

ceeded in suppressing it. One would rather sacrifice all else in order to keep it in spite of everything, for it is a sign of free development to which one clings, Poland and the Pole being unable to live otherwise than in a freedom that is signed with the sign of the Resurrection.

A. KREUTZA

(Translated by J. Augustine Greene, O.S.B.)

FATHER GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, THOMISM AND THE 'NEW THEOLOGY'

I SUPPOSE there is no greater and more devoted authority on the classic Thomist tradition than Father Garrigou-Lagrange. For well over forty years he has been writing in defence of that tradition. His first works were written at a time of crisis, when the very bases of faith were attacked by the Modernists. He was an apostle of Thomist realism against the immanentist, evolutionist and phenomenalist philosophies before modernism was condemned by Pius X. Writing now in his old age, long after that struggle of his youth, Father Garrigou feels that there are once again danger-signals of a falling away from St Thomas, and he is as convinced as he ever was that such a falling away will bring disaster to many. 'Whither goes the new theology?' he writes at the end of his book.¹ 'It is returning to modernism.'

In view of the urgency, as he sees it, he considers it timely to give us a constructive and concise statement of the whole system of philosophy and theology of St Thomas. In all controversial questions he takes, as he always has done, the more traditional view, almost always under the guidance of the classical commentator, Cajetan.

An English Catholic, aside from the main stream of Catholic thought, must wonder that there could be any foundation in present-day Catholic thinking for Father Garrigou-Lagrange's fears. It is more in France than in England that much of the older theological tradition has been questioned in recent years. There are, for instance, more and more positivist theologians who question in one matter after another the historical accuracy of Cajetan's interpretation of St Thomas. There are other positivist theologians who, through their concentration on the historical aspect, develop into eclectic

¹ R. P. R. Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., *La Synthèse Thomiste*, 1947, 8vo, 740 pages; English Agents, Blackfriars Publications; price 18s.

theologians who, while claiming to remain true to the basic Thomist principles upon which all are agreed, build up a theology of their own from a number of quite different traditions. In addition to these there is a group, of whom the most illustrious is Maurice Blondel, who have maintained in full loyalty to the Church a position much nearer to that aimed at by so many of the modernists, who call their philosophy a philosophy of action, or, more recently, an integrist philosophy. All these, in one way or other, Father Garrigou-Lagrange regards as a challenge to Thomism.

For two reasons he thinks it urgent that the challenge should be met. The first is his conviction that Thomism is the only ontology which has proved itself compatible with Christian revelation. The second is his desire to make quite clear that it is impossible to be a Thomist by half-measures. Either one must accept the whole exactly, so it appears from this book, as Father Garrigou-Lagrange accepts it; or one must, if one is consistent, abandon the basic Thomist principles. Further, he implies, sooner or later one will be consistent, and from small beginnings one is driven to great errors.

The greater part of the book is a constructive exposition which speaks for itself. He begins with a statement of the sources of Thomism, the nature and method of theology according to St Thomas, and how that theology uses its sources. St Thomas clearly recognises that there is much in the philosophy of Aristotle which is excellent, and which can even prove or defend a number of basic doctrines, such as the freedom of the will or the immortality of the soul, which, though not in themselves supernatural mysteries, yet form a part of revelation. Philosophy deserves to be studied for its own sake, and, in order to be a philosophy, must be given complete independence from theology. Once emancipated, it becomes theology's handmaid. While clearly distinguishing reason from faith, St Thomas shows that they can form part of one world. Reason can be baptised. Accepting revealed truths as the source of theology, reason can prepare, compare, explain, develop, analyse and deepen our understanding of such things. This possibility supposes the analogy of being between the natural and supernatural orders. But since theology takes as its source revealed truths, known by the light of infused faith, it is only possible as a living and scientific wisdom in those who have the faith. In such it is helped by the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless theology is strictly a science and must use as its instrument sound reasoning based upon a sound philosophy of being.

Father Garrigou shows the need for the Thomist of fitting the Thomist theodicy into the revealed doctrine of the Trinity. Nothing that sound reasoning, by way of negation, eminence and causality

tells us about God is in the end irreconcilable with the revealed doctrine of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Similarly we must seek for our understanding of God's created images, angels and men, in the light of the Thomist philosophy of being. Father Garrigou-Lagrange completes his exposition of the Thomist system by showing how it applies to the Christian doctrine of a redemptive Incarnation, the Christian idea of the Sacraments, and even to Moral Theology and spirituality.

He concludes the systematic part of his book by pointing out that the patent consistency of the system, with its adaptability to the whole Christian revelation, shows us the impossibility of Christian eclecticism. Feeling that some may be depressed by such philosophical and theological discipline and feel that the field has been unduly narrowed, Father Garrigou-Lagrange consoles such that Thomism is essentially assimilative, able to take to itself whatever is good even in philosophies seemingly diametrically opposed. Those who look to Father Garrigou-Lagrange for a clear masterly exposition of Thomism will not be disappointed in this volume. Naturally, since it covers the whole of Thomism, the argument cannot be as close and profound as in the author's classical monographs on special subjects. But the picture as here given is impressive and coherent, and as authentic as it would be possible to have.

But the volume does not end here. There follow about a hundred pages of an entirely different nature. The part of the book just considered, about 600 pages, was built up on the lines of the author's recent article on Thomism in the *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*. The last hundred pages contain material of a controversial nature, some of which has recently appeared in the *Angelicum*. Not content with putting the constructive case for Thomism, he feels that it is necessary to be more explicit, and to warn Catholic theologians against the dangers of the 'New Theology'. He mentions by name M. Blondel, and the Jesuits, Fathers Bouillard, Fessard, de Lubac and Teilhard de Chardin. M. Blondel is of course coupled with names like that of Le Ray as the disturbing philosophical influence leading the new theology astray. Other writers are quoted anonymously, among whom Fr Danielou, S.J., seems to be included. One cannot help regretting that Father Garrigou-Lagrange chooses to class together a large group of named and unnamed writers as the 'New Theology', when it is by no means clear that they form any sort of unified school of thought. Most of the names are of deeply respected theologians or philosophers, and it is disturbing to hear them all given a name taken from a warning made last year by Pius XII without reference to individuals, and classed together as on the way to modernism.

As far as M. Blondel is concerned, it is well known that he himself does not see the incompatibility between his philosophy and that of St Thomas. I know that some of his philosophical colleagues have been outspoken in their contempt for Scholastics as Intellectualists. But M. Blondel, especially in recent years, has consistently refused to adopt this position. On the contrary he agrees that Christian philosophy must be metaphysically a philosophy of being, and he is not disposed to dispute the soundness of Thomism as embodying that philosophy. Father Garrigou-Lagrange gives us an unfair impression by seeming to class M. Blondel with American Pragmatism. (Incidentally Father Garrigou seems to regard it as English. On p. 620 he refers to the work of Mr Charles S. Pierce in England, and seems to imply the same mistaken nationality of W. James.) Most of Father Garrigou's argument is based on a quotation from an article of M. Blondel in 1906, in which he says the definition of truth should be *adequatio mentis et vitæ*. In the same article M. Blondel speaks disparagingly of the scholastic definition. In about twenty pages Father Garrigou quotes the same passage at least five times, and always as the main point of the argument. It is quite clear that M. Blondel was not justified in rejecting the scholastic definition, and further that his alternative definition, out of its context, could be given a dangerous and modernistic meaning. To bolster up his argument, Father Garrigou several times quotes another passage of M. Blondel where he states that no intellectual evidence is strong enough to force our assent.

But is it fair to quote such passages out of their context and damn the whole of both M. Blondel's philosophy and the philosophy and theology of many others on the strength of them? Metaphysically M. Blondel is not a pragmatist. Would he in the metaphysical sphere accept Father Garrigou-Lagrange's explanation of the offending definition? I doubt it. How often have not sentences been torn out of their context in the works of Newman in order to prove that he was anything but what he really claimed to be. The same has been done for St Paul; and even an exact writer like St Thomas, as Father Garrigou-Lagrange would admit, can be made to mean all manner of things by being quoted out of his context.

Father Garrigou might reply that he admits explicitly that M. Blondel is right in what he affirms and wrong in what he denies. If this is anything more than merely stating that he means well, and saying the same about him as he might say about any false thinker or heretic, surely it is unfair to spend so much time pointing out the possible dangers in a few partially negative statements of M. Blondel, and saying so little about the positive good. The reader must get the impression that to attempt to follow M. Blondel will

be disloyal to Thomism, and will end up in Modernism. Father Garrigou cannot have wanted to give this impression, in view of Pope Pius XII's recent letter of commendation to M. Blondel.

I do not think one is in any way disloyal to Thomism if one allows that there is a vast field of difficult and vital study not touched by the classical development of Thomism. It is a field which has been much studied in recent times by writers like Newman and Blondel. Both are deeply moved by certain facts of life with regard to people's susceptibility to arguments and philosophies. Newman used to say that logic alone never won anyone over to the truth. M. Blondel tells us that the kind of philosophy we accept is largely determined by our lives, our aims and our interests. They are not saying that it ought to be so, but that it *is* so. Who can fail to see—Father Garrigou-Lagrange would be the first to admit it—that Catholics are by the whole orientation of their lives predisposed to be Thomists? But Russian Communists are similarly predisposed to be Marxists. There is a certain scientific type of student who is predisposed to be Agnostic. Neither Newman nor Blondel would admit that all these philosophies are true. But Blondel would say that that philosophy is true which corresponds to life, and in which our being is properly adapted to life. The Marxist philosophy cannot be accepted by one who has the true attitude towards life. I agree that in the last sentence the word 'true' must be understood in accordance with the Thomist definition of truth. But this does not mean that Blondel's definition has no value. M. Blondel's definition refers more to our psychological concrete relation to truth, and St Thomas's to its abstract metaphysical nature. For the Blondelian philosophy it is most important to realise that we, as it were, grow into truth by acting and thinking truly with our whole beings, not merely by having in our minds what Newman might call 'notional' abstract arguments and definitions.

After this, what can one say in a short article on Father Garrigou-Lagrange's condemnation of the positivist theology of so many Jesuits? For one thing, they write very differently, on different subjects, and it is hardly fair to make them all guilty for whatever the others hold. At least one must deplore Father Garrigou-Lagrange's method of treating, say, Father de Lubac. Can anything justify a mere quotation against Father de Lubac of those precise passages from St Thomas which Father de Lubac says must be understood differently, without any attempt at considering Father de Lubac's closely argued position? Most Thomists will feel extremely doubtful regarding the novel interpretation of St Thomas which Father Garrigou-Lagrange is opposing. But it is not a view to be lightly dismissed with a few quotations from St Thomas.

Father Garrigou is entitled to state his feeling of alarm at the new tendencies, but little good can be done by such a summary treatment in the last hundred pages of a systematic statement of Thomism.

As far as Father Garrigou-Lagrange's own interpretation of St Thomas is concerned, many of us will feel that his arguments to prove that Cajetan's theory of personality is essentially involved in Thomist principles are unconvincing. He gives the reader the impression that the view which makes existence the constitutive element of personality is incompatible with the twenty-four Thomist theses. In reality, of course, these make no mention of Cajetan's theory, and those of us who reject it are as unimpressed by Father Garrigou's arguments as we are by the quotations he makes to prove that St Thomas held it. Though St Thomas speaks of a person having existence, he also speaks of a person being a nature. The person is made up of both, and therefore has both. But this neither proves that the person includes something over and above existence and essence, nor that it is constituted by one more than the other.

But the controversial matter must not blind us to the real value of the five hundred pages which give the case for Thomism. Some people regard it as a weakness in Father Garrigou-Lagrange's work that he includes so little positive theology, so little Scripture and Patristic in his theological argument. There would seem to be some justification for this in some of his works. But perhaps in the present work it would not be so much in place. The object of this work is to show the nature of the theological use of reasoning and philosophy in the Thomistic scheme, and how it hangs together as a system, given the basic truths of Christian faith.

The value of the work is increased by a select bibliography of Thomism, arranged according to subject-matter.

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