

Perhaps there is as much natural religion here as in the similar case of Socrates, though the latter used much more religious language.

This book will certainly be placed among the indispensables for all who are interested in things Chinese.

B. W.

BE NOT AFRAID. By Emmanuel Mounier. (Rockliff; 15s.)

This book would be valuable if only for the frontispiece portrait of Mounier; for the very sight of Mounier's face, its rough, boyish eagerness and generosity, and its deep compassionate lines, are themselves sufficient reason to 'be not afraid'. If you gaze long enough at the portrait you know well enough that the book itself is going to speak to you of that 'optimisme tragique' which is Mounier's description of Christianity. And how convincingly Mounier does indeed speak! In listening to him we are listening to one of the really great men of our time, a man who looked evil in the face yet never gave way to despair.

But it would be a vain undertaking to summarise Mounier's character and message—he has already expressed himself forcibly enough in writings of his own, such as *La petite peur du XXe siècle* and *Qu'est ce que le personnalisme?*, which have now been made available in this volume. Let us just quote two typical passages:

'It is a ruse of instinct to use faith and humanism as a cover for the fact that we do indeed live in the age of Buchenwald and Hiroshima, the Moscow purges and the Warsaw ghetto. The contrary of pessimism is not optimism. It is an indefinable mingling of simplicity, of pity, of stubbornness and of grace.

Unhappy the man who might achieve freedom from that compassion for which one single life is no longer sufficient.'

'I do not think that He (i.e. God) likes the happy and the optimistic either; but rather those who are simple and have compassion and who work without exhausting their compassion or rejoicing in it. Let others, those for whom all phantoms are banished by the vast progress in plumbing, let them launch crusades against despair. Their wagons are already heavy with the despair of tomorrow, that for which there will be no remedy, not even in a liking for the abyss, all abysses having been abolished by decree, then by the Terror, and finally by habit. And this time, the true with the false.'

The true remedy against despair is to be found in Mounier's own writings. Is it too much to hope that they will inspire someone to do for England what he has done for France?

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