

Commentary

ANGLICANS AND METHODISTS. It seems unlikely that the proposals of the *Report on the Conversations between the Church of England and the Methodist Church*, far-reaching though they are, will re-unite the whole of either Church. On a practical level, no other church in communion with the Church of England was invited to take part in the conversations, and though the Anglican Church in Wales cannot be said to have taken umbrage, it must be pointed out that the reunion of the Welsh Methodists with that Church must be attended by peculiar difficulties. On the other hand, the dissentient minority of the Methodists who took part are afraid that the scheme outlined by the Report will divide Methodism, itself at the moment the result of the reunion in 1932 of three formerly separate branches. It is in the end the irresolvable grit of theology which hinders the smooth reunion of the two, more especially the theology of the sacraments and the episcopacy. Professor C. K. Barrett, a distinguished New Testament scholar and a Methodist, has characterized what is broadly speaking the view of the whole Anglican Church on the episcopate as bad history and worse theology. Nor is the Anglo-Catholic party in the Church of England likely to be comforted by the assurance, suggested as a safeguard for the Methodist Church, that 'the same liberty of interpretation of the nature of episcopacy and priesthood would be accorded to it, on becoming episcopal, as prevails in the Church of England'. No one doubts the fundamental charity of the two Churches nor the strong ecumenical current in their leadership, but the two years suggested for further study and discussion of these questions before the decision is made seem hardly adequate.

THE BIDAULT INTERVIEW. It was unfortunate that the BBC chose to release its Panorama interview with M. Bidault at the moment it did. The opposition to General de Gaulle's authoritarian regime is strong; the alliance of Communist, Socialist and Catholic trade unions in the minefields in direct defiance of the President is far more respectable evidence than the actions of a handful of fanatics. But, even if no communications can be proved to exist between M. Bidault and the condemned OAS leaders, the showing of the interview was ineptly timed and created an impression of irresponsibility far from the usual image of the BBC.

RICHARD O'SULLIVAN, Q.C. Richard O'Sullivan was born on February 18th, 1888, in Cork, and died on February 18th, 1963, devotedly tended in St Joseph's Hospice for the Dying, Mare Street, Hackney. Appreciations of his work and personality have appeared in *The Times* and *The Tablet*. He was since 1936 chairman of the committee of the Association of Friends of Blackfriars, which was founded by Fr Bede Jarrett, O.P. to support the training of Dominican students in Oxford. This cause was especially congenial to him because his thought on matters of law, society and civilization found so much of its inspiration in St Thomas Aquinas and in discussions with his many Dominican friends. They in turn were quick to admit an ever-recurring debt to an apostle they admired and loved, a host whose company made them free of the conversation of men distinguished in many walks of life, an Irishman who would never long allow them to forget the Christian origins of English life and law. Many tributes to his memory have come from younger men whose early work he encouraged and whose talents he fostered, joyfully sharing his deep learning, wide interests, and insistent vision - it seemed no less - of a society where law and grace were one. That vision, personified for him by St Thomas More, not only informed his busy and distinguished professional life, but set him travelling throughout the country in years of work for the Catholic Social Guild. May he rest in peace.