

(Editions du Cerf, 600 francs), should be a sufficient answer. In it, Père Marcel Ducos, writing from a long experience, discusses the immense obstacles to the Church's mission in an industrialized society. He avoids debates on abstract 'problems', though he is intensely aware of the sociological factors that so profoundly affect the lives of those the Church is seeking. 'The working-class world' is a concept, an idea. You never meet "the working-class" in the street. You meet a working man, who has a name, who has a family and who lives in this street and works in that factory. It's not "the working class" that is hungry or is insecure, but working men whom we know.' Whatever else may be accomplished, personal knowledge and personal love are possible, and Père Ducos pleads for these.

LA REVUE DE SCIENCES PHILOSOPHIQUES ET THÉOLOGIQUES is only one example among many of the wealth of specialized French reviews, having, one must suppose, a very limited public but able each quarter to publish some two hundred pages of articles and surveys which are invaluable for scholars. It is published 'with the help of the National Centre of Scientific Research', and it includes in its latest issue an important study by V. de Couesnongle of 'The notion of general virtue in St Thomas Aquinas', notes on Luther's conception of the Mass and on the present status of apologetics, as well as comprehensive bulletins of recent work in medieval history and dogmatic theology.

At a very different level of usefulness, INFORMATIONS CATHOLIQUES INTERNATIONALES provides each fortnight an invaluable survey of the Church's mission in the contemporary world. From oil in the Sahara to proposals to revise the Index, the documentation is lively and accurate, and preparations for the forthcoming Council give special value to this truly Catholic survey of the world the Church exists to serve and sanctify.

REVIEWS

THE LIFE OF RONALD KNOX. By Evelyn Waugh. (Chapman and Hall; 30s.)

For four hundred years biography has been incomparably the most popular form of English Catholic historiography, but this is the first time since Roper's *Life of More* that one has been written by a master of English prose. Inevitably it is admirably constructed; a superficially uneventful life is given the qualities of a drama. But it is also objective. There was probably a great deal of Mr Purcell in his *Cardinal Manning*, there was a very great deal of Mr Snead-Cox in his *Cardinal Vaughan* and of Mr Ernest Oldmeadow in his *Cardinal Bourne*. There is nothing of Mr Evelyn Waugh in his *Ronald Knox*.

Perhaps there were two elements in Mgr Knox that Mr Waugh might have emphasized. The first was the peculiar quality of his memory, intensely vivid but apparently fed directly from his senses. He had a poor memory for historic dates, as I learnt when I was helping with background work for *Don's Delight*. He asserted that he had no memory for addresses. As Chaplain at Oxford his memory for both Christian and surnames was erratic. Once he had associated a wrong name with a particular face he could seldom rid himself of the error; thus there was an undergraduate named 'Jamie' whom

he consistently called 'Jan'. But the phrasing of the prose and verse that he had read seem to have left perpetual echoes. He could recapture another's style without re-reading. And his past life and its material setting seems to have stayed with him in small scenes as clear-cut as medieval manuscript illuminations. This could be illustrated from his lecture upon Birmingham.

It is tenable that this formed a constant factor in his life. When I was an undergraduate at Balliol he showed me the window-seat where Charles Lister had once sat when he was talking to him. Ten years later he showed me where he had stood in the garden quadrangle when Charles Lister was sent down. I could cite eight other examples from within the college. But though to an Oxford judgment Mgr Knox was to stay as obviously Balliol as his friend Mgr Johnson remained Trinity, his college had never circumscribed his friendships. All Oxford must have been thickly haunted for him by the memories of those whom he had cared for most and who had been killed. His second period at Oxford was oddly joyless. He would never have returned there if it had not been for the busy activity of Mr F. F. Urquhart. His life would have been as useful and happier if he had gone as University Chaplain to Cambridge.

Perhaps it would have been happier still if he had left St Edmunds to take charge of a London parish. As a priest he was essentially pastoral. Though normally averse from giving any spiritual direction, the administration of the sacraments meant so much to him. He would have cared for his people deeply, for one of the greatest of his gifts was his kindness. He would have got on admirably with his fellow clergy.

For there is one other point that Mr Waugh might have amplified. Mgr Knox had become in so many ways a very characteristic English secular priest of an old, perhaps slightly northern, tradition. He is not conceivable either as a Jesuit, a Dominican or a Benedictine. He had a particularly strong feeling for the Old Brotherhood, of which he was to become a member, and, among colleges, for Ushaw. He, who was so ill at ease in most convents, became immediately at home in any number of presbyteries.

This is a fact which has some implications for English Catholic history. Ronald Knox would have found very little in common either with Dr Manning or with Dr Newman; Dr Wiseman would have swum past, a distant planet. But he and Dr Lingard would have been at ease with each other. Fortunately for the Catholic Church in England the pre-tractarian traditions of the clergy were saved from destruction, partly by Dr Ullathorne. Ronald Knox was essentially pre-tractarian. In the thirties he called himself a 'Garden of the Soul Catholic' and his confessor was the only representative of Dom Augustine Baker. He had become profoundly Catholic: he stayed profoundly insular.

But these are not criticisms of Mr Waugh's work; judged precisely as a life of Ronald Knox there is nothing in it that could be criticized, and that is the only fair standard of judgment. Mr Waugh did not set out to write a history of the Catholic Church in twentieth-century England, and even if one disagrees with some of the details of his backgrounds they do not affect his painting of the central figure.

Thus I do not agree with Mr Waugh's version of the history of Balliol. Still, that great college is well able to look after its own reputation. Unfortunately that is no longer true of Mgr A. S. Barnes. It would be sad if he were only to be remembered by the passage in this biography. He was a more learned and scholarly man than the passage suggests; he was a polymath in

the old Cambridge fashion; beneath much ingenious theorizing there lay great slabs of recondite and exact knowledge. He was also a far better chaplain. Still, Mgr Barnes had never wished that Fr Knox would succeed him and Fr Knox deliberately reversed every detail in his management of the chaplaincy. He represented very exactly the type of antiquarian vicar with a good living and with central views which young Ronald Knox had found so mutually allergic. I am not sure that Mgr Knox would have disagreed with Mr Waugh as much as I do.

The same may be suggested tentatively of Mr Waugh's account of the attitude of the English episcopate. To judge from my own memories, the English bishops regarded Ronald Knox with admiration and provided him with some unique opportunities. The fact that a number of them and of their clergy did not appreciate the use that was made of those opportunities was never due to any animosity or suspicion but only to that quality of innate conservatism which Ronald Knox himself possessed.

But I am not quite convinced that Mgr Knox saw it the same way as I did. I am sure that he never had a financial grievance against the hierarchy; it would have been against his nature to wish to make money from the Word of God as if it were a *Body in a Silo*. I am also sure that he frequently felt wounded and frustrated. When he was helping my brother to revise the *Westminster Hymnal* he had been light-hearted about criticisms of his work. But then he was still chaplain at Oxford. His later translations had come to mean much more to him, precisely since in his own phrase it was for them that he 'had laid down his crook'.

It is perhaps due to Mr Waugh's quality of genius that he can not only see Ronald Knox as he was but so often see things as he saw them. Possibly almost instinctively he has thrown into relief just those human factors in Ronald Knox's life for which I would guess Ronald himself was most grateful: Eton, the unique quality of his friendship with Lady Acton and the peace that Mells brought him.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.

THE LIFE AND WORK OF EDMUND BISHOP. By Nigel Abercrombie. (Longmans, 70s.)

For one who has spent years in the company of the author of *Liturgica Historica*, and has looked to him as a teacher and counsellor, this biography brings the happiness of a personal encounter at last. Edmund Bishop left many letters and notes and a most careful diary, and his present biographer is a kindred spirit. The result is such a living picture of the man, that not only can we follow his life year by year and often day by day, but in the most intimate way we can watch the development of this great spirit, with all his convictions, hopes and ideals, and all his projects and his failures. It is truly exciting to read how Bishop, while working in a humble position in 1867 spent his free time poring over the folios of Martène's liturgical masterpiece and then began his pilgrimages to the focal points of pre-Reformation Catholic life in England, and to the great Benedictine centres (he had once hoped to become a monk at Downside); how he searched the liturgical manuscripts in the old libraries, collecting and collating evidence and establishing relationships; how in his unselfish way he provided material for others (and indeed not a little of the work of Baumer, Gasquet, Butler, Strawley and others is unquestionably in debt to Bishop); and how he gradually came into touch with all the English and continental scholars in this field of study.