

The problem of the Mass calls for courage and adaptability in accepting the modern world and its techniques in organisation, economics and production. What we take over from the past is the imperishable core of doctrinal truth, but new adaptations to the ever changing material field are necessary if we are to create the living Christian Culture. The chances in any event of constructing an archaistic simulacrum of a bygone age are nil. In particular the applications of the doctrine of private property to modern conditions call for a creative moral and intellectual effort which cannot be wholly painless. A beginning has been made by Maritain and others, but much still remains to be done. In this connection we would support Dr Micklem's contention that the extension of State Competence and Control is not necessarily a 'threat to the values for which the Church stands'; though we may add that the problem precisely consists in reconciling the demands of a mass society with the eternal needs of human freedom.

There are numerous and substantial points of agreement between the present work and Maritain's 'Humanisme Intégral', with which it will no doubt invite comparison. It is perhaps inevitable that Dr Micklem's historical approach to the problem of the Sacred and the Secular should lack something of the range, depth and fire of the earlier French work; but it is also likely that his treatment of the subject will prove more acceptable to English readers.

R. VELARDE.

WILLIAM LAW: A Study in Literary Craftsmanship. By Henri Talon. (Rockliff; 8s. 6d.)

Quite possibly many friends of the mystical and Christian writings will be put off by the sub-title of this extraordinarily concentrated study of William Law. They must be re-assured. Although it is a study of Law's prose style, which was so often almost a lyrical style, Dr Talon is so concerned not to 'dissociate the subject matter from the expression', that what he presents is very much more than a mere unfolding of Law's mystical beliefs 'so far as was absolutely necessary for an appreciation of his talent as a writer'.

He introduces us to the complete Law: that is, Law the Tantivy Tory wit, Law the moralist, Law the speculative and ascetical theologian, and, alas, Law the rigorist. It is exceedingly salutary to find at last a study of this remarkable man in his entire person. Just as St Teresa, the Eagle, was a shrewd business-like woman as well as a mountaineer among the spiritual peaks, so Law was a remorseless logician—though he despised the discursive reason—and threw his 'ifs' with devastating effect among the latitudinarian Whig rationalists of his time. By setting off Law's austere figure against his environment in church and society Dr Talon has performed a considerably useful service.

Rigorism was the mark of Law's work; how it affected his style

and his manner of persuasion is one of the chief tasks Dr Talon has set himself. His answers are illuminating. He shows the limitations of Law's art of persuasion, the chief of which arose out of his imperfect understanding of 'fleshly man'. Law failed in turning the spiritually feckless from the town of Morality let alone Vanity Fair; but at the same time he aroused men like Dr Johnson and the Wesleys. If he was a rigorist among rigorists, if he struck at the stage to destroy, as his fellow non-juror, Collier, struck at Dryden's towering crest to reform, it remains that one must not easily dismiss his rigorism.

His opponents, writes Dr Talon, might have 'quoted with great effect the authority of many saints and theologians, above all of St Thomas Aquinas . . . at the cost of some slight misrepresentation of his thought'. That is the rub. The lax should beware of casuistry just as rigorists should mortify themselves with as much of it as they can stomach. Nevertheless it is the glory of men such as Law and Pascal (whose name cannot be avoided in this context), and to a lesser extent, Bossuet, that they did battle against *le divertissement*. Their God was a consuming fire. Their understanding of pastimes was expressed in Barclay's Apology: 'we should "pass the time of our sojourning in fear"'. But always it is to be remembered that Law is in the lists against men like Horace Walpole. Does he speak to their condition? If he does not, it is not for want of liveliness of style and felicity of expression. His candid portraits of worldly, mammonish and rather decent folk in his *Christian Perfection* must without doubt have been instantly recognised by those men for whom we may feel a certain sympathy in their dislike of 'being righteous overmuch'.

In one or two places Dr Talon writes of Law's 'becoming a mystic'. Am I crabbed in disliking such a description of Law's growing awareness of the fact that he was 'born between two books'? 'Becoming a mystic' is rather like 'going in for mysticism' or 'taking up religion'. But it seems that Law did reach a certain stage in his life when he profoundly realised the limits of moralising and of witty dissertation with the 'uninclined' (his own deliberately chosen word). He had read Malebranche and Descartes. He was, like the Quakers with whom he later came to friendship, a Behmenist, like Barclay a Cartesian. But at the back of them all stand St Bonaventure, Hugo of St Victor and the mystical writers of the 11th and 12th centuries. His interest in vegetable life, even mineral (I am at once reminded of Vaughan, Sillex Scintillans, in this connexion) is decidedly Bonaventuran. We may say of Law as M. Gilson says of the Seraphic Doctor that 'the world appeared to him as a system of transparent symbols giving rise in the devout soul to the thought of the Creator'. How that informs his 'style of love' with its rhythms and imagery we learn among these pages. Underneath the style is something of the silent music of the unceasing murmur of the world. It is meet that Law died singing.

His writings would have especially appealed to publishers in his day if it had suffered from our paper shortage, for they were void of padding. I do not know whether Dr Talon has been impressed both by Law and the paper shortage, but it is probable that he would have liked to expand what he has so ably confined. As an 'evangelical' of sorts rather than a 'mystical' fellow your reviewer would have wished far more space had been devoted to Law's interpretation of the Inner Light in relation to his understanding of the Atonement. As a not altogether recent admirer of Coleridge, I should have liked to read more of Law's influence over that important man. It would help to take us up to T. S. Eliot, the late Charles Williams and Brother George Every. You can throw in Aldous Huxley if you have a mind.

H. M. EDWARDS.

**THE WORSHIP OF THE ENGLISH PURITANS.** By Horton Davies. (Dacre Press; 25s.)

This book written by the Professor of Divinity in Rhodes College, Grahamstown, is a careful and exhaustive sketch of the origin and history of those religious bodies which broke away from the Anglican Church in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The name Puritan was given to all such, though there arose a sharp cleavage between the Presbyterians who followed their founder Calvin more closely, and the Independents or Congregationalists who looked for, and found, a further Reformation through the "Spirit. In particular they disliked credal formulas and fixed forms of prayer. In several respects the Puritans as a whole deviated from Calvin, who desired weekly Communion, tolerated the idea of Episcopacy, used the Apostles' Creed, and approved of Confirmation and Confession. But they were true to him in rejecting vestments of any kind, or ceremonies which were not directly prescribed in Scripture, and in making the Bible the fundamental rule not only of doctrine but of worship. For this reason they rejected the Book of Common Prayer even in its 1552 form which Calvin himself was prepared to tolerate, in spite of 'its many tolerable ineptitudes', as he termed them.

In spite of their differences both Presbyterians and Independents accepted the *Directory for Public Worship* set forth by the Westminster Assembly and given Parliamentary sanction in 1644, thereby replacing the Book of Common Prayer. It is fully (though occasionally inaccurately) described by Mr Davies. Being a compromise effected between those who desired a fixed liturgy and those who did not, it is rather a manual of direction than a service book. Great emphasis is laid on the sermon. The Lord's 'Supper' includes the recitation of the words of Institution and a prayer for the sanctification of the elements of bread and wine: 'that we may receive by Faith the Body and the Blood of Christ'. But the worshippers are directed to sit at or around the Table. The Puritan objections to the Prayer Book are well known, especially to the Sign of the Cross in