

of the primacy of the spiritual, and the most amazing quest of the Absolute that human philosophy has ever known. Perhaps we Catholics would find many points of contact with Hindu philosophic thought and religious aspiration were we to study the great Eastern Fathers—Basil, the Gregories, Ephraem—instead of neglecting them as we do.

And, we might add, through that study many points of contact also between Hindu thought and Thomism at its best.

The second piece of documentation is the text of the Instruction of the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church for the safe-guarding of the integrity of the Syro-Malankara Rite, February 25th, 1957. It is interesting and encouraging as illustrating the minute care the Holy See is taking to prevent the infiltration of western influences, good in their proper place, but alien to the ethos of an oriental rite, which, owing to the close contacts between the two rites since the reunion movement began twenty-five years since, have shown a tendency to creep in. These directives will effect a complete restoration to the eastern rite of its original purity.

Lastly the news and comments contain an interesting account of the three outstanding Jacobite priests recently reconciled with the Holy See. These show that the reunion movement, begun by Mar Ivanios, is still making remarkable progress. The youngest of these three priests, Father C. A. Abraham, who studied for some time in the University of Oxford, writes in this issue of E.C.Q. a deeply interesting apologia for his return to Catholic unity.



## REVIEWS

ENIGMA—A STUDY OF MORAL REARMAMENT. By Sir Arnold Lunn. (Longmans; 16s.)

In *Enigma* Sir Arnold Lunn writes about Moral Rearmament (M.R.A.) with a twofold purpose; to diminish prejudice against M.R.A. in England generally, and to inform accurately the Catholic community about this important spiritual movement, described by Father Seiler, S.J., University Chaplain in Switzerland, as 'Eine grosse Phenomene'. He has attempted to observe the events with the coolness of an unconcerned spectator, no easy task in respect of a subject which has roused violent feelings for and against, especially for one who is bound by the English Hierarchy's edict, disapproving of any English Catholic's participation in M.R.A., and he succeeds well.

The earlier chapters are mainly concerned with examining the

various adverse charges that have been levelled against M.R.A. Many of these criticisms were in circulation before there was any question of Catholic association, but they have been widely circulated and have deeply influenced the general English attitude towards M.R.A. Naturally some of these have penetrated Catholic quarters and have been accepted without question. Sir Arnold Lunn has taken endless trouble to inform himself and his report is accurate, interesting, and at times fascinating. Especially the chapters on 'The Day's Round at Caux', 'Organization and Finance', 'Some People', give an inkling of why this movement casts such a spell on many of those who come within its orbit. The later chapters, reviewing the experience of Catholics who have had contact with M.R.A., are even more interesting.

Sir Arnold is no uncritical admirer. His criticisms are in the main justified, though occasionally they irritate by a kind of hair-splitting and he gets near laying himself open to Pascal's quoted criticism (p. 194): 'C'est une chose monstrueuse de voir dans un meme coeur et en meme temps cette sensibilité pour les moindres choses et cette étrange insensibilité pour les plus grandes'. Nevertheless there is a subtle difference of attitude in his criticizing from that of other books giving the Catholic point of view. These have mainly been written with the purpose of proving that though M.R.A. has achieved much that was admirable, yet there exists in it a basic irresolvable reason for making the association of Catholics impossible. Sir Arnold seeks to persuade that though there are indeed difficulties, these are not insurmountable, that the persisting desire of M.R.A. in the face of every rebuff (p. 169) to make association workable should be met on the Catholic side with an equal effort to overcome the difficulties.

His criticisms are levelled with the aim of helping M.R.A. to understand the genuine difficulties of Catholics and to create the necessary conditions for association by removing or modifying the stumbling-blocks.

It is difficult for Catholics to remember that, in meeting their demands, it is also important for M.R.A. to keep conditions which make it possible to continue to include not only Protestants of varying sects, but also members of non-Christian communities if it is to continue to fulfil the function that is its 'living purpose'. (p. 161.)

The understanding of this aim is basic to an understanding of M.R.A. It has been excellently expressed as 'To live out a genuine universalism', in the statement by the twelve priests at Lausanne. (pp. 160, 161.) They claim that the faithful adherence to this purpose on the part of M.R.A. in the face of every temptation, has in fact produced something completely new. Is not this the secret of the inner corrective to extravagance that Sir Arnold claims for M.R.A., and which from my personal

experience of eighteen years close association I know to exist, as during that time there were many fashions which swayed the movement, but which were all corrected. As most of the condemnations of M.R.A., including Monsignor Knox's scornful, and in one case inaccurate, allusions, have been made on the assumption that it is just another manifestation of earlier enthusiasms, and it is only too easy for both Catholic and Protestant to fall to the temptation to judge it by something they are already familiar with, this statement that here is something completely new seems to me of the highest importance. Surely this claim gives a reason for reconsidering accepted judgments.

The purpose of M.R.A. is to be or rather to become a way, or means, or platform for the reconciliation of the many divisions that exist in the world we are born into today; many of them of centuries-old standing and arising from bitter memories which create the deepest prejudices and fears, often reaching into the unconscious and inaccessible to reason, both in individuals and social groups. Undoubtedly these fears and prejudices do cause difficulties in achieving just social administration or arriving at peaceful solutions to international problems. It is this relation of the personal to the social on which M.R.A. lays so much stress, which meets with so much criticism when expressed in popular slogans. This intention of M.R.A. to *become* a platform for reconciling dividing factors is genuinely its only ambition, an idea that has taken years for some of those working in M.R.A. to lay hold of, so it is not surprising that it is not always understood by outsiders. It means for M.R.A. constant adaptability and watchfulness against every tendency to crystallize into a form which would make this aim impossible of realization. This is the cause of the looseness of definition which so annoys many Catholic thinkers, accustomed as they are to exact definitions.

The only means M.R.A. employs to achieve its aim of reconciling, is the personal one; it helps individuals to discover in themselves their prejudices and attitudes which cause division, to realize the effect these have on others and to put right the harm done so far as lies in their power. This is naturally a slow and continuous process and is in itself a complete negative to perfectionism as defined on page 52. The daily Quiet Time and sharing of the thoughts written down with others more experienced, described by Sir Arnold in Chapter IV, is the very effective way by which growth or continual change is achieved.

The strong disapproval to action taken on 'guidance' unchecked by a team does in fact prevent much foolishness, even if some mistakes are still made. It is often remarked that in M.R.A. Protestants have ceased to protest. It is this practice of Quiet Time and Team Sharing that in fact leads Protestants away from the weaknesses of their protestantism

and nearer to an understanding of the Church. Submission to Team Guidance over years gives the Protestant a sense of a body which has a right to correct him and little by little prepares him to accept authority and the idea of obedience which is so foreign to his nature and bringing up. Confession of sins to another and the willingness to pray together for forgiveness, distinct as this is from Sacramental Confession, teaches him the need for an intermediary between himself and God, long before he is intellectually ready to accept such a doctrine. The Catholic who has had Sacramental Confession from his childhood can have no conception of the depth of repression that exists in those who have sinned and have never confessed their sins to anyone, or the relief and sense of freedom in doing so for the first time to someone full of faith in Christ's forgiveness, as happens so frequently in M.R.A. One further thing prepares the Protestant for an understanding of the Catholic Church, that is the 'living of a genuine universalism', which means working out in hard practice all that is implied in the phrase 'sons of one Father', the breaking down of all barriers to understanding between himself and others of differing class, race, nationality, culture, temperament or faith. In M.R.A. this is no theoretical thing, but a costly discipline, achieved by the same method of opening heart and mind in silence to being shown what is making any relationship difficult, followed by simple honesty and genuine apology. Though this method sometimes degenerates into an irritating technique, at times it touches a startling reality and achieves the marvellous.

All this is a gradual preparation for Catholic concepts and a move away from the essence of Protestantism, conceived as an undisciplined individual judgment claiming the right to choose and select what is to be believed, out of the Deposit of Faith held by the Church. It also becomes impossible for anyone who lives the M.R.A. discipline for any time to be content with anything but a Universal Church. This explains why many Protestant M.R.A.s regard their Sunday church-going as of secondary importance to M.R.A. meetings, whereas Catholic M.R.A.s become more ardent in their religious practice.

There remains the emphasis on ideology, which again leads to a better understanding of the Church. By this oft-quoted word is meant by M.R.A. a religious faith which aims to bring all departments of life into subjection. In an old notebook I have a statement made by Dr Buchman at a team training meeting. It was made before the word ideology was adopted by M.R.A. but I think it expresses his meaning. He said 'The World will agree to the personal religious experience, but will resist the Christians having the plan for the nation.' Is not the refusal of the Catholic Church to accept the rulings for personal and social morality and education laid down by Secular authorities exactly

the reason why she has come into conflict with Communism in a far greater measure than have the Protestant Churches who have often acquiesced in a compromise? Does not this make the Catholic Church ideological in the M.R.A. sense? These things and many others in M.R.A. so move a Protestant during the years, from his original position, that for many converts to the Church, as for me as an individual, becoming a Catholic seemed but the logical next step.

I have stressed this because it seems to me that it is the gradual approach which is the main obstacle to Catholics understanding M.R.A., holding as they do the wholeness of the Revelation of Faith unbroken, and regarding it as their sacred trust to keep this intact, and coming as they do from a Body which has maintained its wholeness. It is equally difficult for a Protestant coming from a world of numerous divided sects and individual opinions to understand the Catholic conception of the whole.

Catholics feel, and rightly feel, that the whole cannot be reached from the parts, that it must be accepted as a whole in its entirety. They recognize that M.R.A. is without many things they know to be of the first essentials, so do not understand that it can possibly be a means of preparation for receiving the whole.

Yet M.R.A. was just this for me as for many others; it led me to the doorstep but could not take me across the threshold into the house. It is for this reason and for the sake of others like me that I hope that priests and well-instructed Catholics may continue to have contact with Caux and other centres for M.R.A. conferences.

I must here refer to page 10, where Sir Arnold states that the enthusiasts of M.R.A. have never made the slightest attempt to discourage, and in some cases have actually encouraged, conversions to the Church and have been responsible for persuading . . . lapsed Catholics to return to the practice of their religion.

This is the only statement in the book with which I am unable to agree, for though it is true that lapsed Catholics are encouraged to return to their religious practices and that indifferent Catholics are stimulated by the M.R.A. atmosphere to learn more of their own Faith, yet very few have been encouraged to enter the Church and then mainly those who were already married to Catholics, and many have been actively discouraged. It is or has been a general belief in M.R.A. that no one turns to the Church who is not in some way defeated morally; people are told it is because their affections are unsatisfied and impure, or that they are seeking security, or that they are self-willed and resenting discipline, that they think they want to become Catholics. They are diverted by being sent to countries where Catholicism is weak, or kept too much on the move ever to take

instruction. The depth of loyalty that all M.R.A. workers feel towards the movement and their very discipline makes it hard to take action under this kind of discouragement. In fact many converts to the Church have separated from M.R.A. because of the way their friends in M.R.A. acted. In few cases has M.R.A. stood beside potential converts to help them through the difficulties they had to meet. Even when there has been no direct discouragement there has been a definite attitude of the whole thing being beside the point and unimportant.

The fact that several have left M.R.A., after years, for the Church and also that several Catholics who were associated for years with M.R.A. have also left, because of the discouragements that were constantly being put in the way of those turning to the Church, has no doubt been an influential factor in M.R.A.'s agreement to the terms suggested by Bishop Charrière (appendix 1, p. 20), and of an increasing desire for conciliation. Some of us would like to see a ninth point to the agreement, that those interested in the Church should in no way be discouraged and should be allowed to take instruction from the priest of their choice.

There is no doubt in my mind that these conditions really put into effect would go far to make Catholic co-operation possible and in a way that would be of real value to all concerned.

MARY RENNELL

PURITAN DEVOTION. ITS PLACE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHRISTIAN PIETY. By Gordon S. Wakefield. (Epworth Press; 21s.)

Mr Wakefield has done well to reveal to us so eirenicly how much genuine warmth and devotion characterized Puritan spirituality. A Catholic reading this volume will be surprised at the nearness of much of this devotion to Catholic spiritual literature. Mr Wakefield is himself of course a Methodist, and it is well known that Methodists, like the Puritans, and unlike some Protestant traditions, have always valued highly the ascetical life and the struggle for holiness. Realizing their nearness to medieval asceticism, the Puritans were often somewhat apologetic about their advocacy of mental prayer, examination of conscience, and various forms of discipline, protesting that they did not do it for the sake of gaining merit. At other times they openly recognized their indebtedness to, or agreement with, Catholic writers or forms of spirituality. Among the many Catholic writers whom they appreciated St Bernard of Clairvaux is outstanding. But Mr Wakefield is occasionally able to find a sympathetic parallel with St Francis of Sales. The book has made the most of such resemblances, since it is consciously written 'as a modest effort toward ecumenical understanding'.