

their reply also. They are not misled in this degree. If they set us a pseudo-problem then their true problem is contained within ours. We too are concerned in the tension of classes and we help to make it. We must look to and work for an end in which it shall be resolved, not in the destruction of the flesh by the spirit, but in its total renewal by the spirit. And yet we hold too that the end is here and now. It is accomplished in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ despite all appearances.

For the Church is at once in history, because of the Incarnation, and history is in the Church because it has prophetically prefigured the Mystical Body of Christ from the beginning of time. The fact of the incarnation of the Church in the social structure of the day is a necessary one. It always gave rise to sanctity in persons. It does still. But society changes faster than its institutions, and the Church herself is institutionalised for her operation. Thence grows the tension: persons and mechanisms confused: old familiar affections built around habitual regularity of life as if it existed for itself, and not for a further end. And then this change in society. It is late in the process when it becomes widely evident. It is later still when the new formations are apparent. There is then inevitable pain, in whatever degree it comes, which is the sign and healthy response of the organism to the wound. Then in the nature of Christian progress incarnation anew begins.

Christians in holding possessively to their old affections, in rejecting the pain offered them, do but increase the pain of others and scandalise their chances of salvation. Their simplification is as gross and unsympathetic as the Communists'. To them is given the reality, all their lives, of the Sacraments. The Holy Spirit the Comforter is here giving them understanding and hope. Pain and weakness can make them only more pliable in accepting the grace which brings them into the company of their deprived fellows, and, through them, restores a society which by itself is lost.

The personal letters to Père Danielou make it clear how far he has entered into such relationships, under what stress, and that he has lost nothing of the truth while discovering it for others. '*Ce cri d'angoisse, cet appel jailli de votre âme souffrante et croyante m'ont atteint au coeur*', writes Pastor Westphal. These are the depths and riches which our separated brethren know. They must know them in Catholics too.

PAUL OLSEN

EXISTENTIALISM AND HUMANISM. By J. P. Sartre. (Methuen; 5s.)

THE PHILOSOPHY OF DECADENTISM—A Study of Existentialism. By N. Bobbio. (Blackwell; 5s.)

Yet another pair of little books on Existentialism, each of them costing the usual convenient price of five shillings, each translated into readable English and both offering the hope that here at last is Existentialism without tears—in so far as one can have Existentialism without tears. Sartre's work is a development of the ideas which he put forward in a lecture at the Club Maintenant in 1945. One meets the customary Sartrean incision and vigour applied to a series of topics such as morals, Christianity, Marxism and modern politics, a series which derives its unity in Sartre's discourse from the skilful way in which he scrutinizes it beneath the burning arc-lamps of 'freedom'. Although the general reader will find few better expositions of atheistic existentialism within such a short compass he would do well

not to take the Introduction by Philip Mairet too much *au pied de la lettre*. Mairet's description of phenomenology and his attribution to Kierkegaard of direct influence upon Marcel are misleading, while it is difficult to know what to make of the statement, repeated from Sartre, that 'Jaspers is a professed Catholic'. Wherever else Jaspers professes his Catholicism, it is certainly not in his philosophy.

Professor Bobbio has taken a somewhat easier line by treating Existentialism as an '-ism' connected with other '-isms', and by explaining it in terms of the latter. True to the fashion which we have now come to associate with Croce and his disciples, Bobbio thrusts Existentialism into his own categories of decadentism, mannerism or Hermeticism, whence they emerge slightly the worse for wear. So despite his many profound and interesting observations on the existentialist within us all he never transcends the psychological level; the ontology of it all remains untouched. And if psychological motivation is to be invoked so generously one might ask how much responsibility for present-day nihilism is to be laid at the door of the Catholic tradition? Men may be divided into two classes. On the one hand there are the open-souled whose initial act is a cry of gratitude for the gift of being, who take upon themselves the pain and hurt of life so that through them the Spirit may renew the face of the earth; on the other side are closed souls, so much turned inward that they only perceive their own existence suspended in nothingness and wail over it, instead of seeing that He Who is has caught them up into the fulness of his being. Existentialists belong to the second class, and so does much post-Reformation Catholic spirituality.

D. NICHOLL

LECTURES ON GODMANHOOD. By Vladimir Solovyev. (Dennis Dobson; 18s.)

Vladimir Solovyev's significance lies rather in his aims and ideals than in his positive achievements. He regarded it as his task 'To justify the Faith of the fathers, to elevate it to the highest level of rational consciousness, and to show how this ancient Faith, freed from the chains of inner seclusiveness and national self-love, coincides with the eternal and immutable truth.' As Professor Zouboff remarks in his admirable Introduction,

The whole creation had room in Solovyev's heart, was genuinely, organically, dear to him. Not only did he throw himself into the one-man crusade for bringing together the Orthodox and the Catholics; he defended the Protestants as certainly a part of the Church of Christ, however much they may have deprived themselves of the fullness of grace and truth because of their separation from the main body of the historic Church; and he prayed fervently all his life for the Jews, that they too would come into the fold of Christ's sheep, according to the word of St Paul that in the latter days they will be released from their 'unbelief,' i.e., their inability to perceive the Messiah in Jesus. Solovyev regarded all men, of whatever faith or station in life, as in some way, in some measure, carrying out God's will and purpose.

Eclectic in philosophy, while keeping within the main stream of German idealism, and insufficiently grounded in the positive sources, Solovyev had not the equipment to bring about, even on the theoretical level, a fusion of Eastern Orthodox and Western Catholicism. But the work he did in fact accomplish cannot be ignored by any who would contribute to that all-important undertaking. The present series of twelve lectures was published, in Russian, in 1878; when first delivered two