

Reviews

THE COUNCIL AND REUNION, by Hans Küng; Sheed and Ward, 11s. 6d.

A significant event connected with this book is the reception it has received from Catholics and non-Catholics respectively. The readiness with which Professor Küng has distinguished the dispensable cultural accretions of the Church from its indispensable theological foundations has aroused amongst Protestant reviewers fraternal and enthusiastic charity: up to the time of writing, very little notice seems to have been given to the book in Catholic publications.

Such indifference is disheartening if it shows that we are unaware of the apostolic duty to adapt the outward face of the Church to the manners, traditions and customs of the country. The objections to our Church in this country are still cultural and political rather than theological; and to the average Englishman we still seem to live—in Newman's words—in an 'old-fashioned house of gloomy appearance, closed in with high walls, with an iron gate, and yews, and the report attaching to it that "Roman Catholics" lived there; but who they were, or what they did, or what was meant by calling them Roman Catholics, no one could tell;—though it had an unpleasant sound, and told of form and superstition' (*Sermon on the Second Spring*).

And although there is much from which we can take encouragement—the spirit behind the revised plans for Liverpool Cathedral, the work of the Catholic Enquiry Centre, and the life of prayer lived by so many individuals—the general tendency of native Catholicism remains that of people living, culturally, in a small world who can yet so easily mistake it for a big one. Is there not a lack of expansiveness, generosity, large-mindedness? It seems to go with a lack of self-confidence, which is manifested in the suspicion that if we are too open and honest in the dialogue with our separated brethren we are giving something away, as though the Church were not what we claim it to be—of divine foundation and guarantee—but what our critics have always insisted it was: a mere survival from the past which is unable to adapt itself.

This is not to impute a lack of faith or charity, but to indicate a tendency which if persisted in—in spite of specific encouragement to the contrary by Pope John himself in his encyclical *Ad Petri Cathedram*—could have the effect of harming them; since a charity that lives to itself and is directed solely towards one's co-religionists becomes cold and miserly. Thus I would wish to suggest that an interest in ecumenicism is, especially if one is an English Catholic, a means of developing one's spiritual life; since by coming to see a little more clearly what belongs to the faith and what does not one can come to a deeper understanding of where one ought to stand and can grow to a more real assent to the foundations of the Catholic faith.

We might also come to see why, in the Middle Ages, the Church was as

universal as it was by permitting as it did a greater cultural diversity to exist within the theological unity than it allowed, for example, in the mid-nineteenth century; and we might then come to understand why in a review of this very book in the Anglican magazine, *Prism*, the reviewer considers the main charge against us to be that we have failed to live up to our large claims: that the Church 'while claiming to be Catholic . . . fails to demonstrate its Catholicity'.

To read and meditate upon Professor Küng's book would be, therefore, an excellent Lenten preparation, drawing attention as it does to our failure to show forth the fullness of the Church. The central part of the book, entitled 'Renewal of the Church', provides the point of departure; and Professor Küng's agenda is impressively comprehensive: Catholic appreciation of the religious motives in the Protestant Reformation; the growing regard for the scriptures in the Catholic Church; development of the liturgy into a people's liturgy; understanding of the universal priesthood; increased adaptation of the Church to the nations, and the discouragement of Europeanism and Latinism in the missions; purification of the papacy from politics; reform of the Curia; simplification of canon law; a clearer recognition of tolerance and the claims of the individual conscience. Not only is the list endless, but it must be considered with humility, caution and the spirit of requisite obedience to the discipline of the Church; and such an agenda can only be touched upon in the space of a paper-back; Professor Küng is at all times concerned to safeguard himself against legitimate criticisms of being superficial and over-hasty, his book is published with commendations by the Cardinal Archbishop of Vienna and by the Superior of the *Mission de France*.

In matters of this kind, however, to concede the need for change and reform is to concede much; and some of us may very well live to appreciate the truth of Bacon's maxim about the levity and unconstancy of men's judgements, 'which, till a matter be done, wonder that it can be done; and, as soon as it is done, wonder again that it was no sooner done'.

JOHN COLLISON

THE WHOLE MAN AT WORSHIP, by Hélène Lubienska de Lenval, translated by Rachel Attwater; Geoffrey Chapman, 10s. 6d.

INTRODUCTION TO THE LITURGY, by I. H. Dalmis, O.P., translated by Roger Capel; Geoffrey Chapman, 24s.

The slender volume by Madam Lubienska de Lenval is described by the publishers as 'an exploratory essay on movement and the use of the body in worship—not just in arid ritualism, but in the living worship of the whole man'. The more ample work of Père Dalmis is similarly claimed to be an 'important and authoritative study, unequalled in the English language for its accuracy of detail and the level of its perception'. Both these books can be