exasperated beyond endurance by M.R.A. and all who have been inveigled into attending film shows or star occasions, or who have been stalked by M.R.A.'s photographers, will sympathize with him. So, more seriously, will those who have seen the damage which can be done to fragile personalities by a movement which works mainly through a rather febrile emotionalism. Mr Driberg's exasperation has appeared to some reviewers rather excessive, and as leading to a lack of proportion, especially in his examination of the late Dr Buchman's early career and the first days of the 'Oxford' movement. A student critic has considered him guilty of giving too much attention to a trivial movement, 'using a steamroller to squash a peanut'. There has been a tendency to undervalue his work as a result. He finds so little to say in favour of Moral Rearmament that there is a danger of his assessment being dismissed as too hostile. Should this happen it would be, in the present writer's opinion, most unfortunate. The arguments so often advanced in favour of a

kindly attitude to M.R.A. are based on rather rare instances of its having been a stage in someone's religious development.

In fact there is a considerable case against M.R.A. and it has been presented exhaustively, and with adequate documentation, by Mr Driberg. No amount of attack on his treatment of Dr Buchman's lesser equivocations can lessen the force of such chapters as those in which he discusses M.R.A. and Labour, or its attitude to sex, or its use of advertising. Among the most damning pieces of evidence which he prints is a letter from Mr Beverley Nichols, in the chapter headed 'Personal Encounters', whose moving account of M.R.A. deception triggering off a nervous breakdown will surely touch the memories of more than one reader. This is essential reading for anyone interested in M.R.A. in any of its phases; its main criticisms are not new, but they have never been so forcefully advanced, and they have not been convincingly answered.

*Anthony Ross, O.P.*