

that just at this time must be a 'dark' period, just as in individual spiritual experience. The devil, in other words, is more than usually busy. May it not then be that those people who are weak in some way will be particularly vulnerable—and by these the devil can do a great deal of work—even if it be only 'nuisance value'? May he not be upsetting the rest of us through them, while trying to ruin these people utterly? In which case, instead of merely trying to exercise patience with the neurotic, can we not make a positive plan of campaign? If the next 'age' is to be more 'spiritual'—as seems certain—then we must expect in any case to meet the devil more intimately. Well, maybe this is the beginning of his attack! How shall we launch *our* offensive to this? I believe the mere realization of it, with the determined effort to *fight*, and not be dismayed, would disarm the enemy as well as anything. Psychologically, see how this attitude always prevents an attack from a pugnacious person. As another example, see how a class of children will 'play up' if teacher is 'under the weather'. At all events—still subject to your ruling—I begin to believe that something of this sort is the answer. For a great deal of our difficulty in bearing with these afflicted ones is fear. Perhaps fear of the unknown—because we cannot see what is the root of the trouble, nor know how to deal with it. If we could recognize it, and be determined to deal with it in the way most pleasing to God—might not half the enemy's strength be destroyed? By the way, I have just realized that all the time I am, of course, thinking in terms of the 'household'. Among non-Catholics, though, there could be no great difference, I suppose—but we need to deal with our own troubles first!

G.H.

VI

IN A private letter to the Editor someone well-versed in modern problems of psychology writes apropos G.H.'s letter in 'Points of View', July:

"The questions are pertinent indeed, but I don't think generalized answers are possible: I don't think they are, because 'neurotics-in-general' do not exist: there are all sorts and kinds, and more exactly still there is just Mr X. or Mrs Y. It's the same

with the "charitable neighbour", his character, circumstances and all the rest; and what is his position vis-à-vis the other? One doesn't know, and until one does I don't see one can presume even to begin an answer. In other words, it's all a matter of personal relations to be worked out between them, and I don't think anyone who doesn't know either can give them any blue-prints or "authoritative answers". But G.H. seems to assume that he is the person with all the charity (though doubtless not a strong nervous system), while the other person has got all the disease. Not very promising for either of them . . . but I should imagine the "neurotic" loathes charity, and G.H. can't do anything for *him* or *her* so long as he is afraid for his own sanity.'

X.Y.



POINTS OF VIEW (II)

IN A recent article in the *Catholic Herald*, Dom Columba Cary Elwes has brought new courage to many by pointing out that this is the age of the apostleship of the laity, and he has added that 'we are back in a contemplative age, but a contemplation of God in the world as well as out of it'. The laity has become familiar with the idea that it has a part to play in the redemption of the world through Catholic Action. United in such organizations as the Legion of Mary, lay men and women fight side by side to convert the ignorant, to reclaim the lapsed, to bring consolation to the lonely and thus to share in our Lady's work on earth for her divine Son. There are many other forms of organized Catholic Action, such as the Young Christian Workers and the Grail, but all have one thing in common. They seek to instruct their members in the social and moral teaching of the Church, in doctrine and apologetics and they encourage them to build their lives around the centre of the daily Mass and to live in the spirit of the liturgy. In so doing they will learn to give their lives to the service of God in their neighbours. They will learn to serve wisely with the wisdom born of knowledge and of prayer.