

mild but powerful civilian adviser - all do what is required. But somehow they always seem contrived, for their occasional appearances have to compete with the accumulated effect of the long campaign through the desert, in which the Arabs, however anonymous they may be, are as authentic as the sand. The details of life in the desert are wonderfully observed, and when finally we arrive at Damascus it is as though we had travelled there ourselves, so pervasive is the sense of heat and weariness, of companionship and courage.

It is unusual nowadays that a film should so resolutely refuse the opportunity to explore the hidden places of human weakness, which, in the case of Lawrence, thanks to Aldington's biography and much other writing as well, are already well enough known. Just occasionally, as in the emphasis on Lawrence's realization that his hatred of blood can become a love he can't resist, there are hints of the strange quality of this man. But, for the most part, it is the events that speak, and how eloquent they are in that innocent air!

ILLTUD EVANS, O.P.

Reviews

CHRISTIAN UNITY: A Catholic View. Being an account of the first official conference organized by the Bishop's Committee for Christian Unity (Heythrop, August 1962). Edited by John C. Heenan, Archbishop of Liverpool, Sheed and Ward; 10s. 6d.

The printed report of any conference can never do justice to the gathering itself, since much that is valuable is achieved in informal discussion and in the exchange of experience. One may suppose that the Heythrop conference was full of such uncontracted mercies. Those who were not present must be content with the prepared papers, and they are, without exception, models of ecumenical understanding, though geared, as is natural, to the special circumstances of this country.

In an introductory, and most informative, chapter on the conference itself, the Archbishop of Liverpool emphasizes how far we have still to go in order to enter fully into the spirit - and the methods - of a truly ecumenical theology. He instances the unfavourable reactions of many Catholics to a statement he himself made soon after the Heythrop meeting, namely that 'Christians have come to realize that what matters most is not that they are Catholic or Protestant but that they are fellow Christians'. Mgr Heenan points out how recent any

ecumenical work among Catholics has been in this country, and he rightly claims for the Heythrop conference (confined as it was to priests) the importance of a new and eirenical advance.

Father Henry St John's paper may be said to mark the culmination of his own work over many years in stimulating Catholic interest in Christian Unity. What he was saying thirty years ago – and what seemed very revolutionary then – is common form now, and his admirable paper on 'The Eirenic Dialogue', with its insistence on the need to abandon the mood of 'war-psychology' and the corresponding need to engage in a sincere and informed theological encounter with separated Christians, is surely a classical statement of what the ecumenical movement must mean to Catholics. He provides six fundamental points for discussion – the nature of biblical faith and inspiration, the nature of the faith which accepts the revealed word of God, the relation of Scripture to tradition, the nature and scope of theology, development of doctrine, and the nature and extent of infallibility and one gathers that they did indeed provide the basis for the serious theological consideration that is necessary.

Cardinal Bea spoke with the authority of his office as President of the Secretariate for the Unity of Christians, and his paper on 'The Priest: Minister of Unity', as well as his concluding address, emphasizes, in a moving way, the apostolic meaning of ecumenical work. It is a wonderful thing that at this crucial stage of the Church's new interest in the restoration of unity she should be served by a great scholar who manifestly possesses that personal love of truth in charity without which any formal steps must fail.

Mgr Gordon Wheeler, in an engaging address on 'English Catholicism and the Anglican Tradition' provides plentiful reminders of our insular difficulties. He is right to insist on them, and, while he speaks with proper caution of oversimplified approaches to Anglican complexities, he at the same time urges a new and generous dialogue with Anglicanism.

Fr Maurice Bévenot has much to say that is valuable in his contribution on 'Communicatio in Sacris'. He echoes the hopes of several other speakers in suggesting that an extension of prayer in common, under agreed and consistent conditions, could do much to transform the ecumenical dialogue. His historical examples, especially in the case of relations between Catholics and Orthodox in the Greek Islands in the seventeenth century, show how varied has been the practice sanctioned by Rome and how untenable is the view that prayer in common is always of its nature wrong.

Fr Jerome Hamer and Fr Bernard Leeming, writing respectively on the World and British Council of Churches, provide the documentation that is essential for a Catholic understanding of the ecumenical movement as it has developed among non-Catholics.

The value of this book is more for the promise it offers than for any remarkable originality. Fr Leeming remarks that what was said 'must seem very elementary' to Cardinal Bea, and it has to be admitted that the papers provide ample evidence of how slow Catholics have been in this country to interest

themselves in the ecumenical movement. The hope must now be that the impulse of the Heythrop Conference will lead to informed and generous action at the level of the diocese and of the parish. The good will is there, and the Bishop's Committee will, we hope, do its best to make use of it.

ILLTUD EVANS, O.P.

THE ROMAN QUESTION, Extracts from the despatches of Odo Russell from Rome, 1858-1870, edited by Noel Blakiston; Chapman; 63s.

Pius IX became Pope in 1846, Cardinal Antonelli his Secretary of State in 1850 and this partnership was unbroken until the latter's death in 1876, two years before that of Pius, thus constituting the longest Pontificate and Secretaryship in the history of the Church. It was to this formidable partnership that Odo Russell was introduced in 1858, at the age of 29, as unofficial British representative at the Papal Court. The despatches and letters in this book cover the period of his Mission until he left Rome in July 1870 on the morrow of the Infallibility definition and the eve of the disappearance of the Temporal Power.

Although part of the fascination of these admirably written documents lies in the vivid description of the Roman scene and such incidentals as the reappearance of Keats' Joseph Severn as Consul, the indiscretions of Miss Dawkins and the proposal to canonize Christopher Columbus, the main interest lies in the transactions of Russell with Pio Nono and Antonelli. He puts on record the charm, courtesy and confidential manner with which they spoke to him on the most vital matters, all of which would seem extraordinary in relation to a young, unofficial representative of a Protestant country if one did not remember that Odo was the nephew of Lord John Russell and became the son-in-law of Lord Clarendon at a moment when such great families were still ruling an England that was the most powerful country in the world. The interviews with Antonelli reveal a somewhat limited statesman with an expert grasp of his thesis; those with Pius IX, are of an altogether different kind. The Pope was amiable, discursive, familiar and humorous, though he once caused Russell to suspect senility when a joke about Semiramis eluded the Englishman while convulsing the Pontiff; but Odo was quite percipient enough to realize that behind all this was the inflexible will of one ready to be a martyr.

The greater part of the book is taken up with the situation created by the *Machtpolitik* of Cavour and Victor Emmanuel whereby Italy, including the Papal States, was absorbed into the Kingdom of the Piedmontese. Russell, as a Liberal Englishman, never concealed his enthusiasm for this development or his regret at seeing the remnant of the Temporal Power preserved by French troops. He did not hesitate to urge upon Pius and Antonelli the acceptance of the nationalist movement and it is remarkable how little resentment the two showed at his outspokenness. They abstained, for instance, from drawing a parallel with the British Government's attitude to the Fenian movement in