

1. Hugh Wyn Griffith and F. H. Drinkwater

I am saddened that *New Blackfriars* should have seen fit to publish the article 'Prophets and Parishes' by F. H. Drinkwater. The author's comments on Jean-Paul Audet's book *Structures of Christian Priesthood* and on Jean-Paul Audet himself are unworthy of a Dominican publication—they are untrue, trivial, uncharitable and remote from reality.

Untrue? 'Here is another of those radical-theology desacralizing books from the Continent this time translated from the French'—yet it was written by a Canadian and was published in English before French.

Trivial? 'Our present author, then, may strike the reader as slightly intoxicated; the breathalyser-test shows that his learning is all there, but his judgment is maybe somewhat affected, somewhat one-sided. Can we be so cocksure . . .'. These last five words contain their own rebuke to your author.

Uncharitable? 'Such airy notions can be understood in academic laymen or professorial members of religious orders' . . . 'What are we to think of all this? . . . the kind of paper-theorizing that emerges from scholarly and professional circles deeply engaged amongst their books and researches especially . . . members of religious orders who may well be far from any contact with pastoral realities and responsibilities.' This, about a Dominican who spends half his year in Jerusalem and half in Canada, who, a member of a large family himself, has formed close friendships with families in Canada, England and France—friendships so close as to give him a contact with pastoral realities that may well be denied to the clergy in the presbytery—who is respected for scholarship, yes, but loved by those who know him for his sensitivity and his understanding of our problems.

Remote from reality? What else can one say

about the views of your author who writes as if England had no problems—except 'among some circles of academic clergy and laity'—from whom ' . . . our English experience (is) that: . . . priestly celibacy works as well as ever' or from whom priestly celibacy is 'freely assumed' when the alternative is not to be a priest?

If this is to be the standard of *New Blackfriars*, if 'Prophets and Parishes' was intended to be a serious assessment of a book that is certainly meant to be a serious contribution to our thinking on a subject of major importance, then I am not proud to be a Dominican.

HUGH WYN GRIFFITH

Canon Drinkwater comments:

As regards the question of fact, the book is announced on the wrapper as a translation, and I seem to remember seeing its title in some Paris publisher's list. All the rest of Mr Griffith's letter is a matter of judgment, and I am content to leave it to the readers of the journal. I trust I have a proper respect for scholars and scholarship, especially for Dominicans, and especially when they come from that School in Jerusalem which carries on the work of the great Père Lagrange. When they write as mildly and modestly as Fr Jean-Paul Audet one feels affection as well as respect. At the same time, sheer scholarship is not enough, and in these days especially I think we may often feel justified in arriving at quite different judgments from some of the scholars, even from their own facts. One day perhaps somebody will write a treatise on the Holy Virtue of Discrimination, and there would be room for a whole chapter on the difference between the learned data assembled by research and the conclusions to be drawn from them; or more briefly, between scholarship and judgment.

2. Simon Clements and Monica Lawlor and J. M. Cameron

In the review of *The McCabe Affair* published in the March issue of *New Blackfriars*, Prof. J. M. Cameron describes as 'detestable' that section

of the book which deals with the report that the Apostolic Delegate was seen in Rome soon after Fr McCabe had been dismissed from the

editorship of *New Blackfriars*. He says that Mgr Carson '... has twice denied in public that Archbishop Cardinale was in Rome in November 1966 (*sic*). 'One can either accept what he says or provide evidence to show that he is a liar.' He goes on to say, among other things, that '... the source of one side of the story is Mr George Armstrong, the Roman correspondent of *The Guardian*,...' Earlier in the review Prof. Cameron says that ours is a '... substantially accurate ...' record; he thinks this important, so do we. Whether or not the Apostolic Delegate was in Rome in November 1966 is immaterial; the source of the report that he was in Rome in February 1967 is not Mr George Armstrong but Mr John Horgan (of the *Irish Times*), as we point out in the book on pages 50 and 160 (cf. p. 184). It was this report which Mgr Carson denied (see page 50 of the book). The comments which Prof. Cameron makes about Mr Armstrong's 'incapacity to measure its theological significance' are not only, therefore, irrelevant but they are gratuitously denigrating. It was our view last June and is now that Mgr Carson, Mr John Horgan and Mr George Armstrong are all men

of integrity; it would, therefore, be 'detestable' to us to call any of them liars. What Prof. Cameron describes as 'innuendo' is a perfectly simple state of bewilderment; we reported the discrepant statements in full because we found them deeply puzzling; we still find them puzzling.

SIMON CLEMENTS

MONICA LAWLOR

J. M. Cameron comments:

The section of my review Mr Clements and Miss Lawlor object to was very carelessly written and I would like to express my apologies for it and also to express my regret that I made what I now see to be a silly remark about Mr Armstrong's capacities as a reporter on ecclesiastical matters. 'November' was, I can only think, a slip of the pen. I certainly read the book with care and I had realized that the crucial date was February 1967. I still find the phrasing used by Mr Clements and Miss Lawlor a bit unfortunate, but perhaps this is a matter of taste. At any rate I am sorry I made a muddle of what I had to say on this point and I am sorry if I have offended any of the persons involved.

And a Note by Dr Bernard Towers:

As one of the General Editors of the *Teilhard Study Library* I was grateful for the space provided in the March issue for a notice of the first two volumes. As so often these days the reviewer revealed more about himself than about the books. For instance, volume 2 is entitled *Evolution, Marxism and Christianity*: the biological papers were dismissed not only as being merely 'of some interest to the beginner' (but then, of course, one is only a Cambridge biology don) but as having little relevance to the *title* of all things! It was the middle term that seemed to catch the reviewer's eye, and he dealt at length only with those papers that dealt specifically with Marxism. His interest in the third term did not, apparently, lead him to Father Elliott's paper on Teilhard's Christology, nor to the radio-discussion between all contributors.

It is currently fashionable in some Catholic circles to regard commitment to the extreme left as a natural consequence of that 'political imperative' which the reviewer seems to think Teilhardists refuse. Having been actively engaged in Catholic-Marxist dialogue for over a quarter of a century, I find the recent outburst of enthusiasm rather touching but somewhat

naive. Teilhard seems to me to open up a wholly honourable political road that leads beyond nineteenth-century sectarianism and points towards the hoped-for integration of the twenty-first. . . . Embracing, as it does, both the traditional Marxist *dieu en avant* with the old-fashioned Christian *dieu en haut*, Teilhardism seems to make each more relevant and more meaningful. It will lead, and in fact is leading, to that necessary human convergence and co-operation that sectarianism is bound to oppose and frustrate.

One can only judge, of course, on the basis of one's own understanding. An almost 'cultivated' ignorance of Teilhard is still unbelievably widespread in this country. The *Teilhard Study Library* is intended for works both informative and critical, and manuscripts are being actively sought. It is made clear in the Editors' Foreword that the series is not concerned with hagiography, nor indeed with simple exposition. Readers must judge for themselves the integrity of the enterprise.

The reviewer finds on re-reading his review that he has nothing to add to it.—Editor.