

And Rothko's 'I am for the simple expression of complex thoughts' has a nice parallel in Einstein's $E = mc^2$, that simple and bafflingly profound equation. (One of the only three typographical errors I noticed is that this appears as $E + mc^2$!) Again, I am sure that the author has put his finger on a very important fact.

The volume is beautifully produced, with stuck-in prints and pleasing typography, and this also contributes to the pleasure of reading the book. While I was not struck by the profound originality of the book, it is certainly well thought out and is always interesting.

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A VARIETY OF CATHOLIC MODERNISTS, by Alec Vidler. *Oxford University Press*. £2.50 (50s.).

Those who have read Alec Vidler's earlier books will no doubt be looking forward to his latest one. And in many ways they will not be disappointed. It is the outcome of careful scholarship, drawing upon many unpublished or not easily obtainable documents, and thus providing an access to much interesting information, enlivened, as always, by a personal but unbiased interest in the men and events dealt with. In a book so obviously the fruit of close research (as the careful annotation, for instance, indicates) it is refreshing to find Paul Sabatier called, so aptly, 'the great busybody of the movement' (p. 108); or the reason for treating Blondel briefly, given in so direct a statement as: 'I do not feel qualified to do justice to Blondel since I find his thought obscure, his style insufferable and his temperament uncongenial' (pp. 79-80).

Yet, in spite of these complimentary qualities, and in part because of them, the book is in some ways curiously unsatisfactory. For it appears to be an attempt to do two things at once: to give biographical introductions to the less well-known men connected with the Modernist movement (such as Alfred Fawkes or Lucien Lacroix), and to deal, at some depth, with the differences in thought both of these and of the more prominent 'modernists' such as Le Roy and Laberthonnière, the treatment of the former being additional to that already contained in Vidler's *20th Century Defenders of the Faith*. It is, of course, reasonable to expect some knowledge of men like Loisy and von Hügel, and not of the 'lesser lights and fellow travellers' (and the exclusion of George Tyrrell in favour of A. L. Lilley is precisely on the ground that the former is already well known);

but this does not make it any easier for the reader of what is a relatively short book to adjust, on the one hand, to the sort of careful treatment given in the first two chapters to the question of Loisy's sincerity, and on the other, to thumb-nail sketches of some fourteen men in as many pages. This kind of ambivalence of treatment—and therefore of presupposed interest and knowledge—is also accentuated by those discrepancies of style to which the spoken, conversational lectures turned into written book are always open.

Nevertheless the book remains both interesting and enjoyable. Particularly good—because combining most happily the necessary background information with assessment—are the chapters on Edmund Bishop ('An unrecognized Modernist' as Vidler calls him) and on Marc Sangnier and the *Sillon*. But anyone whose interest is in Loisy should certainly read the first two chapters. Having done this every reader will wish to continue, and will find in what follows much that is new, and much that is stimulating to further research (to which the bibliography will be of great help). Of most value is the picture which emerges of the nature of the relationships between these very varied figures, obtained through numerous quotations from their letters to and about each other: comments sometimes adverse, sometimes sympathetic, serving to underline once again the diversities of thought and approach to contemporary problems of those whose views the encyclical 'Pascendi' systematized and stigmatized (and the book raises the question 'With what justice?') as 'Modernism'.

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