

In his second section, on psycho-analysis, Jaspers delivers some shrewd blows (a few below the belt). But it is in his third section on science and pseudo-science that Jaspers comes nearest to helping us in a big way. He has been pointing out that Marxism and psycho-analysis are false because they are totalitarian; they try to make a certain aspect of life into the One, whereas Reason leads us towards 'the Comprehensive'; as opposed to the narrow positivism at the back of the specialised sciences. Reason leads us to ask what it is all about; we are drawn towards 'the Comprehensive'. An attempt to state this profoundly helpful observation in traditional terms might be as follows. When humanity begins to lose itself in the details of technique, trying to dominate the earth by its current magic (Marxism, psycho-analysis, or pseudo-science), then it ceases any longer to have soul-space and soul-leisure in which to ask, 'What is the *whole* of life about?'; and it goes dead. This is more or less the condition of Britain at the moment; thousands of young people are leaving our universities every year regimented in the positivist prejudice that to ask what the whole thing is about is nonsense—'metaphysics'. They 'couldn't care less' what the whole thing is about. We can observe the effect of this attitude around us—the nation goes *dead*, it neglects the land, which bears no fruit or food. This condition of a nation, and the cause of this condition, were long ago described in the traditional myths of the people, in certain legends of the Grail. It will be remembered how the land was dying because the knights who should have been searching for the Grail (for what the whole thing is about) had given up the struggle. Then Sir Galahad comes along and *puts the question*—the search is on; and immediately the land springs to life again. Life begins to flow strongly, and the everlasting springs are unfrozen—as soon as the question is put. To search for the whole meaning of life is to release life-giving energies for the salvation of the people and the fruitfulness of the land. If the Devil can persuade us to stop putting this question, and we wearily shrug it away as 'nonsense', or 'metaphysics', then he has blocked the springs of life—and we go dead. Perhaps Professor Jaspers has never considered himself a twentieth-century Sir Galahad; but he is.

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THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH: Papers presented to the Theological Commission appointed by the Continuation Committee of the World Conference on Faith and Order. Edited by the Rev. Newton Flew. (S.C.M. Press; 2ls.)

This important book presents a Catholic theologian with a wealth of texts, elucidations and welcome information. The editor can truly say with John Wesley 'I am persuaded no such

book as this has yet been published in the English language'. There are more than twenty reports coming from as many different Christian communities; many of them carry at least the official approval of the authorities in those communities. The editor himself is responsible for the statement of Catholic ecclesiological teaching; he shows himself to be both comprehensive and penetrating, a well-informed and accurate judge. It will be noticed that in the Orthodox Exposition 'Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus' is set out in such a way as to show a contrast between the Orthodox and the Catholic interpretation of this axiom. In point of fact, the 'orthodox' interpretation is exactly what any Catholic theologian would give (p. 43, n. 1). Taken altogether, these accounts reveal a very distinct concern to maintain the continuity of the Church, its 'catholicity', and to define it in terms which are not exclusive (e.g. cf. the statements of the Methodists, p. 211). Unlike other views expressed on this subject by those in the ecumenical movement, division in Christianity is here generally regarded as the result of a positive operation of the Spirit. Multiplicity is indicative of an abundance of gifts calling for numerous and diverse expressions. Almost every report is based on this presupposition; there is a great advantage in it: the religious spirit and what is characteristic of each movement stand out all the more clearly. And naturally a full stop is put to any semblance of polemics. Doubtless many things are glossed over and lack precision: history plays a small role in a subject which more than any other demands it, doctrinal relativity is inherent in the conviction that one can pass beyond the teaching and the limits of one's own 'church'. Nevertheless these reports serve to indicate what advance has been made on the liberal, pragmatic and individualistic conceptions on which some years ago it seemed that the agreement of non-Catholic Christianity would have to be made. The Catholic must welcome this advance; but let him beware of helping to stop or to alter the direction of the movement by appearing too anxious to throw ballast overboard himself and to associate the Church herself in this progress of the 'churches' which are becoming increasingly more conscious of their imperfections. The greatest danger for ecumenism today is to stop too soon, to define itself too quickly. For Catholics on the other hand, their part is to hold fast on this point to all the truth they possess so that no illusion may become crystallised into too uncompromising a position: so that no stage, however profitable it may have been, should become the last: so that no union or unity by way of compromise should succeed in putting off for a long time if not for ever the only unity which is possible.

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