

O B I T E R

THE CATHOLIC EDITOR. The September issue of *The Catholic World* announces the resignation of Father Gillis, C.S.P., its editor for twenty-six years. During a vigorous career Father Gillis has never been wanting in outspokenness. He was one of the most prominent Catholic exponents of isolationism, and latterly he has turned his artillery on to the late President, whose transgressions are for him the principal cause of the distresses of our time. In his 'Valedictory' Father Gillis defends himself from the charges that have been made against his editorship. He long ago abandoned the security of the editorial 'we', and has claimed 'no authority but my own and no merit for my opinions except what they seemed to the reader to be worth'.

It is useful to be reminded of the distinction between the Catholic Faith and the opinions of Catholics. During the Spanish Civil War BLACKFRIARS was constant in its emphasis on this radical principle of Catholic journalism. It is still too easily assumed that a responsible review, especially when it is edited by priests, is committed in all its utterances to a near *ex cathedra* solemnity on any issue where the impact of Catholic principles can conceivably be presumed. In justice to Father Gillis it must be admitted that he has never claimed more than a personal authority for what he himself calls his 'uninhibited and perhaps somewhat rampageous editorials'. Yet the widespread circulation of Father Gillis's views and the emphatic confidence with which he has proclaimed them may have extended the notion that the Catholic publicist (apart obviously from his exposition of the truths of Faith) is a privileged person, exempt—so far as his co-religionists are concerned—from cross-examination.

It is certain that the Catholic epithet can too readily be invoked to compensate for the poverty of an argument that may be in itself neutral. At the other extreme one can detect the 'economy' of, for instance, those continental Christian Democrats who hide their light under the substantial bushel of political advantage. The freedom a Catholic editor enjoys is no different from that of all the baptised. His responsibility is, however, the greater because of the potency of his function. He should, therefore, be reluctant to invoke sanctions proper to a sphere very different from that of the day-to-day world of events with which he is concerned. His editorial 'we', or even the impersonal 'one', can evoke an authority far greater than any his secular colleagues have to consider. Does this mean that the Catholic editor is not free to show the need of interpreting political and economic affairs in the light of Catholic principles? On the contrary this is

what he is bound to do. But he is equally bound in practice to consider St Augustine's classic words: *In necessariis unitas, in dubiis libertas, in omnibus caritas*.

CATHOLIC ACTION AND THE LITURGY. Père Travers, in a note in *La Vie Intellectuelle* (September), gives an account of a congress of representatives of specialised forms of French Catholic Action held at Chamarande. The purpose of the Congress was to consider how best to implement the findings of last year's great Congress at Lyons on 'The Day of the Lord', i.e., how to make the Sunday the reality it should be in contemporary Catholic life. Père Travers concludes:

'The Liturgy is not so much the concern of a particular movement as it is the manifestation of the Church's renewed life. The Liturgy belongs to every Christian. That is why, rather than creating yet another movement alongside so many others, the need is to work through all the organisations that already exist. The phrase "liturgical movement" should be banned. Rather should we speak of the liturgical revival. This revival can flourish in every territory, can enrich it and give it new meaning. In return every one of the movements of Catholic Action will gain. A new solidarity can be established among them so that the Faith, which transcends all specialised activities, may be known and made more really manifest'.

THE FAILURE OF GERMAN RE-EDUCATION is analysed by Waldemar Gurian in *Commonweal* (August 27).

'The occupying forces tried to accomplish too much. . . . They tried to bring about a complete reform and renewal of German life. And failure was the result of this enterprise for which, despite elaborate regulations and projects, the forces of the occupation were simply not prepared'.

Dr Gurian thinks that all cultural and educational activities should be handed over to private groups with special knowledge of German life who would be less likely to make the mistakes inevitable under bureaucratic control.

GABRIEL MARCEL, who was awarded this year's *Grand Prix de Littérature de l'Académie Française*, receives a Belgian tribute in *La Revue Nouvelle* (September 15). Marcel is, says Paul Rostenne, 'the philosopher of generosity':

'According to the psychology of the existentialists, the emphasis must fall on autonomy as a human value, and above all on "refusal", since man is to be understood as a being who is able to say "no". Gabriel Marcel, on the other hand, sees that there is no possibility of saying "no" without the complementary possibility of saying "yes", that the possibility of refusal demands an equal possibility of acceptance. And he goes further when he shows that "yes" precedes "no", acceptance precedes refusal. . . . For him,

man is essentially defined by his relation and availability to another. To Sartre's soliloquising man for whom "hell is the others", Marcel opposes the man of human conversation for whom "hell is myself alone".

THE SOUTH AFRICAN CLERGY REVIEW, edited by Father Bonaventure Perquin, O.P., of the newly-established Dominican Priory at Stellenbosch (10s. Od. per annum) is a new quarterly that should be of the greatest value to priests in a country with its own pastoral problems. Thus Fr Perquin's own article on 'The Repercussions of Industrialisation on the Catholic Church in South Africa' is of capital importance. The review also contains articles on general aspects of canon law and moral theology, and in this way should be of much assistance to clergy often inevitably cut off from the theological publications of Europe and America. As the Apostolic Delegate to South Africa points out in a Foreword, 'We have our own particular problems and difficulties in South Africa. These can be dealt with more effectively in our own Review, giving a practical and topical discussion of events, and providing a channel for discussions'.

IRENIKON in its issue for the third quarter of 1948 has Père Bardy's 'St Augustine and Eastern Thought' as its principal article. He shows that the Oriental mistrust of St Augustine as a 'Latin' theologian can be removed by a more profound analysis of the elements that go to make up one 'who so marvellously united in his own person the theologian and the mystic'.

THE AMERICAN ECCLESIASTICAL RECORD (August) has the first article of a useful series on new translations of the Psalms.

'ALDATE'.

REVIEWS

WILLIAM TEMPLE, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: HIS LIFE AND LETTERS. By F. A. Iremonger. (Cumberlege: Oxford University Press; 25s.)

'If ever there was a full Church of England man, it was William Temple.' So, in this fascinating and admirably written biography Dean Iremonger sums up the quality of the late Archbishop of Canterbury's churchmanship. Unquestionably he was a great man, essentially English and essentially Anglican, yet with more than a touch of the prophet in him; a leader whose personality and thought made their lasting impress on the Church of England, and to some extent at least upon the nation itself.

Few men have been gifted with Temple's power of attracting and holding an audience. At the Blackpool Mission to Holidaymakers in August Bank Holiday week 1922 he gave a series of lunch-hour