

earnest attempts of U.N.E.S.C.O. The exhibition exploits all that is amusing and odd in this oddest of arts, if art it be. Perhaps this seems an irresponsible attitude to those who make such ambitious claims for the Cinema. But the *Observer's* own film critic, whose name is by this synonymous with the serious understanding of what the Cinema can hope to achieve, perhaps sums up the matter when she writes: 'Historically, politically, sociologically and economically, films are important: but the most important thing of all is that they have given you and me and millions of other people something, in our several ways, to relish'.

I.E.

REVIEWS

IGNATIUS VON LOYOLA: BRIEFWECHSEL MIT FRAUEN. By Hugo Rahner, S.J. (Freiburg: Herder.)

IGNATIUS VON LOYOLA: DER BERICHT DES PILGERS. A translation and commentary by Burkhart Schneider, S.J. (Freiburg, Herder; 7.80 DM.)

St Ignatius Loyola wrote, dictated or inspired 6,813 letters and instructions in the course of thirty-two years, an average of about eighteen a month. These are all extant in their original Spanish, Latin or Italian, and have been published in twelve large volumes of the *Monumenta Historica Societatis Jesu*, from 1903 onwards. Nobody knows how many other letters have perished or been lost. It is a formidable documentary, and when we further discover, as a glance at a few of the letters rather movingly shows, that the writer had no facility with his pen, that each letter represented a struggle with all the demons of vocabulary, grammar and syntax, that many a time he rewrote a letter three times over, and that during the whole period he was suffering intermittently from the disease which eventually killed him, calculus or the stone, most tormenting of human afflictions, why then, without much effort or research, we have already learned something valuable about the founder of the Society of Jesus. A well-known non-Catholic publicist, René Fülöp-Miller, recently included Ignatius in his very restricted list of five 'Saints who moved the World'. Most people would agree that he had a right to be included, but why, they might well ask, were those other authentic world-movers, Benedict and Dominic, left out in the cold? As for Ignatius and his colossal dossier, only a man as determined and strong-minded as himself would have the courage to plough through it all. His letters

bear a resemblance to the many huge journeys he made, nearly always on foot, and a wounded foot at that. In one place he records drily, speaking of himself in the third person: 'Fifteen or twenty days after his release from prison, he went out of Salamanca alone, with some books loaded on a little donkey, and arrived in Barcelona.' It is 554 miles from Salamanca to Barcelona. Not another word has this laconic Basque to say about his tremendous tramp, made without money or any food except such as he might have been able to beg along the way. He then walked in the same fashion, alone and on foot, from Barcelona to Paris, 690 miles in mid-winter, and without a word of the French language to help him along. His only comment on that feat was to say that he reached Paris in good weather and fine fettle, *por gracia y bondad de Dios Nuestro Señor*. How good a story the delightfully garrulous and observant Felix Fabri, o.p., might have made out of such a journey as that! What is called 'human interest', picturesqueness, the lively epithet, the gracious diversions of St Francis de Sales, are very rarely found in the correspondence of St Ignatius, but he has his compensations, and through the lumbering sentences with their repetitions and subordinate clauses as often as not hanging in the air, it is easy to feel the glow of a heart overwhelmingly in love with God our Lord. Indeed, it would hardly be an exaggeration to say that this one man's life and record is a proof of God beyond the power of any Freud or Wittgenstein ever to whittle away.

It was then an excellent idea of the distinguished Austrian theologian and scholar Hugo Rahner to bring together in one volume a distinctive part of the huge Ignatian correspondence, his letters to women and theirs to him. The Saint's contribution is eighty-nine letters and the women's fifty. This section of his epistolary labours may come as a surprise to those who think of Ignatius as 'the Soldier Saint', the Moses of a peculiarly masculine Israel. It may surprise them, too, to learn that this world-mover, this dedicated activist, this baptized stoic of the books, is unique among the Saints as a man most strangely given to tears. St Teresa of Jesus tended rather to scorn tears as a womanly frailty, though she could not prevent them coming unbidden to her eyes. But Ignatius was never ashamed to weep. Merely to think of God caused the tears to flow, and in his later years he had to desist from saying Mass regularly because he could not see the Missal through his tears. Strength and tenderness are by no means incompatible, and those closest to Ignatius, the early Jesuits, avowed that he had for them a heart as soft as any mother's. Women had been his trouble as a young, gay *caballero*, but when he turned to God at the age of thirty, women were his salvation. But for their loving ministrations, he must have died from his terrifying austerities at Manresa, and then, after

his extremely moving pilgrimage to Palestine, it was women who gave him a roof and the little he needed for his sustenance while he tried so pathetically to acquire a smattering of book-learning at Barcelona. It was the same story at Alcalá and Salamanca. Women stood by him and listened spell-bound to his first halting utterances as an apostle of God's love, when from men, with a few exceptions, he received only the hard fare of dislike and suspicion. Practically all the women in the pilgrim stage of Ignatius's existence, that is, until he became fixed in Rome and founded the Society of Jesus, were humble folk, ordinary housewives or shopkeepers. Outstanding among them were two, Inés Pascual and Isabel Roser, both of Barcelona. Without their devoted help there might have been no Society of Jesus, but Isabel rather spoiled her generosity by a tendency to claim Ignatius, the fashioned saint, as her private possession. She insisted on making a vow of obedience to him, and then, having sold her property in Barcelona, voyaged to Rome determined to become a Jesuitess! She did, too, for a while, by dint of securing a Papal mandate on the unfortunate Ignatius. Father Rahner devotes thirty-eight pages to the battle between those two strong-minded characters, providing a splendid as well as humorous commentary on their letters to one another. In the end Ignatius prevailed, without losing the devotion and friendship of Isabel, but she had put ideas into other ladies' minds, some of whom began to pine for the Jesuit type of existence. They included an Infanta of Spain and a delightful Italian marchioness, Jacoba Pallavicino, who took to signing herself in letters to Ignatius, 'Jacoba of the Society of Jesus'.

The story of the women who would be Jesuits is only a small part of Father Rahner's fine book. More important, if not so unfamiliar, is the section dealing with St Ignatius's direction of women's souls, in which he displays all those gifts of tact, prudence, wisdom and psychological insight learned from his own long and hard apprenticeship in the school of God. Father Rahner's translations of the Saint's complicated Spanish letters are really masterly. His book is well arranged and excellently illustrated. It would be a good deed of some competent person to put it into English.

The smaller book listed above is a good German translation from the original Spanish and Italian of the little work variously known as the Acts, the Confession, the Autobiography or, as here, the Report of the Pilgrim, which emanated from Ignatius himself. This appeared in English early in the present century, with notes by George Tyrrell and Herbert Thurston, S.J., but it has been long out of print; and anyhow Father Schneider's version and commentary are altogether superior.

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