

- in 'the glory of God'. Cf. Daniel W. Hardy and David F. Ford, *Jubilate: Theology in Praise* D.L.T. London 1984, Chs. 2, 7; Appendix A.
- 10 Ibid. p. 298.
- 11 Doubleday, New York, 1958.
- 12 Op. cit. p. 107.
- 13 Ibid. p. 158. Cf. Bonhoeffer: 'Every real action is of such a kind that no one other than oneself can do it'. (*Letters and Papers*, op. cit., 8th June 1944, p. 325).
- 14 Ibid. p. 39.
- 15 Hans Frei, in *The Identity of Jesus Christ*, Fortress, Philadelphia 1975, gives an account of the resurrection in these terms, the best that I have found.
- 16 Cf. Hardy and Ford, op. cit., Chs. 7, 9, Appendix A.
- 17 These pointers to an ecclesiology Thomas Day, in a perspective essay, calls 'Bonhoeffer's main point—and the purpose of his writings'. ('Conviviality and Common Sense: The Meaning of Christian Community for Dietrich Bonhoeffer' in *A Bonhoeffer Legacy. Essays in Understanding* Ed. A.J. Klassen, Erdmans, Grand Rapids 1981, p. 225).
- 18 *The Human Condition*, op. cit., pp. 178—9.
- 19 Emmanuel Levinas in *Totality and Infinity. An Essay on Exteriority*, Duquesne, Pittsburgh 1969, offers a philosophical account of ethics that embraces this aspect together with action and theory, 'the welcoming of the face and the work of justice—which condition the birth of truth itself' (p. 28).
- 20 *Letters and Papers*, op. cit. p. 383.

Dear, Dear Maude

Peter Hebblethwaite

Baron Friedrich von Huegel wrote to Maude Domenica Petre in February 1910:

My dear, dear Maude,

You, now that Fr. T. is gone, are about the only English Catholic, with whom I have felt, with whom I feel, profoundly at one in these most complex and straining transition-problems (Michael de la Bedoyère, *The Life of Baron von Huegel*, p. 240).

Fr. T. was of course George Tyrrell, who had died, excommunicated in 1909. Maude, born in 1863, belonged to an old Catholic family which had combined dying for the Pope with a tradition of Cisalpine resistance to intolerable papal decrees. In childhood she resolved to become, when she grew up, a saint, a philosopher and a martyr (p. 6). When doubts assailed her, a learned Jesuit recommended that she should go to Rome to study the philosophy of St Thomas Aquinas.

Off she went, accompanied by a chaperon, and her puzzled aunt, Lady Lindsay, used to explain to inquisitive friends: 'Maude has gone to Rome to study for the priesthood' (p. 8). Though she wrote ceaselessly and well, her books have long been unobtainable. She has been referred to and exploited in all writings on the Modernist crisis, but she has always appeared as a subordinate figure, the devoted slave of Tyrrell and vestal virgin guarding his sacred flame. Clyde F. Crews has written the first book⁷ which treats her as interesting in her own right, and not merely as an appendage of others.

She emerges with enhanced reputation from this full-scale treatment. Nearly 46 when Tyrrell died, she lived on until 1942 and acted as a volunteer fire-watcher in the blitz, wearing trousers and carrying buckets of sand as she approached 80. After 1909, after Tyrrell, she lived under an ecclesiastical cloud, being excommunicated in the diocese of Southwark, south of the Thames, by Archbishop Peter Amigo, who outlived her. So she moved from Sussex to north of the Thames in the diocese of Westminster, lived at 15 Campden Grove and was a daily communicant at the Carmelite Church in Kensington. She was clearly an indomitable lady.

As the author remarks, there are many studies of "conversions" to the Church of Rome and many accounts of why it became necessary to leave it. But Maude Petre inaugurates a new genre: why I stayed despite everything. His title is taken from her 1937 book: *My Way of Faith*. 'The Church has lighted my way', she wrote; 'instead of struggling through a wilderness I have had a road—a road to virtue and truth. Only a road—the road to an end, not the end itself—the road to truth, not the fulness of truth itself. Without the Church should I have learned to serve, to pray, to love, to adore?' (p. 96). But what a price she had to pay. If she was indomitable, she was also obstinate.

For Archbishop Amigo, representing the official Church, she was guilty by association with Tyrrell. She loved him, but took a vow of chastity to keep their relationship innocent. Their first kiss was on his death-bed. On Christmas Eve 1907 Petre received a letter from the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, Francis Bourne, ordering her to withdraw her book, *Catholicism and Independence*. She explained that this was not possible but, after an interview with him, agreed that there should not be a second edition. The incident also marked the end of her relationship with her religious order.

What exactly Bourne objected to is not clear, but probably the opening chapter, dedicated to "The Temperament of Doubt", caused alarm only a few months after the anti-Modernist encyclical *Pascendi*, which knew only certainties. Petre's treatment of doubt (she knew what she was talking about) was in fact very sensible. Urging acts of faith upon the doubter (the usual procedure) was "like advising him to

dance on a broken leg by way of setting it" (p. 39). Moreover, she held that there was such a thing as salutary doubt. Quoting Robert Browning in *Bishop Blougram's Apology*, she observed: 'But instead of calling the snake "unbelief" let us name it "mystery", and surely we shall have a temper of mind which will combine loyal adherence to our faith with unswerving attachment to truth. Because we feel the snake we know that we believe, and, because he stirs beneath our touch, we know that our faith has the fulness and possibilities of life and is not a stereotyped formula' (p.39).

These had become unfashionable notions. Archbishop Amigo insisted that she should subscribe by oath to the doctrines of *Pascendi*. She refused. In the first place, this had been asked of no other layperson. Secondly, she wanted to know whether the condemnations of *Pascendi* were *de fide definitiva*, that is whether they were so much a part of Catholic faith that one would have to die for them, should the situation arise. The episode brought out some fundamental points. Was it true, as Tyrrell had alleged (rather like our contemporary Leonardo Boff) that 'Rome cares nothing for religion, only for power?' (p. 66) Petre did not propose to deny papal authority, but she wanted it kept within certain limits, life-giving limits she would have said. Worse still (from a tactical point of view), she imagined she was setting an example that bishops of courage might follow: 'Perhaps among our Bishops some might be glad to see a firm, though loyal resistance opposed to a system, which is humiliating local Sees and crushing the life out of local churches' (p. 63). None took up her challenge in public. What they did in private remains a secret of the archives. But Amigo did not change his mind.

After the first World War—Maude was a nurse at Verdun—she became the always suspect historian of 'Modernism'. The author says that 'she mellowed, but not very much'. But if by 'mellowing' one means that she continued to believe that through the Church the essential truths were communicated and, more important, that one could legitimately hope for a future reform of the Church, then her mellowing is not in doubt and she becomes a pioneer of Vatican II. 'Rome lauds and trusts,' she wrote in old age, 'those who are submissive because they do not care, and blames and mistrusts those who resist her because they do care.' (p. 95). In 1938 she wrote to Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, who seemed to her to be in the tradition of Tyrrell which otherwise had gone underground. But she got a disappointing letter from him the following year, and never mentioned him again. Teilhard was probably too Ultramontane for her taste, kissing the rod that struck him.

So the indomitable old girl died. She is pictured in the frontispiece crouching with her dog and her cat. This surely gives the wrong impression of the eccentric spinster. Maude Domenica Petre

has been neglected because the official Church did not like what she was saying, because in her relationship with Tyrrell she was calumniated, and because she was a woman, from whom no theological knowledge or spiritual expertise were expected at that date. If she had been a man, she would have had the authority of a von Huegel. If she had become an Anglican, she would have had the influence of an Evelyn Underhill. If she had been trusted, she might have been a broadcaster as famous as Fr Cyril Charles Martindale S.J. None of this happened. She had to be rescued by the American thesis-writers. This is the best of them, though it is disconcertingly dedicated to 'all the gang at 634,—my old Kentucky home'.

- *English Catholic Modernism: Maude Petre's Way of Faith*, by Clyde F. Crews. Burns & Oates, London, & University of Notre Dame, Indiana, 1984. £12.00.

Reviews

RHETORIC IN SOCIOLOGY by Ricca Edmondson. *Macmillan*, London, 1984 pp 190. £20.

In a remarkable essay (*New Blackfriars*, September 1981), Ricca Edmondson and her husband sketched an argument in favour of a rhetorical theory of communication which would counter-act the dominant view, in theology as elsewhere, that the important thing is to accumulate the correct propositions whether or not they impinge on anyone's interests or needs. Plato's hostility to the Sophists has given rhetoric a bad name, as if it were merely "a technology of manipulation". Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, on the other hand, initiates systematic "exploration of reasonable intersubjective communication in society". The immense influence of Cicero and St Augustine ensured that rhetoric was studied in the Middle Ages. Erasmus and Luther were equally aware of its importance. It seems to have been Petrus Ramus (1515—1572), that violent opponent of all things Aristotelian, who confined rhetoric to matters of mere style. From then on—"for reasons which are usually linked to the predominance of Cartesian rationalism"—the rhetorical understanding of intellectual exchange has yielded more and more ground to the beguiling myth of a purely cognitivist conception of language. It is now commonly supposed that arguments may, and should, be framed in complete independence of the protagonist's interests or needs. That "pure logic" is the most intimidating form of rhetoric in the field is usually concealed from its devotees. The grip of the cognitive/emotive dichotomy remains amazingly tight, notwithstanding the many attempts to rehabilitate rhetoric. I.A. Richards, with *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (1936), was one of the precursors. But Dr Edmondson dates the new interest to 1958, with the publication of *The New Rhetoric* of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca. She is well aware of what is in effect a reconciliation between logic and rhetoric in the work of such philosophers as J.L. Austin, Paul Feyerabend, John Searle, and Stephen Toulmin, as well as of thinkers like Gadamer and Habermas. The key passage runs as follows (page 22): "Arguments are evolved and experienced in terms of positions held by different speakers rather than in terms of facts which are directly apprehended ... If utterly certain facts and interpretations are available and everyone were able to perceive