

BLACKFRIARS

attain the immediate aims proposed for co-operation, but further by establishing contact with Catholics to sweep them into Communism. Communism being an international doctrine, it is for its supporters to reconcile their present friendliness to Catholicism in France with the professed anti-religion of Communism in Russia (and in past speeches of French Communists).

However, in certain limited spheres of action such as the measures to be taken to relieve some immediate and temporary distress, such as that caused by a strike, co-operation can be allowed with due safeguards. The latter half of the book is taken up with an examination of the particular objects proposed for common action: Anti-capitalism, Anti-fascism, Prevention of war, Liberty, Revolution and Defence of Culture. M. Scherer shows that, on analysis, there is only an apparent community of object, and that in reality in all these things there is an irreconcilable diversity between the aims of Communism and Catholicism.

The book is to be praised for the author's admirable attempt to avoid the confusion of ideas arising out of the equivocal use of words, by defining clearly what he is discussing, and perhaps more for the pervading spirit of charity, willing to give the other side the benefit of the doubt.

Even if we in England do not have to deal with the problem that is the occasion of this book, we nevertheless recommend it to all, particularly because it stresses the necessity for Catholics to be *independent*. Whenever there are two opposing errors, because the Church's opposition to one happens to be more obvious at the moment, she tends to be identified with the other error (as now she is identified by many with "Fascism" in Spain). It is essential for Catholics to preserve their independence of all parties, whatever they may seem to have in common with them; to quote Scherer's words: "Dans la mesure où des catholiques se trouvent compromis avec les forces du mal et pratiquent à l'égard du capitalisme libéral ou du communisme une politique de bienveillance coupable ou de concessions périlleuses, ils perdent le droit de se présenter comme des reconstructeurs."

ROGER DOMINIC CLARKE, O.P.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A CAMPAIGNER FOR CHRIST. By David Goldstein. (Catholic Campaigners for Christ, Boston, Mass.; \$2.50.)

To the ordinary reader the somewhat cumbersome book-title would not suggest the dramatic character of the book itself. Mr. David Goldstein (like Mr. Charles Chaplin!), though often taken as a typical American, was born in London of Jewish parents.

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Both his father and mother were Dutch, who had sought a living first in England and then in the United States.

There is a touch of Ghetto drama in the writer's remark that he was only eleven years old when of his own accord he started work as a cash boy in a dry goods store because "he wanted to bring in money to help support the home."

Soon after he had followed his father into the trade of cigar-maker, his instinctive escape from the limitations of Jewry led him into the Trade Union Movement. The same human instinct for a certain fullness of social life further led him, as he then thought, to widen his sectional trade unionism, to the world-wide brotherhood of Socialism—a catholic instinct! This London-born, Dutch-parented, New York bred Jew, whose schooling ended in his eleventh year, describes this progress from the Ghetto to the Socialistic Brotherhood with a picturesque pen which recalls Cobbett. Their common fund of wisdom deepens the resemblance. This is a sample :

As cigar-makers sat opposite each other on long benches in the factories, they, while working continually, discussed various subjects. Some of these discussions were very interesting to me; they intensified my desire for knowledge of sociological problems.

The best arguers were the Socialists and philosophical Anarchists, all atheists. They seemed to me to know what they were talking about, whereas the others were weak. They kept posted up on what was going on in the economic, political and irreligious world. . . .

Conservative, patriotic and religiously inclined persons generally accepted the institutions in which they were born and live, without feeling much of a desire to study their origin, the laws that govern them, or the arguments that will explain the situations that confront them from time to time. They realized in some way, without knowing how to defend the case when questioned, that it is not the principle of private property, the structure of the family, the State or the Church that causes the evils that exist; but rather is the cause due to the incidental violations of the principles upon which they were founded and operate. . . . I look back to-day to the zeal of these ardent propagators of error with the thought uppermost in my mind of the wonderful power for good such a propaganda spirit would be if it filled the minds and hearts of the many Catholics I have met who are morally a credit to their Church and their country (pp. 3, 4).

The gradual widening of this Jewish mind from Socialism to Catholicism is told in this autobiography with a realism which leaves the reader no excuse for weariness.

But a book that deals in the first person singular with such topics as Labour, Socialism, Jewry, the United States, the Catholic Church, is introducing its reader, whether he knows it or not, into the main issues before an almost stampeded world.

VINCENT McNABB, O.P.