

ject, cf. Vincent of Beauvais' *De Erud. Fil. Nob.* c. 7, and Gilson, *Dante et la philosophie*, p. 155).

(7). The same hasty reading of evidence is traceable in most of the references to Plato. Mr. Read does well to distrust classical scholars, but he should make his own investigations more carefully. The whole of the *Republic* implies and expresses a hierarchy quite alien to Mr. Read's beliefs; it is fundamental there that intellect has the highest place and the senses have the lowest, and the education here termed 'aesthetic' is the first step in a training whose goal is metaphysical knowledge. Plato insists that everything which surrounds the children should be good, beautiful, rational in its kind; but this implies also the removal of what is bad, ugly, irrational—hence a strict censorship, and the expulsion of disobedient artists (Cornford's *Republic*, pp. 87-88, 288, 329). And though teachers are to 'avoid compulsion' in mathematics and so forth (*ib.* p. 252), the activities of Mr. Read's syllabus would be considerably impeded by various precautionary measures (*ib.* pp. 81-2, 112-3).

(8). A final quotation from the *Republic*. 'Your lovers of sights and sounds delight in beautiful tones and colours and shapes and in all the works of art into which these enter; but they have not the power of thought to behold and take delight in the nature of Beauty itself . . . Now if a man believes in the existence of beautiful things, but not of Beauty itself, and cannot follow a guide who would lead him to a knowledge of it, is he not living in a dream?'

WALTER SHEWRING.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND SOCIAL ORDER. By R. A. L. Smith.
(Longmans, 7s. 6d.)

DR. SMITH has written a stimulating and challenging book, which deserves to be widely read, and will certainly provoke its readers to discussion. Particularly valuable is his examination, in the light of the Papal Encyclicals, of the various Government Reports which still await legislative sanction and may be expected to determine the broad outlines of our national policy of post-war reconstruction. His views are stated with clarity and force, and are manifestly the expression of deep personal conviction and a sense of urgency. Considering the small space at his disposal and the largeness of the subject of which he treats, it is perhaps ungenerous to charge him with a tendency to over-simplification, and with an occasional excess of optimism which obscures his judgment. Since he wrote his chapter on education, for instance, the White Paper has appeared, and issue has been joined on the crucial question of denominational schools. The result has been to reveal on the one hand a total lack of that unanimity among Christians which he takes for granted, and on the other, the existence—despite a genuine re-awakening to the importance of spiritual values in education—of a deep-rooted aversion to the denominational principle, as representing a reversal of the whole

trend of our national educational policy since 1870, and as involving the imposition of 'religious tests.' Clearly 'the canalizing of Christian thought and feeling' is likely to be a matter of greater difficulty than Dr. Smith assumes. Even where the family is concerned Christian counsels are much more divided than he is prepared to admit. Outside the Catholic Church there is no unanimity even on such vital topics as birth-prevention and the permanence of marriage. In spite, therefore, of the heart-searching occasioned in so many quarters by the declining birth-rate and the general lowering of the standard of sexual morality, it is doubtful whether any legislation in defence of the institution of marriage which involved an attempt to recover the ground ceded in recent years would command effective support even among those calling themselves Christians. That Christian collaboration is both possible and urgently desirable none would wish to dispute; but we shall surely do well to remember Maritain's warning that it will doubtless 'not be free from a certain amount of inevitable opposition and conflict,' and that it must, above all, be safeguarded from 'even the shadow of a tendency to subordinate religion to the defence of any earthly interest or acquired advantage.'

Dr. Smith's essay is not wholly free from the common illusion of social reformers that finance provides the key that will unlock all doors. The assumption that the grant of parity with the State schools would furnish a means of supplying all the present deficiencies of Catholic education is hardly warranted by the facts. It takes no account, for instance, of a whole complex of problems associated with the educational monopoly enjoyed (especially where girls are concerned) by the religious orders. Above all, it leaves untouched the vital question of the relation of the school to the University. At present 'Catholic education' is an ideal that in this country has no reality except as far as the lower rungs of the educational ladder are concerned. It stops short where higher education begins. This is the more disastrous because of the complete secularisation of modern University life. As Rosalind Murray points out, the Universities which, in the ages of Faith, were centres of Christian learning and a focus of constructive thinking, inevitably become, in an age like our own, a focal point for the forces of negation and disintegration which are its dominant characteristics. Yet it is into this alien environment that the Catholic student is abruptly plunged on leaving school, and in it that he receives his intellectual formation. True, the Norwood Report recognises in a measure the need to 're-baptise' the University curriculum; but the scheme of religious instruction for which it provides is intended to key in with the 'agreed syllabus' as taught in the undenominational schools, and so does nothing to meet the special needs of Catholics. Until the crucial problem of the re-orientation of the Universities to God has been solved, the ideal of an 'integral Christian education' as Dr. Smith understands it will hardly be realisable.

Were it possible, in fact, to implement in full the programme of reform so warmly and ably advocated by Dr. Smith, we might indeed produce a social order more in conformity than the present one with the principles of abstract justice—'a land fit for Christians to live in'—but it would be a 'Christian society,' as he himself emphasizes in his closing chapter, only in proportion as it found its unifying principle in recognition of the Kingship of Christ. 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you.'

H. M. CHEW.

CHILDREN IN SOVIET RUSSIA. By Deana Levin. (Faber, 1942; 6s.).

THIS review happens to have been held up for a year. But the notice of a book by a communist enthusiast, an educational expert, who gives us a picture of Soviet education in its methods and ideals: up-to-date methods, many of them admirable, all skilfully directed to bringing up children to an ideal, the communist ideal of a godless materialist, collective citizenship, may be opportune now when there is much spoken of religion and clergymen in the U.S.S.R. when their Allies are driving towards the Eternal City, and when important material reforms in education are being mooted in this country. Miss Levin, presumably not a Christian, writes from her own experiences as a teacher in Russia since 1933, and adds valuable appendices quoting syllabuses and text-books. It is of course difficult to assess how far her evidence applies to the whole of the U.S.S.R. and how far we can trust the account of material prosperity there. But the chief impression is that of education for an ideal. Everything contributes to this: the study of history, art, letters and science (rather darwinian); as well as methods of co-operation between children, teachers, police and parents in the work of education; friendship and co-operation between teachers and taught; use of schoolboy initiative, collective pastimes, etc., all those things are carefully planned to develop in the young the communist ideal of a terrestrial paradise, to the ruthless exclusion of any Christian myth of a celestial paradise. Educational technique and equipment are in general most advanced. There is in the methods much that we can observe with interest (such as children's co-operation), much that is abominable (such as the godlessness and collectivisation of youth), and much that we Christian educationists ought to know already (such as the vocation of the teacher as educator). 'Make unto you friends. . . .' The chief trouble in our educational reforms in England is the emphasis on reforming the means and methods of education, while ignoring the Christian end of it all. The work of the Christian educationist is to be a faithful dispenser of the mysteries of God, and thus to prepare Christian youth to be a follower of Christ in this world, with the ideal of eternal life before him. Our teachers must not be mere purveyors of knowledge, but educators to