

## REVIEWS

longer the will to rise, or in essaying its formulations of worshipful ideas from which it can replenish its wasting energies" (p. 41). If the Christian religion were once again to direct the framing of a social order, the process would be a social "revolution." At present a vast amount of Christian activity is First Aid Work. Where secularism is triumphant and where social reconstruction is a constant compromise between a moribund Christian conventionality and a desire to be "to-to-date," Christians are permitted to do salvage work; but at the first sign of real Christian social action opposition would flash out. In certain countries where social reconstruction has been deliberately undertaken in the light of "the new formulations of worshipful ideas," frank and brutal opposition has been meted out to Christianity, and the Church is beginning once again to burrow into the roots of society. Also outside the "persecution zones," there is urgent need for a deeper and as far as possible widespread understanding of the nature of religious social action. Mr. Reckitt's book is a worthy and worthwhile contribution to the literature that we must have. In our effort "to see, to judge and to act," such a book, concerned with the realities of the present situation, should be widely circulated. The body of Christians has lost the tradition of social thinking. The Church has spent several centuries outside the formative currents of social life. The social sense is dormant. Doubtless, its awakening will stir up trouble but if it continues longer in its present state the troubles of the future will be more deadly. An age which is complacent about birth-control naturally ceases to be interested in the future. Mr. Reckitt is complacent about nothing.

On one or two heads he offers material for discussion. He accepts too readily the novel claim of the "new men" that we are in an age of Plenty and that it is likely to go on for generation unto generation. In the constructive chapters on the action of the Church, he becomes for the first time somewhat vague. The Anglican conception of the Church—"and this does not mean only a few leaders, but intelligent Christians however organised" (p. 147)—lacks the concrete, personal reality which gives to Catholic Action, to which he points with approval but with little understanding, the tremendous vitality without which religion in social action will never regain society to Christ.

CEOLFRID HERON, O.P.

## MISCELLANEOUS

*INSURRECTION versus RESURRECTION.* (The Wilfrid Wards and the Transition II.) By Maisie Ward. (Sheed & Ward; 15s.)

In this second volume of her biography of Mr. and Mrs. Wilfrid

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Ward Mrs. Sheed has provided us with a most remarkable and candid study of Catholicism in England during the first fourteen years of the present century. A mass of material has been sorted and re-sorted, and judgment and care have been exercised in the presentation of her father's papers. In consequence a singularly clear impression of Wilfrid Ward is conveyed. He appears as a pivotal figure in the life of his period and his characteristics come vividly before the reader: his profoundly religious outlook; his absorbed and sometimes tiring devotion to the memory of the Cardinal; his unassailable position. He was primarily Newman's biographer and it was his life work to be the residuary legatee of Newman's thought.

The author has wisely decided to describe her father's life against the background of the Catholic thought of his time, and her most valuable chapters are those which possess this wider interest. Her first chapter on the position of Catholics at the close of the nineteenth century is balanced and convincing, and she shows acumen in her discussion of the significance of de Maistre. As the book develops the personality of Wilfrid Ward emerges very distinctly. "I spent yesterday afternoon," he wrote in a letter quoted on p. 54, "with Professor Dowden, the great Shakespearean. I felt towards him as so many people feel towards me—dislike of himself but the greatest interest in his *mind*."

It is an attractive idea to think of the life of the Wards against the background described in "Lotus days"; the house at Dorking with its garden and its lawn and the little wood and the great clumps of azaleas and bamboos. How very faithfully the little jests of the period are recalled for us and the character of Mr. S. D. Collingwood, who described himself as Ward's *scriba privatus* and wrote to thank Mrs. Ward in these terms for putting him in a novel. "My pertinacious tailor has actually sent in my bill addressed to 'Henry Dacre, c/o Messrs. John Lane.' How literary the middle classes are getting." With the same clarity the jests about the Gold Sticks at King Edward's Coronation are recounted for us and the foundation of the Westminster Catholic Dining Society.

That part of the book which will awaken the most serious interest is the long section dealing with the Modernists. Mrs. Sheed is both candid and fair and the description of the impression made upon the Ward circle by Cardinals Vaughan and Bourne is singularly illuminating. It is difficult to read these pages without an increase of sympathy for the latter prelate. The ninth and tenth chapters, which are concerned with Modernism, are among the best in the whole book. Here the author's judgment is singularly discerning and her analysis of Father Tyrrell's

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position adds to our knowledge of the last years of his life in the Society. One or two of his letters printed here will, however, be misunderstood unless they are read in the light of his nerve-racked and apocalyptic vision of a Catholicism from which he would never be excluded.

It must be said on the other hand that the author's treatment of von Hügel is less happy. He occupies an altogether disproportionate place in a life of Wilfrid Ward and there is no parity between the Baron's serene mind with the unreluctant sweep of his ideas and the tribulations of the *Dublin Review*. He had no capacity for grasping those details of the concrete situation which seem never to have been absent from Ward's mind and correspondence. Wilfrid Ward had his own inevitable and distinguished place in the Vaughan and post-Vaughan Catholic milieu. The Baron's position was very different. "He had," writes Mrs. Sheed, "but little of the mental alleviation and relief from strain that social life brings." This is justly observed. Bound to Rome in the last resort as was von Hügel, his magnanimous and unanchored mind was freed from the pressure of society.

Among the lesser figures in the author's gallery the sketch of Monsignor Umberto Benigni has a singular interest. It is not difficult to imagine how the situation in England must have appeared to this prelate. *Insurrection versus Resurrection* in fact abounds in remarkable or delightful glimpses of the Catholic life of the early part of this century. It has a completeness to which no other work on Catholicism in England in the last generation can aspire. It is to be hoped that many readers will penetrate past the unwise sensationalism of the title to this account. In one respect the book's arrangement is unfortunate. Both in this volume and in *The Wilfrid Wards and the Transition* much space is given to Mrs. Wilfrid Ward as one would expect in a joint biography. The author has built up a very sympathetic and attractive impression of her mother's character, but this could have been contained much more simply and effectively in a separate memoir. It is difficult to keep it in proper focus in the midst of the diverse subject matter of this large book.

As a picture of a family and its circle Mrs. Sheed's two volumes are very memorable. They will have a permanent value for all students of the religious development of the period. Throughout the book the reader is aware of Wilfrid Ward's profound integrity of thought. "As," wrote his wife, "he had strengthened the faith of others during life, he opened to us at the end a vision of daylight clearness. His vocation was an intellectual vocation, and it was by absolutely honest use of his intellectual powers that he had to make his way."

DAVID MATHEW.