

REVIEWS

and could be used **to** implement, as the Prime Minister would say, any type of Society, Catholic or Pagan.

Mr. Hollis's book will not only be indispensable to anyone wishing **to** understand modern history and contemporary politics; it will also be invaluable in that study and application of *Quadragesimo Anno*, to which every intelligent Catholic has **been** urged by the Pope himself. And this is a sufficient indication of its worth.

T.C.E.

I COMMIT TO THE FLAMES. By Ivor Brown. (Hamish Hamilton; pp. 240; 6/-.)

'Contemporary taste . . . is rationalistic where romantic values **are** natural and romantic where reason demands **to be** upheld.' **The cult** of the Coon, of King Kong, of dictatorial coloured shirts. . . It seems, alas! if we really **look into the** matter, that we are all extremely naughty. Should we indeed conduct the investigation under the exclusive tutelage of **Mr.** Ivor Brown we might be led to suspect that the guidance of reason is irretrievably a thing of the past, that all is over between us. Yet D. H. Lawrence was not merely a gentleman who thought that the only thinking worth talking about resides in the lower reaches of the abdomen; jazz is not entirely the worship of orgiastic and ape-like coons; disapprobation of democracy is not necessarily motivated by a weak desire to hold aloft be-shirted arms to a Myth Man, nor is psycho-analysis merely a wayward fancy for seeing untoward sexual significance in the way we go about our everyday occasions. Even, perhaps, in the horrid, unwholesome hell of Hollywood one may sometimes venture to discern a glimmer of hope. **Mr.** Ivor Brown repudiates any element of puritanism in his position, as, incidentally, he repudiates any sympathy with Roman Catholicism and (here being 'romantic where reason demands to be upheld') its 'bedizenments of myth and magic': his is the voice of reason crying in the Waste Land. Yet alike relatively (to carry conviction) and absolutely (to see the truth) it is a bad thing if we **can** find nothing but error in errors since in every error there is truth. And in any case, the Book of Life is the one book one cannot commit to the flames; one can only turn over a new leaf, and therein there is continuity. So, for example, the essential failure of Buchmanism is accurately diagnosed; **but how** much more valuable to go on to state its essential worth. And as tactics of persuasion how much more efficacious! But this is not to deny the value of the satirical onslaught: the book should administer a salutary jolt, not least to the partisans of intellectual laissez-faire, and recall the errant attention to a number of primary home-truths we are in danger of forgetting.

L.S.G.V.