

CHURCH AND SCHOOL. A study of the impact of education on religion, by Joan Brothers; *Liverpool University Press, 25s.*

The aim of Dr Brothers' research, to discover to what extent the parish can absorb the consequences of social change, is obviously of the utmost importance to the Church in this country. The work is a study in depth of one year's output of the Catholic grammar schools of Liverpool, of pupils who had spent two or more years in the Sixth Form, and was made three years after they had left school. It seeks to answer such questions as: how do young Catholics who have attended grammar schools perceive this social institution (the parish)? Do they still identify it with Catholicism? Or do they regard the parish as being part of a cultural way of living from which their education and social status have removed them? At a time when on the one hand social mobility is greatly increasing among Catholics, while on the other strenuous efforts are being made to put over the idea of the parish as a community, the relevance of the findings cannot be exaggerated.

The conclusions stemming directly from the research are quite clear, but there are also wider implications. The former concern changes in social structures and in social relationships. Most of the eighty-four subjects interviewed asked little more from the parish than the provision of

adequate religious services, that it be a good 'religious filling station'. They had no sense of belonging to a community. Flowing from that is a change in the role system between pastor and parishioner. The changes in the wider social structure have meant that this relationship has been disturbed, with misunderstandings on both sides. There is no complete breakdown in communication but there are crises and tensions. The author suggests that one of the major pastoral problems of the Church in the years to come will be precisely in this area. As to the wider implications it would seem, though Dr Brothers does not go beyond her brief to mention it, that inter-parochial secondary modern schools will also produce similar, if not so pronounced, social effects. This surely is a field where there is urgent need for sociological research for, as Dr Brothers remarks, 'what emerges most clearly is the interdependence of values and social structures'. The social structures are changing, or being changed, and producing their effects willy-nilly. It is to the advantage of all of us to know where we are going.

*John Fitzsimons*

THE DECLINE OF HELL by D. P. Walker; *Routledge and Kegan Paul, 35s.*

Recent discussions of the problem of Hell leave us ill-prepared for the issues which were the concern of those who are the basis for this book. For where the modern critics of this doctrine are prepared to ignore all authority, both ecclesiastical and scriptural, and to rely for their perception of the truth solely on the intuitions of 'morally sensitive' humanity, seventeenth-century theologians, whatever their moral sensitivity, had no such complete freedom. Modern rebels, in their objections to Hell, implicitly deny not only the outmoded physical descriptions of its tortures, nor even the irrevocability of its punishment, but

also the whole idea of judgment and choice between individual members of erring humanity. The seventeenth-century rebels, shocked as they were by the idea of an *eternal* torment, were nevertheless not sufficiently 'emancipated' in the modern sense fully to deny the concept of justice. Nor, indeed, did they on the whole reject the possibility of suffering. True, some of the Anabaptists and Socinians denied the immortality of the wicked; but, as Mr Walker tells us, 'For all these merciful doctors, with the possible exception of some Anabaptists and Socinians, the wicked will receive punishment lasting several