

practical decision can be rational: without practical decision no logical clarification can be more than academic. The result is that we neither think effectively nor live decisively'.

Throughout the book, the argument is clear, patient, and ingenious. If, in spite of this, we find the author's conclusions preposterous, we do well to question his initial assumptions. There is good reason to doubt whether it is either possible or necessary to reconcile the assertions of natural theology with the philosophy of logical empiricism. That philosophy, as its name suggests, derived from two sources: the improved formal logic introduced by Frege, and the traditional British empiricism put into canonical form by Hume. Because the greatest British exponent of the new logic subscribed warmly to the epistemology of Hume, the two elements have often been regarded, by admirers and critics alike, as inseparable. But in the last decade more and more philosophers have combined an admiration for the new logical techniques with a belief in the fundamental incoherence of empiricist epistemology. Now that it has ceased to be fashionable to regard tables as logical constructions out of sense-data, we may look forward to a cessation of attempts to present God as a logical construction out of internal impressions. Hume's philosophy is, as it was meant to be, incompatible with any natural theology worthy of the name: the God of Christian orthodoxy, the maker of the world, cannot be the object of any experience however mysterious and sublime. God's existence can be shown only as the conclusion of an argument, not as the delivery of a sixth sense. The renaissance of logic has provided tools for the deployment and criticism of such arguments; the revolution in epistemology has removed some of the obstacles to their consideration. It is yet to be seen how natural theologians will make use of their opportunity.

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HISTORY OF THE MISSIONS, by Bernard de Vaulx. (Faith and Fact Books) Burns and Oates; 8s. 6d.

MISSIONS IN THE WORLD TODAY, by René P. Millot (Faith and Fact Books) Burns and Oates; 8s. 6d.

TEACHING ALL NATIONS, A Symposium on Modern Catechetics. Ed. by Johannes Hofinger, s.j. Translated by Clifford Howell, s.j. Burns and Oates; 35s.

The two books in the Faith and Fact series reviewed here cover the entire field of the Catholic Missions, the first taking the story from Apostolic times to 1914, the second summarizing the present state of the Missions in a geographical rather than a chronological order. Necessarily very compact in their treatment of such a huge subject, the first still manages to give a useful summary of the controversy concerning the Chinese Rites, while the second has some en-

lightening statistics on the missionary effort of different nations and Religious Orders.

The third volume is long and extremely important, consisting of lectures by no less than 28 participants, of whom eight are bishops, in the 1960 Eichstätt International Study Week on Missionary Catechetics. All these lectures afford information of great value, but the agreement between them is so considerable that there is much overlapping; while the arrangement of the various sections is not altogether satisfactory. One could wish that Fr Höfner, the editor and moving force of the Study Week, who is Director of the East Asian Pastoral Institute, Manila, had been more ruthless and cut down the volume to some 120 pages. It would then be more likely to have the distribution and impact which the importance of its thesis requires.

All the lectures assume that the old-fashioned catechetical methods which the Missions have carried over the world, and which are being abandoned in the more enlightened Catholic areas of Europe, are singularly ill-suited to the work of the Church in missionary regions. The title of the book, *Teaching All Nations*, precisely states its theme, and the lectures make a vivid appeal for a revision of our methods in fulfilling this mission given us by Christ. It would be impossible for anyone who has objectively examined what goes on in Mission territories to deny the urgency of this appeal or the validity of the suppositions on which it is based. Even where Catholics in the mission-field have a considerable standard of education it is obvious that their intellectual conception of the Faith is not co-ordinated with their secular knowledge and often has to be kept in a separate compartment to be retained. Yet, of its nature, the Faith should be a light to the mind. It is of the first importance that this light should be enabled to break through the barriers erected by obsolete, partial and even obscurantist statements in religious teaching.

This point is made very clear on page 379 by Cardinal Gracias when he says: 'We are not losing because we lack good will, but because of the indifference of Catholics to enlightened Catholicism'. If the Cardinal is correct, and the sense of the conference, which included more than 60 Bishops, was overwhelmingly with him, the revolution needs to go far. It could start with mere appearances. 'One of the earliest memories of many of us', says one of the lecturers, 'is that the ugliest, cheapest and least appealing of all books we ever used was the Catechism'. What of its contents? In one Mission an attractive-looking Catechism had been experimentally produced and some young Africans were found looking at it. 'What is it?' they enquired, when asked if they would like to have one. 'A Catechism'. 'Oh, no!', they cried, 'we don't want a Catechism'.

If the very word produces such a reaction, then there is something badly wrong with the contents of what has hitherto been produced. As a Professor from Rome says: 'One of the most urgent problems of our contemporary pastoral ministry (is) that of restoring to the Gospel message the quality of joy that is proper to it.' The Catechism, it is insisted over and over again, must present the Good Tidings and, in one bishop's words, make the Christian 'love

human life and understand that it is there that he accomplishes his own perfection. One must beware of the Manichaeism latent in many Christian educators.' The Catechism must present Christ first of all, the positive and joyous message that he brings, and leave the 'Thou Shalt Nots' in their due position. One bold group even proposes translating the Commandments in the form of positive injunctions to holiness. In every case the Bible and the Liturgy must be regarded as prime vehicles of the Good Tidings and it is worth while noting that, in connection with the latter, one Bishop declares that 'an inflexible conservatism insisting on the exclusive retention of Latin has led to an immense loss of souls'.

Where is the Good News to be taught? 'The Missions leave the entire religious training to the schools'. But this is disastrous, because it disregards 'the most important place of Christian formation, namely the home'. A consideration and practice of religion identified with the school is too easily left when the school is left. And, as the lecturers consistently maintain, the methods of religious teaching must not lag decades behind the modern methods of secular teaching. It is possible to find one congregation devoted to teaching whose methods are part of their Rule, laid down in the early years of the last century.

As inevitably catechetical instruction will fall under the supervision of the clergy it is interesting to note on page 306 that the regional superior in Africa of 'a certain renowned order of missionaries' stated that 'all of us were sent out to the mission without any kind of special training in catechetics'. On page 308 the same lecturer declares that 'we must enlighten (the seminarian) about the fundamental laws of human learning and teaching. 'This would be a revolution indeed. But the seminaries depend upon the Bishops and it is interesting to find an Archbishop making the point that 'our first necessity is to convince the members of our hierarchy that catechetical renewal is one of the vital necessities of our day', a point underlined by Cardinal Agagianian himself in his letter to the editor: 'the ordinaries in the missions . . . while respecting the wishes and suggestions of the experts, will have to use their own judgment in which way religious instructions in their missions are best to be carried out'. This must also be the concern of those who appoint the ordinaries.

In *Princeps Pastorum* the Holy Father enunciates certain principles which must govern the whole question of catechetics. 'It is not enough', says the Pope, 'to multiply conversions and to inscribe long lists of names in the baptismal register. The number of Christians will mean little if they are wanting in quality'. These words of the highest authority are sufficient evidence of the necessity of that revolution to which *Teaching All Nations* is an inspiring incitement.

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