

REVIEWS

Another key point that we would gladly have seen more fully developed is that of the relation between the "historical" and the "mystical" Christ. If the Church has a mystical or sacramental implication, as we have said, this is only because the "historical" Christ, even precisely as historical, has also a "mystical" or sacramental significance. The historical Christ, in His life, activities and death, signified all mankind (even as Adam in his sin signified all mankind). And what was signified was also effected, so that in Him all mankind made reparation and lived anew the divine life of union with God (even as in Adam all mankind sinned and died to that divine life). Therefore is the historical Christ the head and all men sharing His incarnate life by Baptism are members of the body, which is the Church, and head and body, with its members, are the mystical Christ.

We are bound to recognize that in these days the apologetic of the Church must assume a new form, or better that it must re-assume its older form. The polemics and controversies which the Reformers called forth in the sixteenth century have coloured Catholic apologetics down to our own times. But now it is imperative that a new and more fundamentally doctrinal approach be adopted; and for this reason we gladly welcome Father Gruden's work as typical of what is needed.

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LA DIALECTIQUE DE LA DUREE. By Gaston Bachelard. (Boivin; 15 frs.)

This book is described by its author as a propaedeutic to a philosophy of repose and as an essay in discontinuous Bergsonism. As he explains, he can agree with Bergson on almost everything except continuity.

This being the case, the emphasis throughout is on the discontinuity of the real, its negative aspect, rather than on the fulness on which Bergson insists. For Bergson negations refer to judgments and not to subjects, and are therefore of secondary importance; M. Bachelard makes them primary, refusing to deny reality to the emptiness we experience along with fulnesses. The durations we experience are made up of events and intervals, not of events only. For Bergson reality is continuous, discontinuity and negation belong to the mind looking backwards along the real; for M. Bachelard continuity is problematic, a practical problem, something to be achieved and maintained, never found. Continuity only appears in experience that has not yet been analyzed, and it is by delicate analyses, psychological and phenomenological, that he tries to establish the reality of the discontinuities in all duration.

What can be thought can be taught, and M. Bachelard under-

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takes an analysis of time as it is thought, preferring this thought time to the unteachable intuition of a fleeting present. He thus discovers past time to be an artificially systematized series of interruptions between the decisive instants that have made us what we are, and the future a programme of ordered active instants. Ordered succession is thus a datum, but not any quantitative filling-in of the gaps between instants; they are *known* as empty, and objects are only *known* as what they are known as.

Again, any knowledge of time includes a rhythm of action and inaction, of hypotheses entertained and rejected. The very appearance of duration requires differences, action suspended and re-started, a whole dialectic movement; the complex structure of durations can only be discovered by eliminating errors, the regularity discovered presupposes dialectic. This is shown in regard of both physical and intellectual durations, and it becomes clear that only the order of succession is objective, it is thought as the form of durations, the organization which causal centres of activity supply. Durations are *formed* first, and then stuffed with matter, solidified by causes capable of recommencing after a check. Continuity is never on the same plane as the object alleged to be continuous.

Regularity cannot be retained in any sense that would imply an absolute time by which to measure rhythms. Temporal objects are to be known in terms of the frequencies of their rhythmic structure, and M. Bachelard thinks that if all their frequencies could be known no "irrationals" would remain. Rhythm, and not time or duration, is the ultimate in his discontinuous Bergsonism. And rhythms are systems of instants; continuity is always metaphorical because it is always coloured by a point of view.

He describes repose as a "*vibration heureuse*," and analyses some higher and rare forms of spiritual activity in which he finds the rhythm to be such as to co-ordinate and dominate the lower human rhythms. We may quote by way of example what he calls the "*(cogito)*³," the *je pense que je pense que je pense*. The last chapter is a summary of a book little known in Europe, *La Rhythmanalyse* by the Brazilian Prof. dos Santos. Rhythmanalysis, like psychoanalysis, aims at producing health of mind.

M. Bachelard's theories have the merit of being more in keeping with modern microphysics than the Bergsonism they are intended to supplant. He regards them as implying an idealistic theory of knowledge. He has paid little attention to the present of our experience, to the existential, and we think that had he regarded this more seriously his fine analyses might well have led him to a whole realist metaphysic on which to base the objectivity of the objects he has studied.

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