

If the Indian natives wish to prevent the Spaniards from enjoying any of their above-named rights under the law of nations, for instance, trade . . . the Spaniards ought in the first place to use reason and persuasion . . . and . . . show they do not come to the hurt of the natives. . . . But if, after recourse to reason, the barbarians decline to agree and propose to use force, the Spaniards can defend themselves . . .

but not content with the reservations already made in the text from which the above is drawn, he added this:

It is, however, to be noted that the natives being timid by nature . . . however much the Spaniards may desire to remove their fears . . . they may very excusably continue afraid at the sight of men strange in garb and armed and much more powerful than themselves. And therefore, if, under the influence of these fears, they unite their efforts to drive out the Spaniards or even to slay them, the Spaniards might, indeed, defend themselves but within the limits of permissible self-protection, and it would not be right for them to enforce against the natives any of the other rights of war (as . . . to slay them or despoil them of their goods or seize their cities), because on our hypothesis the natives are innocent and are justified in feeling afraid. . . . There is no inconsistency . . . in holding the war to be a just war on both sides, seeing that on one side there is right and on the other side there is invincible ignorance. . . . For the rights of war which may be invoked against men who are really guilty and lawless differ from those which may be invoked against the innocent and ignorant, just as the scandal of the Pharisees is to be avoided in a different way from that of the self-distrustful and weak. (*De Indis*, III, 392-4.)

EDWARD SARMIENTO

O B I T E R

LA SALETTE has been overshadowed by Lourdes, and it is often forgotten that the apparition of our Lady to Maximin and Mélanie preceded her appearances to Bernadette by twelve years. September 19th saw the centenary of La Salette, and the August-September number of *La Vie Spirituelle* has six articles devoted to the subject. The weeping mother, her strange message, the secrets she confided to the children, the remote place of her appearance—on a remote mountain-side six thousand feet high, the troubled history of the devotion: here are elements which make perhaps a greater demand on faith than the gentler message of Lourdes. Père Dubarle, O.P. reminds us of the meaning of the prophecies of La Salette:

'When human society has wholly lost the sense of the divine word and of the simple laws that the Church has imposed on it in the name of God himself, then indeed it is very close to those

miserias that have come upon the modern world: wars, civil strife, economic distress (although abundance and peace might have been so easy to achieve) the plagues which divine justice has inflicted on mankind so that it may expiate the sins by which it has destroyed those bonds which united it to our Lord. Christians may well think on the meaning of the sad words of the Virgin of La Salette. In the light of the tragic difficulties of the world which has lost its feeling for Jesus Christ, those words take on an inescapable truth'.

* * * *

THE ITALIAN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY is the subject of a well-informed article by Barbara Barclay Carter in *The Christian Democrat* for August.

'In the midst of difficulties that once seemed insuperable a new Italy has emerged which could bring a precious contribution to the international community. But the opening of the Constituent Assembly, which should have been the occasion for rejoicing, took place in an atmosphere of dread and tragic resolution. De Gasperi in his opening words spoke of the "hand upraised to strike". The Christian Democrats are foremost among those who stand steadfast in their refusal to sign an unjust and dishonorable peace, which, apart from the human suffering involved, would establish the new international order on the very denial of that good faith which is the basis of any order'.

* * * *

ONE of the most encouraging signs in contemporary American Catholicism (at least if the best of its reviews reflect it correctly) is an increasing concern for inter-racial justice. Harlem Friendship House, which is closely associated with the *Catholic Worker*, is a practical attempt to break down the barriers of colour prejudice, whose motive is not 'uplift' or even justice as such, but simply Christian charity. The August issue of the *Harlem Friendship House News* prints the moving 'statement' of Andrew Hatcher:

'If you discriminate against me because I am uncouth, I can become mannerly. If you ostracise me because I am unclean, I can cleanse myself. If you segregate me because I lack knowledge, I can become educated. But if you discriminate against me because of my colour, I can do nothing. God gave me that. I have no protection against race prejudice but to take refuge in cynicism, bitterness and hatred'.

* * * *

DOCUMENTS, 'a non-party review of International Affairs, Economics, Art and Letters', simultaneously published in English and French, aims at objectivity. The first number of this sumptuously produced periodical is certainly well-informed, and such an article as Maurice Pernot's 'Kremlin and the Vatican' should make known the true

facts of the persecution of the Uniates to a public that is scarcely reached by Catholic newspapers:

'The situation which the Holy See now has to face would appear to be extremely critical. On the one hand, the Soviet Union will in future be in control of new territories inhabited by Uniate Catholics, with whose fate Rome must be closely concerned. On the other hand, the Church is officially restored and Marshal Stalin unites in his own person both temporal and spiritual powers. . . . Finally, the Kremlin has certainly less need of the Vatican than the Vatican might have of the Kremlin to assure to millions of Catholics a status, whether *de jure* or *de facto*, permitting them openly to profess their union with the Church of Rome'.

* * * *

THE DIGEST is a characteristic symptom of our time, and is certainly capable of baptism. *Context*, modelling itself closely on the American *Catholic Digest*, takes perhaps a limited view of its possible horizons, but is a readable bookstall choice.

An article by Cardinal Spellman, reprinted in the August *Catholic Digest*, 'Communism is un-American', may puzzle a reader unprepared for that equation of 'American' and 'Christian' which make, for instance, the ecclesiastical films of Bing Crosby so popular. Indeed a Unitarian weekly welcomed *Going My Way*, because it showed that a Roman priest could be a regular guy, unlike the sinister Latin clerics of European tradition.

A rather different examination of Communism appears in the August issue of *Orden Cristiano*, a 'democratic review of Catholic inspiration' published in Buenos Aires. A speech delivered in the Uruguayan Senate by Dr Dordo Regules on a motion to repeal laws against Communist propaganda is reprinted, and concludes:

'It has been said that Liberty and Justice are like the sun: they shine either for all or for none. In this case, that sun must shine for whom it will: it does not matter to me. If it benefits a Communist, so be it. That party may learn that democracy does justice to all without question. That is the strength of democracy'.

Orden Cristiano should be better-known in the United States, where the Argentine is certainly regarded as 'un-American'.

ALDATE.