personality, of Veuillot, who was certainly the greatest of all Catholic journalists—'the greatest journalist of the century', he says. He records the facts about Veuillot and politely refuses to comment. Yet the story of Veuillot carries with it a lesson, and it deserves far more attention and study from Catholics than it has had up to now. Veuillot had great faith but little charity, and for over forty years, in the name of the Church, he belaboured his enemies, religious and political, with a vicious and merciless pen. He invented and exploited to the full a particularly aggressive type of apologetics which Ozanam described as merely serving the purpose of exciting the passions of believers, and no single Catholic bears a greater responsibility for the development of anti-clericalism in France during the nineteenth century. His 'keen encouragement' of the *Cercles Catholiques* of Albert de Mun does not mean that he had any real understanding of the social problem. On the contrary, as M. J. B. Duroselle has pointed out, he entirely neglected social problems, and only mentioned the subject in order to harry and discredit those few 'social Catholics' like Ozanam and Armand de Melun, believing that Society always needs slaves.

JAMES LANGDALE

JONATHAN SWIFT. By John Middleton Murry. (Jonathan Cape; 30s.)

It is with something of a shock that one realizes that Mr Middleton Murry is now one of our elder critics. He made his mark in that brief interlude between the wars, before our literary culture had succumbed to war and crisis mentality. In those days profitable variations could still be played in the game of classicism *versus* romanticism; Mr Middleton Murry was of the latter party, and produced a series of brilliantly intuitive biographical studies in which interpretative tact was combined with psychological sympathy. Now he has returned to the field of pure letters after a long interval, and, paradoxically, his very full and judicious study of Swift's life and work has an almost old-fashioned appearance of solid completeness about it. Against the modern tendency to separate biography from literary appraisal he has resolutely set his face; such a separation is indeed impossible with Swift, for everything he wrote was related to personalities or politics. Mr Murry has made himself master of the rich materials provided by editors and scholars of Swift from Elrington Ball to Professor Nichol Smith (who unfortunately appears in the Preface as 'the late D. Nichol Smith'). The result is a book which lacks the occasional flamboyance of the earlier studies, and in which intuitive judgment is always guided by erudition and commonsense. Swift's mind, like his prose, sheds a cool, dry light, though passion and hysteria may lurk underneath.

In the earlier part of the book a more thorough attention than usual is given to the Moor Park period and to the poems belonging to those

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years. The slow germination of Swift's genius is of absorbing interest. Mr Murry carefully assesses his hero-worship of his patron, Temple, and the rebuff which brought it to an end, and the abortive courtship of 'Varina'. Both episodes served to strengthen that urge to self-sufficiency which was the main motive force of Swift's career. The estimate of the early Pindarics is too favourable: here after all Dryden has the last word; but it does serve to illuminate the transition in the young Swift from intellectual idealism to a stern contempt for its absence or degradation in the real world.

One of the most moving stories in literary history is of Swift in old age, when a copy of *A Tale of a Tub* was put into his hand, saying, 'What a genius I had when I wrote that book'. The long discussion of the *Tale* is remarkable for viewing the work as an exercise of the pure comic spirit—a total derision without any particular critical purpose. The treatment of *Gulliver's Travels* is less original, and its justifiable concentration on the disturbing power of the fourth book perhaps results in some neglect of Swift's studied approach to his climax in Books I and II: the gradual ironic reduction of human pretensions is at work all along.

Mr Middleton Murry's account of the complicated political relations of the Oxford-Bolingbroke ministry has at least the merit of being clearer than most attempts to unravel the tangled skein of those years. Swift is plausibly shown as standing on the periphery of events, in spite of the friendship with Harley so flattering to his esteem: his political standpoint was controlled by his involvement in Irish affairs, and he did not really understand the great issues.

The pen which described the love of Keats for Fanny Brawne was not unfitted to probe the very different relations of Swift with Stella and Vanessa. A coherent account emerges and there is no unnecessary psychologizing. The story of a purely formal marriage with Stella given by the earlier biographers is accepted: it makes sense of many things, but it is by no means proved.

The terrible scatological poetry of the later years, so different from the robust Rabelaisianism of *A Tale of a Tub*, is discussed in a sane and compassionate manner. When the life-story is finished, the reader feels he has lived more closely with Swift and his writings; to have brought this unapproachable man so much nearer to us is a measure of Mr Middleton Murry's scholarship and imagination.

ROGER SHARROCK

THE DEATH OF THE FOURTH REPUBLIC. By Ronald Matthews. (Eyre and Spottiswoode; 18s.)

The worst enemies of France have too often been her own leaders, the politicians for whom the party's traditions—however obsolete they

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