

BLACKFRIARS

decrees, that of 1919, a Roman Cardinal was, with the knowledge and blessing of the Holy Father, holding 'conversations' at Malines. From this it does not of course necessarily follow that such 'conversations' are always opportune or to be encouraged; still less that the Holy See gave anything like official approval to all that was said and done at Malines.

Mr. Blake's letter in the same number (p. 221) expresses some not uncommon apprehensions and misapprehensions. Reunion, however, is not a matter of 'gaining advantages': the healing of the divisions of Christendom is the express will of Our Lord. Nor must we suppose that this can be brought about *only* by 'convincing' individuals. Non-Catholic Christians are not Jews, Turks or infidels: they are members of Christ's Body, indelibly signed with the baptismal character, yet deprived of the visible communion with the Church and the full participation in her liturgical and sacramental corporate life to which Baptism obliges and its character empowers them. And this, for the most part, owing to historical causes in which they have neither part nor interest. Reunion aims at breaking down the divisions which keep them from their inheritance. Reconciliation to the Church, whether individual or corporate, is not a 'giving away'; it is a receiving and a fulfilment. The reconciled denies nothing: his very repudation of heresy and schism is something positive: the negation of a negation.

Prayer and work for reunion cannot cease because of inexcusable misunderstanding and ignorance. Cardinal Mercier's Pastoral of January 18th, 1924, on the Malines conversations, eliminates all excuse for such misunderstanding among Belgian Catholics as Mr. Blake relates. And though the Church may sometimes be forced into the 'retail' business, she cannot be content to remain there. Her Head has put her in the *wholesale* line: she is the *Catholic* Church with a mission 'to every creature.' A more pertinent parable concerns an Elder Son who, having served his Father long and faithfully, resented all that was done to welcome his brother's reconciliation and return to his Father's house.

I am, Sir,

Yours, etc.,

VICTOR WHITE, O.P.

THE NEW STYLE OF ARCHITECTURE

To the Editor of BLACKFRIARS

SIR,—That the new style of architecture is, according to Mr. Williamson's suggestion in January BLACKFRIARS, in its type far in advance of either painting or sculpture *as such*, seems on

CORRESPONDENCE

reviewing the facts to be untrue. As to painting in relation to architecture, yes; but surely this is because the painters are not allowed to co-operate with the architect.

Mural painting cannot develop unless the painter, whose gift lies in this direction, is allowed to *paint on walls*. The problem is one quite apart from the easel picture, and can in no great degree be tackled in a studio. So, unless the architect will make a place for the painter and insist on a painter who is also a workman, the general taste for those 'charming' and respectably lifeless posters, usually called mural paintings, will continue and we shall have to keep pigs for a living.

Granted, the problem of a painting on a wall has practically ceased to be understood. Knowing how to paint frescoes does not mean understanding what can be put on a wall; for the medium of expression is but the matter of the second birth, as it were. The matter in which the concept is formed, is all the knowledge the artist has through sight; and it is the more severe judgment needed in its selection, that forms the mural painter's greatest problem.

None the less, it seems a pity that this great branch of our culture should be allowed to die for lack of encouragement, just at the time when it would be possible to make a synthesis of the two great traditions of mural painting and so form a twentieth century school equal in knowledge and creative ability to any that have gone before. But the twentieth century, especially the Catholic part, is afraid to create or encourage creation. Why?

Yours faithfully,

CONSTANCE MARY ROWE.

AFTER FOUR HUNDRED YEARS

To the Editor of BLACKFRIARS

SIR,—The excellent review of *Après quatre cents ans* in your February number set me hunting for a copy of the book, and as I have only just received it after weeks of enquiry, I think that many of your readers will be glad to know that in Swiss money it costs 3 fr. 50. In Belgian exchange it costs 33 fr., and the Librairie Desbarax, 24 rue de Namur, Louvain, will supply it for 29.70, plus 3.50 postage. It is truly a beautiful volume in matter and in form. Every 'apologist' should have a copy. Thanking Father Tindal-Atkinson for bringing it to the notice of your readers,

I am gratefully yours,

IVOR DANIEL, P.P.

Catholic Rectory, Pembroke Dock.