

would inevitably be unjust and immoral, as many people have now come to see. But have the English or American bishops as a body given any indication of this? Certainly in no very clear way: nothing comparable to the explicit Joint Pastoral of the French hierarchy some years ago, or even to the statements of the late Pope. Zahn suggests that the modern Catholic has become somewhat blunted in conscience over questions that concern Church and state: perhaps because he has been so long exposed to 'the kind of moral theology which is almost completely concerned with finding the permissive loopholes and charting the outermost limits of sin'. Martyrdom is less fashionable than it used to be, except among missionaries.

What can be done? Professor Zahn puts forward two points for special attention during the present Catholic reassessment and renewal. The first concerns the relationship, within each country, of the Church and State as institutions. 'The long-dominant tone of almost automatic support for the legitimate authority and its programmes would be replaced by a tone of cautious reserve and, in case of war, even suspicion'. There are obvious advantages in coming to terms with the régime in power, however evil it may be, obvious dangers in opposition; but it is in situations of this kind, perhaps more than in other matters, that the universality of the Catholic Church ought to make itself felt against temporary national advantages, whatever the risk. For to the extent that the Church in any part of itself accommodates itself to a secular régime it becomes to that extent an agent of the régime, supplementing secular controls with spiritual ones. And where one member of the body is wounded, the whole body is wounded.

In the second place, Zahn points out, there must be renewed emphasis on the responsibility of the individual conscience to apply moral principles in particular situations. We must take more active measures to educate a laity who will not automatically manifest towards their bishops 'a kind of docile and uncritical obedience that would be unworthy of their nature as free, rational, and responsible human beings'. The doctrine of the primacy of conscience is, of course, traditional in the Church; it would not be easy to claim that in practice it is given the importance it deserves in our teaching.

If this book is disturbing, then, it is also full of hope, not least in being both written and published by Roman Catholics.

LAURENCE BRIGHT, O. P.

THE APPEASERS, by Martin Gilbert and Richard Gott; Weidenfeld and Nicolson; 42s.

'If I may judge from my personal knowledge of Herr Hitler, peace and justice are the key-words of his policy.' So said Sir Thomas Moore in October 1933. He was yet another who had not read *Mein Kampf*. As far as Hitler's policy goes, his statement was of course nonsense. But did Hitler indeed have a consistent

policy? If not, then Moore's remark did make a good deal of sense. Peace and justice (in this context) were not absolutes; they meant peace in Europe and a juster recognition of Germany there. As every English government between the wars knew, peace had to come as a consequence of this justice. It was therefore the business of the English government (how was it that no-one thought of the 'honest broker' phrase?) to bring to an end the injustices of Versailles; and then, by mutual guarantees, by economic co-operation (foreshadowing even the Common Market), by a common colonial policy, to establish and fortify a peaceful Europe. In carrying out this policy we inevitably found ourselves snubbing our one essential ally, France, and the consequences of this discord are still powerful in the 1960s.

The authors of this book, seizing on the illusions and falsity of appeasement as it was in 1938, have an easy job demolishing the arguments put forward by Lord Halifax and Sir Horace Wilson. No-one now speaks in defence of appeasement. To the familiar charges of dishonesty and truckling to power, is now added the charge of being undemocratic. This charge, made largely by implication (indeed largely by means of judiciously selected photographs) is not proven; nor could it be proved, since it is almost absurd. Every political faction has its social and pressure-group backing, and this is as true of the anti-appeasers as of the Chamberlainites. But taking this 'it was all so anti-democratic' line has had a serious consequence: it has prevented the authors from seeing that in fact Chamberlain's policy, which included a systematic and largely successful rearmament plan for England, was not only soundly based in theory, but was operated in 1939 from a position of strength. As a policy it had everything except a grasp of current realities. English governments have displayed this distressing faculty again and again since 1940.

The history of appeasement is important to us today. We too face the dilemma of desiring peace while not being able, honourably, to seek it. Now as then, governments stolidly prepare for war, and if pressed for statements of principle, talk in terms of deterrents. Halifax used the phrase in 1938; the difference is that, now, everyone realizes the lengths of awfulness and wrong to which governments will go in waging war. Twenty years ago, it was even thought that a nation at war would respect the private property of enemy civilians.

It is a pity, then, that this book is not quite what it claims to be. It is about appeasement, and not about the appeasers. As a history of appeasement it is adequately done; as a narrative it is factual, concise and gripping – no mean achievement in this field. But there is behind it a failure to understand quite what it was all about. 'Appeasement was a mood less alien to women than to men' – this sort of statement has no place in this sort of book. The diplomatic manoeuvres are satisfactorily footnoted; the dark corners of prejudice are not. Mr Gilbert and Mr Gott evidently believe that the 'stand up to Germany' school were right, and were therefore better men. It is indeed probable that in a practical way they were, that they would have contained Hitler and so achieved an uneasy peace – a coexistence. It is ironic that those who began with a concept

of justice should have been so led into a series of false and dishonourable positions. The dilemma is still with us: justice or force. Does the conscious pursuit of justice mean inevitable war, and is the operation of international gangsterism the only hope of peace? I do not think that we can yet be persuaded that this was true even of the 1930s, certainly not by the partial story presented by this book.

MICHAEL COOK

ROSEBERY, by Robert Rhodes James; Weidenfeld and Nicolson; 50s.

Rosebery died in 1929, having succeeded in 1894 as Prime Minister the portentous figure of Mr Gladstone, who was terminating an enjoyment of high office that had begun in the reign of William IV. The joint careers of these two men more than cover the rise and fall of the first Liberal Party and the chief criticism of this life of one of its most remarkable figures is that it does not put Lord Rosebery firmly within that frame. The author takes Mr Gladstone's position as understood and passes over, in silence, the fortunes of Liberalism after 1911. But this is a political biography, for the personality of Rosebery, interesting enough in its way, is not sufficiently so to justify 500 pages, which show signs of over-hasty preparation and writing.

Gladstone created the Liberal Party out of the Whigs and Radicals whom, as a member of Peel's Government, he had started by opposing; his titanic energy and personality both embodied Liberalism and concealed its internal contradictions. For the word 'liberal' has two shades of meaning; it signifies 'generosity' and 'freedom'. Gladstone and his colleagues wanted to be generous to the under-privileged and this meant increasing state interference with social affairs; this inevitably meant restriction of private enterprise in many ways; it was not surprising that the Labour Party, which unhesitatingly accepted the implications of the policy, entered upon the Liberal inheritance. The tremendous performance put up by Gladstone, with his massive political expertise and cunning, postponed the show-down; but so soon as he vanished from the scene the conflicts within Rosebery made it quite impossible for him to control the divergences within the party. After a year of insomnia and nightmare Cabinets he resigned, never to hold office again, while the Liberal Party only temporarily regained a great majority in 1906 because Joseph Chamberlain had wrecked the Tories by his Tariff Reform campaign.

Rosebery had seemed destined for a splendid, not a tragic eminence. Handsome, deeply intelligent, capable of assiduity, an aristocrat by birth and temperament, fabulously well-read, rich by inheritance, he had married for love Hanna Rothschild, the greatest heiress in Britain. He stage-managed the Midlothian campaign of Gladstone in 1880 and then, after some curious cold-shouldering by the Prime Minister, stepped into the Foreign Office during the brief government of 1886, to reveal an innate mastery of its workings unequalled, perhaps,