

BLACKFRIARS

One has only to look at sculpture in Greek, Roman and Gothic art to see how perfectly it was in accord with its surroundings, the same is true of painting, and the art of the metal worker, etc. It is important not to fasten upon aberrations whether in Architecture or the lesser arts as if they were really representative of the new art which is springing into life. When the day has fully dawned, then architects, painters, sculptors, metal workers, and every other craft will *all be working in one style, and unable to work in any other.*

The characteristics I have noted as marking the development of the new style everywhere are solidity, dignity, proportion, and form, with so far little dependence upon detail. This does in certain cases give a crudeness to the designs which will be eliminated when the new style has developed its own decorative detail.

Yours faithfully,

BENEDICT WILLIAMSON.

THE CATHOLIC FAMILY

To the Editor of BLACKFRIARS

SIR,—In view of the last paragraph of Mr. Gordon's letter, I feel obliged to point out that my article was nothing more than a personal attempt to find a solution for what is commonly regarded as a difficult problem: I involved no one else in its conclusions.

If Mr. Gordon had submitted an alternative solution, or advanced objections of a radical sort, I should have been greatly in his debt; for I am anxious that this question of the Catholic family should be faced, and all the possibilities considered. But his present criticisms are, I think, easily disposed of. If persons are surrounded by conditions which make a moral life impossible, and they are able to choose another milieu in which morality can be practised, then they are bound to choose the latter, even though it may provide less comfort. The real question before us is whether those alternatives now exist. There is no glory in needlessly remaining in a milieu which is morally dangerous, and there is no ignominy in seeking a milieu which is normally healthy. Most of us will admire the initiative which, for the sake of their religious beliefs, led Catholics under Lord Baltimore to Maryland, Puritans to New England, and Mormons to Utah; but on my part I suggested only a removal from town life to country life, which could certainly be undertaken if now or in the future it becomes a moral necessity.

CORRESPONDENCE

Turning to Mr. Gordon's dislike of what he calls 'segregation,' it is clear that restricted social intercourse is already obligatory if our young people are to avoid mixed marriages. And, too, the large families which are encouraged in Catholic circles involve a lower material standard which prevents the members of those families from associating on terms of equality with the typical non-Catholic family. Furthermore, the early Christians and the early Franciscan Tertiaries undoubtedly adopted a mode of life which separated them in many ways from the rest of the population. It is evident that to-day only the exceptional Catholic can avoid some degree of social isolation; and it is indeed difficult to understand why the normal Catholic should not prefer to associate in the main with those of his own religion.

Mr. Gordon represents the conservative view. He would have no one abandon the society into which he or she is born: he would not contemplate the possibility of learning from the initiative of those outside the Catholic fold: he is entirely satisfied with the present line of conduct within the Catholic body. Since, however, this country is daily departing further from Christianity, and Catholic family life is becoming more and more difficult, I suggest on the contrary that new proposals should be advanced, and carefully weighed. The history of Catholicism is a long series of new movements, many of which were looked at askance when they began.

Mr. Gordon writes with enthusiasm of the Papal programme of social action: my article proposed nothing less than that we should apply it among ourselves. The great Catholics of the past were those who, in the face of profound difficulty, put precept into practice. Talk leaves the Englishman cold: but I conceive that nothing would go further towards extending the Kingship of Christ than visible evidence that Catholics were publicly carrying out their own social principles.

Yours faithfully,

B. THISTLETHWAITE.