

Book Reviews

It is interesting to recall a book published nearly a hundred years ago which had its origin in a controversy conducted on somewhat similar lines. The book is by John Henry Newman. Its title is : Lectures on the Prophetical Office of the Church viewed relatively to Romanism and Popular Protestantism. In his preface Newman writes : Great portions of a correspondence which the writer began with a learned and zealous member of the Gallican Church are also incorporated in it. In the *Apologia* we have the fuller statement : it was first written in the shape of controversial correspondence with a learned French priest ; then it was recast and delivered in lectures at St. Mary's. Lastly . . . it was re-written for publication. The book was 'chiefly written against Romanism,' though the main object is not controversy but 'to furnish an approximation towards the correct theory of the duties and office of the Church Catholic.' 'Romanism possesses the most systematic theory concerning the Church.' 'Rome supplies a doctrine, but an untrue one.' To attack Romanism was the most convenient way of explaining the Tractarian theory—the *Via Media*. (Nearly thirty years later Newman candidly admits that the spirit of the volume is very fierce.) It dealt with the Catholic position in 'its traditional action and its authorised teaching as represented by its prominent writers.' Which is precisely Mr. Lunn's plan of campaign. The attack is less extensive than Mr. Lunn's, as the author does not deal with the sacerdotal office of the Church. Of course many of the prominent writers used by Mr. Lunn are modern, but there is a continuity of matter in controversy about the Catholic Religion. The book was published in 1838. Seven years later Newman was received into the Catholic Church.

C.N.L.

BRAVE NEW WORLD. By Aldous Huxley. (Chatto & Windus ; 7/6.)

This *Brave New World* has already received so much publicity that we may be spared the painful necessity of describing it again. It is the Utopia of the ideals of our age, the super-servile state of 'Community, Identity and Stability,' the *reductio ad absurdum* of our civilization. Mr. Huxley projects us into the year 632 of the Fordian Era, when Science has wiped all tears from our eyes, when the world is made safe and comfy for everyone, when men (if such they can be called) have gained the whole world just because they have lost their own souls. State-controlled Science benevolently supervises the length and breadth of human existence, from its conception in the bottles

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of the mass-production Hatchery Centres to its cosy extinction in the euthanasia hospitals. In the State Nurseries undesirable reflexes are effectively 'conditioned,' and 'hypnopaedic' suggestion indoctrinates everyone to fulfil contentedly and efficiently that state of life to which it has pleased the Social Predestinator to call them. Feelie Palaces, Scent Organs, Synthetic Music, Solidarity Services, mechanised sports, sexual promiscuity rendered harmless by sterilisation and Malthusian Drill, an innocuous narcotic called Soma, remain to lull the soul to sleep if, all precautions notwithstanding, some minor mishap should cause it to make its protesting presence felt.

Out of the blue, in a helicopter, into this Brave New World, swoops the Savage. He is an incarnation of the ideals of the late Mr. D. H. Lawrence; he stands for everything which the Brave New World rejects: for the soul, for poetry, for passion, for philosophy and (in an aesthetic kind of way) for religion. He stands, in short, for Mr. Huxley's philosophy of 'whole-living.' He finds his way into the presence of His Fordship Mustapha Mond, Resident World Controller for Western Europe.

His Fordship is also an idealist, a humanitarian. He stands for the stability of society and the comfort of the multitude. He knows, as did Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor, that the soul, with its demands for liberty, its flair for living dangerously, its deep emotions and its lofty ideals, is the chief obstacle in the way of these things. He knows that 'liberty' and 'individuality' involve, not only disorder in society and inefficiency in industry, but the intolerable burden of personal responsibility.

So, like the Grand Inquisitor and the Divine Prisoner, these incarnations of two mutually exclusive ideals argue the matter. Dramatically, the discussion is a success. But their arguing leads nowhere; it is an aimless disputation *de gustibus*. His Fordship and the Savage state forcibly enough their likes and dislikes, but they get us no forrader in solving a real problem. They leave us with the dilemma. His Fordship goes on world-controlling, and the Savage goes and hangs himself.

Mr. Huxley is too obedient to contemporary literary convention to allow himself to moralise about his characters. But it is undoubtedly with the Savage, for all his fanaticism and excesses, that he would have our sympathies to dwell. Hence the critics have called this book 'a tract rather than a novel'; a 'highly moral tract'; even 'profoundly religious.' Mr. Huxley, they declare, 'is on the side of the angels'; he 'fights the battle of Mr. Chesterton in the armour of Mr. Wells.'

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Yet it is the World Controller, not the Savage, who might seem to be the champion of morality. The Savage's philosophy is, in fact, completely amoral. His asceticism is not ethical but aesthetic; if he claims the right to suffering it is only to enhance pleasure; if he claims the captaincy of his soul it is, not that he may preserve it in immortality, but that he may taste more fully all that this life has to offer; if he claims God it is not that he may serve Him, but that he may find in religion a source of further and deeper experience.

But, after all, we certainly like the Savage better than His Fordship and his Brave New World. It costs too much, not only aesthetically, but morally too. A soulless morality, mechanical external behaviour, is no morality at all.

They are both amoralists, His Fordship and the Saavge. And that is why they fail to teach us very much. Mr. Huxley's comminations will not help us very far in the task of saving our immortal souls. But at least he does remind us that we have souls to save. Though he is still far from the side of the angels, we may be thankful that he is so far committed to the side of men and fairies.

V.W.

PHILOSOPHIES OF BEAUTY. FROM SOCRATES TO ROBERT BRIDGES. Being the Sources of Aesthetic Theory. Selected and edited by E. F. Carritt. (Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1931. Pp. xxi, 334; 15/-.)

A valuable anthology of the sources, with a short introduction on the history of aesthetic theory, marking the return to the unity of Plato's idea of Beauty, which was split into different 'kinds' by later thinkers and torn between the formalists and expressionists. The selection is governed by the literary excellence of the extracts, more by their historical interest, and most by their philosophical importance. The quality of the brief statements of the position of some of the more considerable authorities which are prefixed to the extracts from their writings is reflected in the able summary of St. Thomas's aesthetic theory. This consists of Platonist and Aristotelean elements, and can only be gathered from his scattered but suggestive remarks. (But in fact it cannot be grasped apart from his theological teaching on mystical knowledge. *Prière*, as the Abbé Henri Bremond has shown, explains *poésie*). It is interesting to note that St. Thomas is the only authority cited between Plotinus in the third century and Sir Philip Sidney in the sixteenth. St. Augustine, the pseudo-Denis, St. Albert the