

Mary. There is a breadth and depth of learning, biblical and theological, rarely met with in books about our Lady, and a facility and perspicacity in interpretation which speaks of a great and wide understanding of the import of the great biblical themes.

Perhaps the author's most impressive theme, the one most useful for an understanding of the author's mind throughout the book, is that humanity is recapitulated in Mary in a way analogical to the recapitulation in Christ. It is certainly a help in following his profound consideration of the great themes—Immaculate Conception, Virginity, Motherhood, The Second Eve, Relation to Father, Son and Holy Ghost, Co-Redemption, Assumption. This book is in effect a Mariology, though not in text-book form, of a profound and substantial character comparable with anything that has yet appeared.

Breadth of view and critical appreciation of sources give the reader confidence, even where the author flatly contradicts a common theological opinion or interpretation (as on the nature of the sin of our first parents).

It is the first volume of a trilogy in which the author is to consider the whole economy of salvation, and this trilogy is to be followed by another, purely theological, with the theology of the Holy Ghost, of Christ, of the Father, considered in turn. To start such a vast theological work with a book on our Lady was an inspiration.

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THE RECOVERY OF UNITY: A Theological Approach. By E. L. Mascall. (Longmans; 25s.)

It is a matter for satisfaction that Dr Mascall has chosen to write a book on Reunion. The Ecumenical Movement is in the air; Reunion All Round is almost the Order of the Day. Cryptic hints of the 'great Church which is to be' fly off episcopal lips. Dr Mascall is uniquely qualified to discuss the subject. He is eminently well read in Catholic theology and most of his work is certainly within the pale of Catholic orthodoxy. At the same time he has shown that he is also deeply read in current Evangelical theology. To this he brings a deep sympathy and wish to be fair, shown in the large quotations, making the book something of a *Catena*, and a spiritual approach which lifts it out of mere polemics.

Dr Mascall is a theologian, and his book is written from that angle. It must be conceded that it is stiff reading, and his wide erudition makes demands on his readers. He insists that Christian Reunion must be considered primarily as a theological concern. Sociological or political factors have come to play their part in erecting barriers between Christians, but it is fallacious to believe that our divisions are basically

other than theological. Dr Mascall is afraid that efforts at 'Reunion' may sidetrack this vital approach and expend themselves on negotiations, in which each 'side' will consider how much of its inheritance it can throw overboard to meet the others' wishes. This not only lowers the whole idea of Reunion, but also deeply impoverishes the resultant life of the constituent bodies. Dr Mascall sees it as essential that all parties should delve below their superficial disagreements—or agreements. And this brings us to a point which he considers of the utmost importance—that the causes of Christian disunity lie as much in where Christians agree as where they disagree. And here we come to one of the major themes of his book: that both Catholicism and Protestantism have inherited, uncritically, many of the ideas of the decadent practices and philosophy of the late Middle Ages. He analyses with some care the Nominalist philosophy which was all that Luther knew, and shows how it inevitably led to his particular theory of Justification. Dr Mascall makes considerable use of Père Bouyer's book, *The Spirit and Forms of Protestantism*.

The Catholic reader of the book will naturally turn with special interest to the last two chapters, 'The Church and the Papacy'. And he will possibly get a surprise. For Dr Mascall here shows himself a severe, if respectful, critic of the Roman Church and, particularly, of the Papacy. Two things seem especially to trouble him—he feels that there is some inconsistency between the Roman claim to preserve the Apostolic deposit of faith and its admitted development (yet did not St Irenaeus speak of a *depositum juvenescens*?). Secondly, he feels that the Roman Church has subordinated the sacramental to the authoritarian and jurisdictional aspect. While there are a number of secondary criticisms made of the reliability of the day-to-day teaching of the Church, his oft-repeated objection is that the Roman Church has become over-balanced. Dr Mascall has himself advanced in many instances the Catholic teaching—occasionally unconsciously slightly 'turned' perhaps by his acute mind—so that one feels that to a certain extent an impasse has been reached. Perhaps one could say on one point that the marriage difficulty advanced on page 228 is discussed by Dr Messenger in his book, *The Mystery of Sex and Marriage* (p. 167).

Yet in spite of this Dr Mascall can finish his book with the generous tribute that in spite of all the juridical structure of the Church, the sacramental life of the Body of Christ goes on, and nowhere else, save perhaps in Orthodox monasteries (*his* alternative), is the supernatural nature of the Christian religion so appreciated as in the Contemplative orders, underneath, in spite of, the juridical structure which is its protection. Dare one suggest?—because of the juridical structure.