

## EXTRACTS AND COMMENTS

CHINA AND THE CHRISTIAN CONSCIENCE. The moving appeal which Mgr. Paul Yu-Pin, Bishop of Sozusa, Vicar-Apostolic of Nankin and Director of Catholic Action in China, has addressed to "men of good faith and good will" has been accorded in our Catholic press less prominence than the corresponding appeal of the Spanish bishops. The greater part of the text will be found in *LA VIE INTELLECTUELLE* dated December 25. His Lordship begins by impugning the pretext of "anti-Communism" for the Japanese invasion, stoutly defends the Government of General Chiang Kai-Shek and his "New Life" movement from the Christian and Catholic standpoint, and outlines with charity and dignity the history of what he regards as Japanese aggression, treaty-breaking and cruelty. *Christianus* comments:

Nanking is taken; the Japanese armies put China to the sword. Doubtless there is not much we can do about it, for, anxious as they are about their own troubles, the European nations that sincerely wish for peace are not going to budge if they can help it. But at least we can try to arouse the human conscience; that is our plain duty . . .

A Christian judgment cannot be confined to enunciating principles. It must also get to grips with *facts*, when the facts are clear.

We must call things by their proper names: These "military operations" in China are *war*, and this war is *an unjust war*. That is why we must echo the words of Mgr. Yu-Pin, the young Bishop of the Chinese capital: "It is my duty to bear witness that the blood which flows in my country is innocent blood, and to ask you whether, in the face of our undeserved miseries, your own heart does not bleed . . ."

I know that, to excuse themselves, the aggressors have found a fashionable pretext: they are not making war against China but "against Communism." "Call a dog a bad name . . ." says our proverb, and all our kiddies know the story of the wolf and the lamb. Mgr. Yu-Pin draws attention to an official communique from the Tokyo Foreign Office, which gives the show away when it says that "it is *probable* that China is pro-Communist." Only *probable*! But the cruel destruction of thousands of Chinese is not probable; it is *certain*. And, anyway, the pretext is a false pretext . . . As Mgr. Yu-Pin says: "Communism before the war was disappearing."

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The head of the "New Life" movement, the head of the Government of the New China, Marshal Chiang Kai-Shek, is no Marxist, he is a Christian, and he is a Christian who takes his Christianity a great deal more seriously than do many of ourselves . . . His famous Good Friday pronouncement is moving. He recalls how meditation on the Passion had sustained him during his captivity. "I understand now," he wrote, "that when one has faith, one prefers to sacrifice one's life for one's principles." Unfortunately, among ourselves, there are too many who prefer to make their meditations on Machiavelli or Bismarck . . .

If we can do nothing to stop this aggression, let us at least pay homage to the victim. The human conscience dictates that good be called good, and evil, evil. At least we have pens to vindicate the truth and tongues to shout for justice. *Vive la Chine!*

**A NEW CHRISTIANITY.** We cannot hope to be able to epitomise adequately the brilliant article entitled *Dimension nouvelle de la Chrétienté*, which Père Chenu, O.P., contributes to the same issue of LA VIE INTELLECTUELLE. Our language, since it makes no distinction between *Christianisme* and *Chrétienté* (a defect which accounts for much confusion) fails even to render his title intelligible. Suffice it to say that P. Chenu detects the birth in our age of new forms of Christian living, resulting from new conditions of human life. Industrialism has introduced into human lives a new and revolutionary element of human interdependence and solidarity; this "natural" fact (and need we again assure our friends of the Land Movement that this is simply a plain judgment of fact and not of value?) receives a new significance from the "divine" fact of the Incarnation:

If God is incarnate in order to "deify" man, He must integrate *all* that is in man, in the depths as well as on the heights of his nature. There must remain nothing that is not redeemed, nothing that is not divinised . . . If such is the law of the Incarnation in Christ, such is also the law of the incarnation of the divine life in the Church throughout the ages. It is the *whole* of man, with all his resources and all his works, that must be assumed by grace. The divine life is not given to us through an elimination of our human content, or by an exclusion of our native structure, but by raising the *whole* to a supernatural plane. What is left outside of this process of sanctification is wholly lost, and that not by a mere privation of integrity (as though the "natural man" retained a secondary independent value of his own), but as a corrupting waste left uninfluenced by the leaven . . .

This means that everything must be included under the influence of God's grace, and most especially all those resources which constitute the very being and progress of mankind—hence, all that "social" structure of man—for only in and through his social environment can man gain his perfection. This is a law of nature transformed into a law of grace.

This means a "new Christianity," which sanctifies the new, changed conditions of human existence. The J.O.C. has realised in practice this new Christianity before the theologians had realised it in theory. Hence the historic significance, not only of J.O.C., but of Catholic Action in general. It is the expression of the "new Christianity" demanded, because of the Incarnation itself, by the new conditions of human existence. Père Chenu is impatient of any policy of "escape" from those conditions:

Too long has a magnificent apostolic zeal been expended in "protecting" Christians from their environment, and in creating an artificial environment into which they may escape and live in a Christian manner in the devout atmosphere of an enclosed group, far from pagan and perverse surroundings. Perhaps this is an unavoidable *pis-aller* under particular circumstances; but the narrow pragmatism of such a policy leads us to a Christianity of refugees, cut off from life, from its daily realities, from its politics, its classes, and so at last to a Christianity without edge, without courage—a Christianity which holds to the letter without the spirit and which abandons to its miseries the paganised proletariat. Such a policy indicates not merely a tactical error; it indicates a structural error, for it implies an error in doctrine. It is to oppose man's religious psychology against the reality of matter; it implies that the Christian life is extraneous to the work of everyday life, that it cannot thrive unless it barricade itself against that work as against something which is incapable of redemption and sanctification. It is a sin against the realism of the Incarnation . . . What is the use of leaven unless it is put into the dough?

Industry is, whether we like it or not, the very condition of our present-day existence, whether as producers or consumers. The rise of Catholic Action, and especially of the J.O.C., with its aim of sanctifying society as such, thus assumes a significance of cosmic historical importance in the history of God's dealings with men. The conquest of the industrial masses for Christ, and the conquest of the industrial employers and financiers, is thus *the* task of the Church in the modern world; (the behest to "flee to the fields" is

legitimate only to the extent that it subserves, and does not hinder, the charge of the Popes to "go to the workers.") Hence the importance of the "like by like" principle of Catholic Action; it is not merely a strategic move borrowed from the Communist cells, but a recognition that artificial social solidarities, as well as the "natural" solidarity of the family, must themselves be sanctified as such. J.O.C. has shown that "labour *as such* is not refractory to the presence of Christ. We are at the dawn of a new age of Christianity; hitherto we were, from the standpoint of the redemption of *society*, only in a pre-historic age with regard to the possibilities of Christianity in face of the possibilities of man."

ECUMENICAL MATTERS. For the elaboration of a theme to which we alluded last month, an article on *Mysticism as the Bridge between the Eastern and Western Churches* by Professor Alois Mager in the January HOCHLAND is to be recommended. The difficulty of finding a common ground with our separated brethren of the East arises from the fact that although

Eastern and Western theology are both concerned with the same subject-matter, the point of view of the East is dominantly mystical and "pneumatic" while that of the West is dominantly dogmatic and rational. Latin theology approaches mysticism through dogma; the Greek theologians find dogma intelligible only through mysticism. The East "mysticises" dogma; the West "dogmatises" mystical experience. And all that is not pure accident.

After a brilliant exposition of the respective attitudes of East and West, viewed in the light of their respective histories, the writer goes on to suggest how that common ground, which to the dogmatic theologian is so difficult to find, might be attained through the Western mystics.—There are many encouraging signs that Westerns, and not only their professional theologians, are waking up to the urgency of the ecumenical question and are showing themselves prepared to face the problems it arouses. The importance of Father Congar's *Chrétiens désunis* (reviewed in the October BLACKFRIARS)<sup>1</sup> with its suggestions for a concrete programme for a Catholic "Ecumenicism" is being widely recognised. Father Bevenot, S.J., speaks of it in EASTERN

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<sup>1</sup> We understand that an English edition is in active preparation.

CHURCHES QUARTERLY as a book which will make history. The Rev. A. G. Hebert of the Anglican Society of the Sacred Mission presents an admirable précis of its contents in the January THEOLOGY. He writes of it:

When the Roman Catholic Church does enter the œcumenical arena and begin to make its weight felt, it is inevitable that these discussions [on reunion] will undergo a deep change; perspectives will be altered, questions will appear in a different light, and a new era in these discussions will begin . . . It is definitely a Roman Catholic book, and its main principles, so far as a non-Roman can judge, would commend themselves to any good Roman Catholic . . . The book . . . is of quite first-rate importance; and we may make bold to assert that a knowledge of it ought to be presupposed in all future discussions about Christian unity. It contains what is usually missing in those discussions, a positive doctrine of the visible unity of the Church . . . It gives the vision of the *Una Catholica* in which all Christians must at last find their homes.

The ex-Anglican community of the Servants of Christ the King has now taken thoroughly in hand the propagation and popularisation of such a "Catholic Ecumenical" movement as that outlined by Father Congar, and in particular of the Unity Octave of Prayer. Their organ, CHRISTUS REX, has in effect become a "popular" organ of the movement. The current (Christmas) number includes an excellent article of general introduction to the subject by Fr. Henry St. John, O.P. (*Spade-Work for Reunion*), an article on the Octave by one of its inaugurators, Fr. P. J. Francis, S.A., and another on *The Dissident Eastern Churches* by Dom Bede Winslow, O.S.B. The Anglican "Papalist" view is put forward by a monk of Nashdom, and the conversion of Jews and Moslems is discussed by "M.G.S.S." Stanley B. James writes well on *Nonconformity and Re-union*, and the Rev. T. Whitton deals admirably with "the opinion prevalent among Catholicising Anglicans that they receive far more sympathy from foreign Catholics than from those of their own country." CHRISTUS REX should have the encouragement and support of BLACKFRIARS readers, who will find in it the fulfilment of a long-cherished hope. The annual subscription is only one shilling, payable to the Rev. Brother Superior, S.C.K., Mount Olivet Monastery, Frensham, Farnham, Surrey.—The Anglican "pro-Roman" review REUNION continues to publish important items of Catholic

origin. The December number includes a translation of an article by Abbé Couturier from *REVUE APOLOGETIQUE* on *The Universal Prayer of Christians for Christian Unity*, a noteworthy statement on "invisible membership of the visible Church" by Fr. V. M. Pollet, O.P., some account of Catholic "ecumenicist" activities on the Continent under the heading of *The Christian Front*, and a translation of the important manifesto of the German Bishops after the Vatican Council regarding the inter-relation of Papal and Episcopal jurisdiction—a manifestation which received the official approval of Pope Pius IX.

THE LAXTON IDEA. We cannot justly, we think, be accused of unduly advertising our own wares if we reproduce some extracts from the article by Fr. Henry St. John, O.P., Headmaster of the Dominican School at Laxton, in the current number of *THE HOWARDIAN*. Its content has a sphere of reference far beyond the school-bounds of Laxton:

The ideal for Laxton, as we conceive it, is not to be a miniature Public School, taking over without criticism the traditions and methods of the Public School system. On the contrary, we believe that the whole conception of education in England needs the most searching criticism in the light of Catholic principles, and that out of that criticism a reconstructed Catholic education must emerge which, while bringing Catholics into vital contact with the whole range of English culture, will at the same time teach them to live their religion so integrally that it will penetrate and christianize that culture and in consequence the whole area of their lives. We believe that the Order, if it is true to its ideal, can play a great part in the reconstruction which must take place if the Christian solution of present-day social and economic problems is to be effective; and we believe that, among many other problems, it ought to be making its contribution towards the educational problem. Many of the details no doubt are not yet clearly defined; they must be worked out gradually on the principle of *solvitur ambulando* . . .

Laxton is particularly alive to the present and urgent necessity for intelligent Sixth Form education as an immediate preparation for Catholic life in modern society:

A liberal education is a dangerous thing unless it is a completely Christian education. It is true to say that never before has the problem of how to fit boys to lead an integral Catholic life been so difficult and complex as it is to-day. Until lately,

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Christian moral principles were assumed as fundamental by the society which Catholics entered upon leaving School. How to keep the moral law was the problem; not, Is there a moral law to keep? A thorough knowledge of Christian doctrine, the cultivation of a robust Faith and the assiduous frequentation of the Sacraments were the chief elements in a sound Catholic education. But to-day, the very foundations on which Christianity rests are called in question; and the Catholic boy leaves School to enter society, whether it be the society of a workshop, an office or a University, where it is taken for granted that Christianity is an outworn superstition, and where morality in the Christian sense hardly exists. Moreover, he enters a world where the most elementary human rights are being more and more openly denied in the interests of money-making and the greed for power. To face such a world and live in it, not only must a boy's Christian life be a very active and vital one, but his mind must be well prepared and made aware of the terrible dangers into which he is going. To give this preparation of mind adequately, it is absolutely necessary that his education should continue well beyond the age of sixteen. At sixteen the normal boy is just passing into the adult mentality. Up to that time his mind remains severely concrete. He finds it extremely difficult to think in terms of principles, and to correlate principles with facts, to grasp the real meaning and importance of human liberty and responsibility; and the fact that he is dazzled by the scientific achievement and marvellous organization of the modern world does not make this task any easier. He cannot grasp and understand life as a whole; he can only see it in disjointed and unrelated pieces. Moreover, he is necessarily unacquainted, up to that age, with the facts connected with marriage and birth which lie behind the social problems, which make life in the modern world so difficult for Catholics to-day.

It will be easily seen that just as a Sixth Form is essential to secular education, so it is equally essential to religious education, and for the same reason. The groundwork of religious education, from twelve to sixteen, can only be made fruitful by subsequent instruction in the more mature years from sixteen to eighteen. Moreover, the actual living of the Christian life, so spontaneous in childhood, so often imperilled by the dangers of adolescence, will only really become vital and integral in these days if its social implications are clearly grasped. The surest way to secure that religion is something more than a mere framework, something that grips the life of a boy and strikes its roots deep down into his being, is to show him, through the study of the social problems of the modern world, that religion does not cover one particular area of life only, but reaches the whole of life and every part of it . . .

Laxton sees that its "Idea" and its responsibilities cannot be finished with even in the Sixth Form and with school-leaving; it must be carried on through the Old Boys' Association. A sectional secretary writes:

On leaving Laxton boys who find themselves faced with the complexity of the modern industrial set-up have to work out for themselves in actual practice the implications of the principles of their religion they have been taught. Those who take their religion at all seriously will find to a greater or less degree that they have little in common as a basis of friendship with their fellow workers. Either one of two things will happen: the boy will reject such of his earlier education as is incompatible with his environment and tend to identify himself more and more with that environment: or by attaining sufficient strength of character he will stand out against all that he sees conflicts with Christian principles and so will conquer his environment. It is the work of the Section to assist the latter development as far as possible.

The Headmaster finds the idea of an O.B. Association which confines itself to old-school-tie functions unworthy and inadequate for a Catholic school in the modern world: "My ideal for the Old Boys' Association is to carry on and complete in after life the work begun at Laxton, and thus to make the school, through the Association, a more effective instrument of Catholic Action." We pray that the proposal may flourish, and that other schools may copy. Now that urbanised Catholic parishes are becoming less and less communities, and more or more mere aggregates of strangers, the necessity such a spiritual bond with school and school-fellows becomes increasingly imperative for the lonely young Catholic in the suburbs.

**POLITICS AND LEAKAGE.** Some of the less widely circulated Catholic periodicals continue to express their alarm regarding the effects of the political tendencies of our Catholic weeklies. Writes THE SOWER:

It may be asked why *The Sower* should concern itself with such high matters, and why it should aspire to the position of self-appointed critic of the English Catholic press. An answer can be found in Father Woodlock's statement in the *Catholic Herald*, that never within his recollection had the Catholic Church been in such bad odour with the British working-classes as it is at the present moment. He gave as a reason the successful promulgation of the Communist lie that the Catholic Church is in



sympathy with Fascism and against democracy. This was a bombshell that exploded with a crashing reverberation and the succeeding silence only tended to emphasize the devastating effect. It will be noted that Father Woodlock said that the allegation that the Church is Fascist and anti-democratic is a lie. None of our Fascist journalists came forward to say that the learned Jesuit was mistaken—"the rest was silence." With fine dramatic instinct Father Woodlock left it there, but we may perhaps be allowed to pursue the subject a stage further, and to inquire the reasons for the success of this particular lie, because not even "the clever Communists" are able to put across a lie like that without some sort of proof, or appearance of proof. If this is indeed a lie (and for our part we hold that it is) readers of the Catholic press will have noted a singular reluctance on the part of Catholic publicists to nail this lie to the counter. On the contrary, they have shown, and still continue to show, the most tender solicitude for Fascist aims and ideals, and seldom miss an opportunity of warning us that our boasted democracy is no democracy at all. Is this a possible explanation of the success of Communist propaganda in spreading this lie? Do our editors, we wonder, agree with Father Woodlock that it is a lie to say that the Catholic Church is Fascist and anti-democratic in her policy? If so we should welcome a clear statement to that effect.

In *The Hemp and the Goose—A Note on Irrelevance* Mr. H. Robbins sounds a similar note in **THE CROSS AND THE PLOUGH**. After describing the irrelevant inanities of our secular press, he continues (with pardonable exaggeration):

We Catholics flatter ourselves, mainly without cause, that we are exempt from this declension of the reason. But we uphold the majestic system and liturgy of the Church only to encourage our children to sing *Faith of our Fathers* during the Holy Sacrifice. Subsequently we are shocked at the leakage. We should be shocked at the shocking irrelevance.

The tempo of this process among us has increased. The tests of orthodoxy are changing. They are no longer the body of doctrine, but the body of respectable fashion. People who until yesterday would have denied social justice to be of the essence of the Faith are now excommunicating all who will not endorse a special political attitude. Not the Spirit decides, but Spain.

There is a Catholic who is the greatest living philosopher. He has put a new razor edge on Thomism. His orthodoxy is beyond dispute. No living Catholic has added more to the munitions of the Church militant. But his massive and unique services to Catholic philosophy have availed him nothing, because he will not endorse the view of our Press on the Spanish tragedy. And

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by several units of the Press he has been treated shamefully. It would be highly improper to enlarge on the merits of the particular case in this periodical; it is used only as a saddening example of what we are doing.

The Master of Christendom has told us in no uncertain terms that the main tragedy of our time is the loss of the workers to the Church. If that is so, and it is, the main and relevant task of Christendom is to win them back, as Cardinal Hinsley says, by Justice and Charity. Are we concentrating on that remedy? . . .

In the epic fight before us, we need every man, and especially every trained man. If, unhappily, any are to be drummed out, let it be those whose selfishness and greed have traitorously opened the gates: not those scattered sentinels who watched and fought while the rest of us slept—slept through the very tocsin of the Popes.

CONTEMPORANEA. CATHOLIC WORLD (Jan.): *The Philosophy of the Stable*—a strong editorial.

CHRISTIAN SOCIAL ART QUARTERLY (St. Mary-of-the-Woods, Indiana, U.S.A.): First number consists mainly of a long and excellent study by Graham Carey, *What is Catholic Art?*

CLERGY REVIEW appears in enlarged format and neat wrapper under the auspices of Messrs. B.O.W.

CRITERION (Jan.): F. McEachran's *A Pattern for Reality* is an original "restatement of Christian idealism on a dialectic basis," valuable both as apologetic and as showing the sterility of dialectical materialism. Maritain's "The very crises of the economic order urge us to study metaphysics" is the text of E. W. T. Tomlin's excellent *Philosophy and Politics*. T. S. Eliot comments charitably on Lord Nuffield's "benefactions" to Oxford University. Montgomery Belgion's *French Chronicle* is much concerned with contemporary French Catholic literature. Poems from Louis MacNeice and Michael Roberts.

DOWNSIDE REVIEW (Jan.): Fr. Hugh Pope's views on Abbot Chapman's Synoptic theories.

DUBLIN REVIEW (Jan.): Prof. Allison Peers on the evolution of Franco's Spain; Michael de la Bedoyère on Aldous Huxley's philosophy; the Marquis d'Aragon on Catholic Action (especially Jocism) in France; Bernard Wall on Morris and Marx; Luigi Sturzo on Oppressed Peoples in Europe and in colonies.

ESPRIT (Jan.): P. L. Landsberg's *Introduction à une critique du mythe* is a brilliant philosophical analysis on the forces behind our ideological conflict.

SOWER (Jan.): Fr. F. H. Drinkwater on catechisms as tramlines that lead to Barcelona and Madrid.

## REVIEWS

- TEMPS PRESENT (Jan. 7): *La Médiation ou la Guerre?* by Claude Bourdet: the responsibility of France and Britain for the continuance of the Spanish war. *Individu et Personne*: J. Maritain popularises a favourite theme.
- VIE INTELLECTUELLE (Dec. 10) includes *Le catholicisme et l'ordre international* by T. S. Eliot; *Le Culte de la monarchie et l'abdication de Edouard VIII* by X. de Lignac; *T. S. Eliot* by Georges Cattau; an instructive study of the "anti-Comintern" alliance by Maurice Jacques.

PENGUIN.

## REVIEWS

### THEOLOGY AND RELIGION

GRACE AND NATURE. By A. G. Hebert. (Church Literature Association; is.)

No dictum of Aquinas has been more abused—in both senses of the word—than that which asserts that grace perfects nature. It enshrines a fundamental and vitally important truth, but too often is it quoted, torn from its context in the whole Catholic and Thomistic doctrine of justification, in a sense that implies that grace is little more than a contributory adjunct to natural perfection, itself conditioned by nature. Self-styled Thomists are not always to blame if Barthians have seen in Aquinas an arch-trayer of the Gospel of God.

Father Hebert, of the Anglican Society of the Sacred Mission, rightly anxious to vindicate the rights and values of nature and the claims of natural law, has fallen headlong into the pit prepared by this pseudo-Thomism. For him "the work of grace is seen to be the restoration of the image of God in man" which means no more than "the return of man to a truly 'natural' condition" (p. 37, cf. pp. 34, 71 etc.). That man was created in grace and called to supernatural glory; that redemption is essentially the restoration of a condition of union with God and not that of "pure nature"; that grace, as such, does *not* completely reintegrate nature, though, by reconciling us with God, it imparts the principle of that reintegration (cf. *Summa Theologica*, Ia IIae. cix. 8 etc.—a point which, if more emphasised, might solve many "Evangelical" difficulties regarding Catholic teaching); that the primary effect of grace for the Thomist no less than for the Barthian is the forgiveness of sin (ibid. cxiii); that grace, while ontologically transforming (ibid. cx.), is eschatological in its very *raison d'être* (ibid. cxiv.)—all this is almost entirely ignored in these pages. In view of the force and urgency of Barthian criticism it is just these points that need special emphasis at the present time. A right appreciation of them seems