

THE FUNCTION OF A UNIVERSITY IN A MODERN COMMUNITY. (Blackwell; 1s.)

THIS substantial pamphlet is the report of speeches made at an educational conference held in May, 1943, by the Association of University Professors of Allied Countries in Great Britain. The existence of such a body is in itself a good and hopeful sign of the possibility of a real and valuable co-operation between the Universities of post-war Europe and it can obviously make a most vitally important contribution to the work of reconstruction. It is of interest to note that, while of course all varieties of religious, philosophical, and political opinion are represented among the members of the Association its President, Professor Dr. Stefan Glaser, of Poland, and its Secretary, Professor J. A. Veraart, of Holland, are Catholics, and while in this country have taken an active interest in the work of the Newman Association of English Catholic University graduates.

The speakers at the Conference were concerned not only with the prospect of better intellectual co-operation but still more with the social function of Universities and with the causes which have prevented them from making a more effective contribution in the immediate past to the life of Europe and of their various national communities. In the course of their speeches they touch upon most of the really urgent problems of the modern University. The value of their contributions varies greatly according to their realisation of the magnitude of the moral and spiritual crisis in which we now are and the tragic completeness with which the Universities have failed to provide that leadership which might have been expected of them. Some like Professor Kot, Sir Richard Livingstone and Professor Andrade go very much to the root of the matter in various ways. Others make some useful suggestions about matters of organisation, but sometimes there is a distressing superficiality and even complacency. A very interesting group of contributions are those which deal with the problems and achievements of particular countries. That on China should be read with particular interest and sympathy.

A. H. ARMSTRONG.

TOWARDS A NEW ARISTOCRACY. A Contribution to Educational Planning. By F. C. Happold. (Faber; 5s.)

In a hundred pages Dr. Happold describes (a) his religion, (b) his opinion on the decadence of society and on its chances of revival, (c) what he as schoolmaster and headmaster has done towards this revival. The book is in three parts: Diagnosis, Experiment, Possibilities. The diagnosis comes to this: society is chaotic and largely decadent—hence Hitler, the revolt of the 'under-mind,' anti-democracy. Democracy is 'passive' (the sum of civic rights and liberties) and 'active' (the participation in representative government). Passive democracy is a priceless heritage; but active democracy must adapt itself to changed conditions. 'Mass-democracy' cannot cope

with modern horrors (it is one). We need a new aristocracy, a new 'élite.'

Elites are either 'directive' or 'permeating,' and the latter fills the ranks of the former. And the modern educator must try to fill the ranks of the latter. He supplies the permeators.

'Experiment' describes the author's twenty years' effort to do this: a rather noble story of a flexible mind, with very good intentions and dogged persistence. His warm and glowing enthusiasm for young human nature holds one's sympathy; despite the utter modernism of the religion. As a story its climax is the League of Honour and Service, a sort of modernist Grail (for boys) or Sodality which Dr. Happold founded in 1935 at Bishop Wordsworth's School, Salisbury. This is his nucleus, his 'order,' his new aristocracy which is to permeate England: a little cohort of leaders, of seers, of doers. What will they do? 'Possibilities' does not tell you precisely. In a general way it argues for this type of aristocracy and this kind of training, it gropes into the future, it urges the Higher Christianity. I am not jeering. Dr. Happold really thinks that Christianity must get 'higher' by passing beyond creed and dogma; and that *then* you can bring youth to the altar and dedicate it and sew the Cross of Sacrifice on its left shoulder (p. 69).

Well, this is happening. It is a fact and a factor in our world, perhaps a growing one, perhaps dynamic. What shall we say? I put only three questions: (1) Granted an undogmatic 'faith' in that 'World of Being,' from which moral values and the League of Service derive, will not Intellect strive to *define* this 'world'? (2) Can *human* energy persist at all if it does not define its absolutes, reach clarity of truth? (3) Can this be done except on a basis of dogmatic *credenda*? The history of European intellect suggests an answer.

KENELM FOSTER, O.P.

EDUCATION THROUGH ART. By Herbert Read. 106 illustrations. Faber; 25s.)

Mr. Read considers this 'by far the most important book he has yet written'; it seems to me much inferior to his *Politics of the Unpolitical*, of which parts at least could be praised unreservedly. Here there are fundamental weaknesses throughout, and the book is so disjointed that my criticism of it must take the form of disjointed annotations.

(1). The book's thesis, allegedly Platonic, is that 'art should be the basis of education.' For Plato, see below. Art is in one place defined as 'mankind's effort to achieve integration with the basic forms of the physical universe and the organic rhythms of life,' though elsewhere the word has the current sense of visual art-works. 'Education must be based on an understanding of temperamental differences,' and 'the child's modes of plastic expression are the best key to the child's particular disposition.' The difficulty of cor-