

EXTRACTS AND COMMENTS

LITURGICA. Among the really significant and constructive periodicals of contemporary Catholicism, a prominent place is occupied by *DIE SCHILDGENOSSEN* edited by a group of German Catholics headed and inspired by Romano Guardini. (Obtainable from Werkbund Verlag, Würzburg, Abt. Der Burg, RM. 7.50 per annum.) The current double-number is principally concerned with the designing, adorning and use of churches. Genuine church-construction must be inspired by an understanding of what churches are and what they are for; in other words it presupposes an understanding of theology, as well as of considerations of utility, cost and technique. Romano Guardini has collected a team which makes this number indispensable to the church-builder: he himself contributes a superb address on the nature and purpose of churches and on the guiding data provided by Revelation in the Old and New Testaments. Prince Eugen Trubetskoy, Rudolf Schwarz and Paul Claudel also contribute, together with some leading church architects, and there are some fine photographs of modern German churches to illustrate their principles. The addition of some simple music for a vernacular Mass may suggest a solution for those who are confronted with the problem of congregational singing. There is nothing individualistic or "arty" about *DIE SCHILDGENOSSEN*: it is the very antithesis of that individualistic aestheticism which is apt to poison the spirit of the liturgical movement and which is severely castigated in a timely article by F. C. Fulque in *ORATE FRATRES* (March 21). From it we quote:

The benefits and true meaning of liturgical reforms have been obscured in many instances by eccentric expositions of them and a too zealous attempt to have them actualized by law. This article aims to show that such extravagances are a manifestation of the very individualism that liturgical piety purposes to supplant. . . .

The first requisite for the liturgical outlook is one of spirit. Liturgy is a piety, a piety that rests on certain metaphysical principles, which is the same as saying, a piety that cannot lose sight of certain facts. These facts have always been the concern of theology, however sorely they may have been overlooked in their application. Instruction and devotions have developed without such a concern, and the non-liturgical outlook is simply the result. The restoration of the liturgy to its rightful place in the esteem of

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Catholics can and will only be achieved in the measure as the first principles of theology are again made the matter of religious instruction. It is with these theological implications more than with methods of devotion and worship, art, music and architecture that the liturgical apostolate and its sponsors must busy themselves. The ages of faith produced Gregorian chant, but this chant cannot reproduce the ages of faith.

Yet it is with the chant promoters that the greatest fault lies. They have had more zeal for legislation than for the spirit of the liturgy. There have been only feeble attempts to produce beautiful and effective sacred music and song. . . . A point that has not been kept sufficiently in mind is that there is other music than chant which possesses the power of expressing the spirit of the liturgy. Why not draw upon it until a love of chant can be achieved? Many contacts with chant enthusiasts and much patient suffering at their "results" have convinced the writer that real damage is being done to the cause of divine worship by their studied folly. . . . To many this academic chant that is coming to be heard more and more seems like nothing but the churning out of archaic nuances and groaning *ah's*. They are not always prepared to say so, but the fact that a few decades of chant reform has not to date achieved anything like a popular response should be an emphatic enough manifestation of popular sentiment. The decline of attendance at high Masses has been in very nearly the same proportion as efforts have been made to enforce chant. People cannot be argued or commanded into loving something which in its *practical* expression is definitely ugly. It seems furthermore idle and silly to sigh for a return of the mediæval outlook and appreciation. Whether it is or is not, the fact remains that the chant sounds to many people like music in "arrested development." Why should it be near heresy to hope for a development of sacred music that would embrace the development that no one will deny has occurred in the field of music generally, and yet express the spirit of Catholic liturgy? This latter aspiration is more in line with the doctrine that the Church is a living organism, growing and flowering with the achievements of mankind, an economy of grace transfiguring nature, not only the nature which was captured in the archives of Solesmes, but the nature which has survived in living men and their works. . . .

When one beholds the destruction that has begun in our churches in the name of liturgical reform and then considers the inner significance of the liturgy, veritable terror seizes heart and mind. . . . The whole purpose of the liturgical revival is to extricate religion from legalism and universalize its application to life. It reveals the inner truths of doctrine that unfold Christianity as a more abundant life and not merely as another sphere which people enter on Sundays and for funerals and weddings. It dis-

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closes the mystical Christ who lifted humanity completely into the supernatural world, the better and larger universe of grace. It is in the world, though not of it, in this all-embracing sense. It has a place in it for all the thoughts, aspirations and achievements that are human.

ANGLICANA. It is distressing to read in the current number of CHRISTENDOM that "it is more than possible that the end of our seven years will see the end of the journal"; it is a considerable credit that a quarterly that aims at sociological criticism from a purely theological standpoint can be supported at all. The current number is typically excellent; there is much in it that we, making the necessary adaptations, can take to heart. There is, for instance, this from a laywoman on *Realists in Worship*:

It is for those who practise religion to take the first step. Their religion really and truly, actually and concretely, must be related to their life, and to the life of others, before those others can be expected to see that there is a relationship between the two. . . . The Catholic Church lives by the divine liturgy, the words of which are drawn from the Jewish Scriptures, from the Gospel of God made man, from the Epistles of those who had been with Him; the Sacraments of which are efficacious signs of grace given us by God; the ceremonies of which use earthly things as symbols of the divine. . . .

Who can hear Isaiah thundering throughout Advent about righteousness and justice, without quailing at the thought of the injustice by which we all live in this our day? When we come to the Sacraments it is the same. What honest and conscientious godparent of a slum baby can hear with equanimity the great words about receiving him into the congregation of Christ's flock, making him an heir of everlasting salvation, giving him the Kingdom of Heaven, bringing him up virtuously to live a godly and Christian life? When the Mass begins with "Our Father . . . give us this day our daily bread" [the reference is, of course, to the Anglican Prayer Book] many a Christian in touch with the poverty of the depressed areas hides his head in shame. We may indeed go on to pray "forgive us our trespasses . . ." The incense that we offer is itself consumed for the glory of God. How dare we pray in the words of the Psalm, that our prayer may be set forth in His sight as the incense when we seek so often to be honoured in our work, to be praised of men? As we kneel at the Crib and worship Him who abhorred not the Virgin's womb, who willed to be born in a foul stable, we dare not shrink from the stench of overcrowded homes, or run away from the bug-ridden

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rooms in which so many live. Indeed we may well shudder at the thought that bugs feed only on the blood of human beings and that these human beings, on whom the bugs feed, have the awful right and duty of feeding upon the Body and Blood of Christ. . . .

It is such questions as these which Christians must hear through the strains of worship, which they must face up to and answer. This would make not for less devotion but for more. Everything of value is to be found in our Holy Faith, the Liturgy is its living synthesis. If what is contained therein is thoroughly taught and studied and lived out in social action in the parish and beyond, live parishes and a live Church must result. Minds and hearts nourished at such a source become at once world-embracing and world-renouncing, concerned with the problem-as-a-whole and the problem-where-we-are-now. Such an attitude of mind makes for intellectual and spiritual honesty, guards equally against despair and complacency, gives joy to worship and incentive to action. . . . Let us ask our Parish Priests briefly to expound the Liturgy for the day before every Sunday Mass, or at least before the principal service, drawing the lessons from Collect, Epistle and Gospel; from Introit, Gradual and Secret; duly relating the Offertory and the Prayer of Oblation to Christ's Sacrifice of Himself on the Cross, to His continued Self-Giving in the Eucharist, and to the giving of ourselves in all the work we do.

There is much to be learned, too, from G. C. Binyon's *The Social Gospel and the Old Testament*, from P. E. T. Widdrington's *An Essex Village in the Bad Old Days*, and from Bro. George Every's *Pass Right along the Car, Please* on the decay of liberalism. ("It was a sense that 'the monarchy must mean something,' that lay behind the almost unanimous response of serious public opinion to the events of last December; I am loth to disagree with an editorial (*sic*) in the most informative of English Roman Catholic periodicals, *Blackfriars*, but I do not believe that that response was the last victory of the Whigs.") More off the beaten track is brilliant and versatile Mr. Rayner Heppenstall's theological excursion, *The Re-born Church of Sophia*, on the new Orthodox "gnosticism" with which Karl Pflieger's *Wrestlers with Christ* has to some extent familiarized English Catholics. It would require a book (and perhaps some theologian should set about it) to deal with Mr. Heppenstall's objections to "Aristotelian Roman Catholicism," which, in his opinion, has made man too unimportant with its idea of God as *Actus Purus* who has no need of creatures. The task of synthesizing Eastern "theosophy" with Western "theo-

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logy" is one of the most important that confronts us. But it will require sympathy and understanding for both, and Mr. Heppenstall displays neither for the latter.—Another thoroughly worth-while Anglican review is REUNION: a living challenge to the "Papalist's" reputation for intellectual backwardness. It has nothing to do with the devotional exuberances of the handful of Italianates who have brought discredit on this extremely important movement in the Church of England; indeed it does not lack a very genuine *pietas anglicana* to the extent that this implies devotion to what is good and solid in Anglican tradition and not an uncatholic insularity which disregards the ecumenical witness of the Church at large, in particular to the Roman primacy. Really thoughtful contributions to the study of that witness and its implications to Anglicans will be found in the current (March) number.

ORIENTALIA. The remarkable fertility of Catholic periodicals devoted to the study of Eastern Christianity indicates not only the extent of Western sympathy for the sufferings of their brethren in the East, but also appreciation among us of the riches with which the East may endow ourselves. The Dominican RUSSIE ET CHRETIENITE now appears in a considerably enlarged format: its contents include besides studies in Orthodox history, theology and spirituality much valuable documentation regarding recent Soviet literature, especially in its religious and philosophical bearings. The current number of IRENIKON includes an important article, *La latinisation de l'Eglise de l'Occident*, on our own Eastern Origins by the eminent patrologist Gustave Bardy. Both these reviews contain accounts of the recent First Congress of Orthodox Theology. The English EASTERN CHURCHES QUARTERLY has also grown. Dom Bede Winslow concludes his article on *The Orthodox and Anglican Orders*, and Dom Theodore Wesseling his critical study of the Sophia-doctrine of Soloviev.

QUARTERLIES. This Spring's output is embarrassingly luxuriant, making possible only the briefest mention of some outstanding contributions. In THE HIBBERT JOURNAL Professor W. G. de Burgh's *The Modern Gospel of Unreason* may serve as an excellent essay on the necessity of Thomism: especially welcome is his rebuke to the God-shyness of

contemporary philosophers; Mr. Channing-Pearce seeks to sterilize the transcendentalism of Karl Barth by showing analogies in surrealism and other manifestations of the *Zeitgeist*, but he succeeds only in exemplifying the old truth of man's innate desire for the supernatural Beyond (which Barth would reject); J. A. Spender exposes the hokum of *History perverted into Propaganda*.—In THE CRITERION Philip Mairet presents an appreciative study of Dalbiez' work on Freud (reviewed in BLACKFRIARS, November, 1936); Roger Hinks argues that gasometers and aeroplanes are "technic" and not art; T. S. Eliot's *Commentary* deals with the birth-rate and "fitness" booms.—Outstanding in THE DOWNSIDE REVIEW are Dom Christopher Butler's *Unification* and Father Edward Quinn's *The Benedictines and the Crisis*.—STUDIES contains articles on Carlism and on Catalonia by E. Allison Peers and A. A. Parker respectively, indispensable for an understanding of the genesis of the present war.—The war and the tragic situation which engenders it is also the subject of two sane articles in THE SOWER, *The Two Spains, A Way to Unity* by Bernard Malley and *Arriba España* by "Parochus."—A brand-new Catholic review is ARENA, of which the first number is very promising: an unsigned article on *Revolution and Tradition* elaborates some ideas at which we hinted last month (but is revolution necessarily "sudden"?); *The Actuality of Newman* by Basil Wrighton shows a refreshing concern for the English manner and tradition, away from the Continental *échappatoire* which is apt to be too tempting to our younger intelligentsia; D. J. B. Hawkin's *Militarism and Pacifism* shows a rare combination of judiciousness and definiteness; D. A. Traversi, perhaps the most penetrating of our Catholic literary critics, turns attention to E. M. Forster; and an apologia for *Christopher Dawson* treats a recent slip-up in *Scrutiny* seriously.—Prof. Allison Peers contributes also to THE DUBLIN REVIEW: a fairly reassuring picture, based on broadcasts by Nationalist leaders, of what *Franco's New Spain* may be like. In *Rome and Reaction* Count de la Bedoyère gives a much needed analysis and explanation of Vatican policy during the past two years, showing its underlying consistency and loftiness of aim for the good of souls: a really admirable article, not least on account of its stress on the great cautiousness of the Holy See with regard to

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Spanish affairs.—Some good Dominican work finds hospitality in unexpected places: to RELIGIONS (“The Journal of Transactions of the Society for promoting the Study of Religions”) Father Thomas Gilby contributes a paper (“of rare lucidity and power,” says the editor) on *The Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas*; and to THE STUDENT WORLD, published by the “Ecumenicists” at Geneva, Father M. J. Congar contributes a singularly useful comparative statement of the respective teachings of Catholicism, Liberal and Barthian Protestantism on the fundamentals of Christianity.

CONTEMPORANEA. ARK: A new study-bulletin to explore the theoretic and practical implications of Catholic teaching regarding the animal creation.

CATHOLIC WORLD (April): *This War Business* by Donald Attwater. *The War of the Machines* by D. Marshall: studies in Marx, Morris and Sombart.

CATHOLIC WORKER (England): Manifesto of the aims and methods of the Young Catholic Workers’ Movement in the archdiocese of Westminster, chaplained by Father A. Manson, O.P.

CATHOLIC WORKER (U.S.A.): *Art and Revolution* by Eric Gill.

COMMONWEAL (April 2): *Some Reflections on Spain* by George N. Shuster: why the issue is not simple.

HOCHLAND (April): *Rückblick auf das Werk des George Bernanos*: Karl Pfleger studies another “Wrestler with Christ” with customary acumen. *Vom Wesen zum Sein* by H. Getzeny: the drift of “existence-philosophy” from a Thomist standpoint.

IRELAND TO-DAY (April): *The Unpopular Front* of Catholic culture: a very lucid statement of its principles and values and of its essential opposition to contemporary civilization by Edward Sheehy.

IRISH ROSARY (April): *Our Falling Marriage Rate* and what is being done about it at Ballynascreen. A forceful editorial on Groups, Agnostics, Morals and Internationals.

PAX (April): A Prior’s thoughts on the Coronation.

TABLET (March 19): English text of a Letter from the Master-General of the Dominican Order on the martyrdom of Dominicans in Spain and on the return of the Dominicans to St. Dominic’s own foundation of S. Sabina, Rome.

THEOLOGY (April): Father H. St. John, O.P., elucidates further the meaning of the Bull *Apostolicae Curae*.

PENGUIN.