

is a pity. We could admit surely that Marmion was wrong to have lionised Aelred Carlyle and rushed him to ordination - what harm would there be in admitting that Marmion too fell for that extraordinary charlatan, when so many others did the same? And as for Marmion's quixotic idea at the end of the First War to grab the Dormition Abbey in Jerusalem while its German monks were in exile and turn it into a bit of the Holy Land that was for ever Belgium—can't we smile and agree it was nonsense? To know that this holy man made a few errors of judgement would not detract from his charm but only make the reader believe in him as a real person. As the book climbs through Marmion's years of greatness one believes this less and less.

And so an uneven work. There is real scholarship, but the book disappoints. And there are jarring notes: the diocese of Menevia is only spelt correctly twice in all the many times it occurs in the text; Lord Curzon is bizarrely referred to as "Earl Curzon" throughout (I know it is a *point d'honneur* for the Irish to know nothing of English titles, but even so); and Paray le Monial we are told is a Shrine of Our Lady. But it was the patronising footnotes, in which, for instance, we are gravely informed that the Huns mean the Germans, and so do the Boches. Who, for heaven's sake, does he think will be buying this book who won't know what a biretta is ("special clerical hat") and that *Regina Coeli* means Queen of Heaven?

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THE CIVILIZATION OF LOVE, Proceedings of a Symposium for the International Year of the Family, edited by Denis Riches, *Family Publications*, 1995. Pp 107, £5-95

Occasionally, book reviews appear to be welcome excuses for reviewers to simply propose their own theses on the subject of the book under consideration. And indeed that temptation is often a great one. In the case of this present work, however, the temptation is of an opposite kind: I am inclined simply to present a string of quotations from the book, without further comment at all. The contributions in this slim volume speak in a far more stimulating, humorous, and convincing way about the 'civilization of love' (i.e. the kingdom of God) than I am able to do. However, I shall try to preserve something of a Golden Mean between laziness and self-indulgence.

The theme of all the contributions is the family. The contributors are all Catholics, and so in a way the theme is 'the Catholic family'. But 'Catholic', here, must not be taken in a denominational sense. The word has two meanings (as the Catechism reminds us: CCC 830-831). First, fullness, completeness; and secondly, universal. In the first place, then, the contributors plumb something of the human and God-given depth of the family and of its purposes; and in the second place, the family is presented as the key building block in society for the construction of the 'civilization of love'.

The Church's teaching on the family is not meant just for Catholics. It is for everyone. Fr. Bob Ombres' paper usefully explains how the Church issues different types of documents on the family, according to the audience she is addressing. Out of the 1980 Synod on the Family, for example, came two different documents. In *Familiaris Consortio*, an 'Apostolic Exhortation', the Pope was primarily concerned to teach Catholics - it is an exposition of dogmatic and moral theology, with sections on the Sacrament of Matrimony, prayer in the family, and so on. In addition, the Synod asked the Holy See to prepare a Charter of the Rights of the Family. This speaks in a different voice: of natural rights, of values which are held in common across all societies. The Church, then, has the ability to unite all people by her teaching, since every person can hear her 'speaking in his own language' (Acts 2:6). As de Lubac said, 'Catholicism is religion itself. It is the form that humanity must put on in order finally to be itself'.

The papers offered at the Conference, and published here are, then, richly diverse. They speak persuasively in a variety of voices. Dr. Mark Blackwell, a consultant psychiatrist, writes movingly on the theme of emotional maturity and the importance of a stable family life. He urges us not to be in awe of the disciplines of psychology and psychiatry: 'I would always maintain that the Church gives me far more psychological insight than psychology or psychiatry is ever likely to give to the Church'. Alice von Hildebrand (wife of the late Dietrich von Hildebrand) and a Professor of Philosophy in her own right, similarly stresses the importance - if we are to preserve a Catholic (i.e. complete, universal) understanding of the family — of not caving-in to purely secular views. Secularism is not neutral: it has its own agenda, and its own understanding of the human person. Her theme is the present 'war on the supernatural' which has been raging in the Church for many years.

It is clear that there are battles to be fought if the family is to be reinstated 'as the central fundamental unit in our society', as Cardinal Hume says in his message to the Symposium. But this is in no sense an 'anti' book. The contributors are not aiming to shoot down false views of the family, so much as to focus on the true, Catholic, one. There is a clear, positive vision given here, and it is offered without any sense of self-righteousness. Indeed, one of the keys to co-operating in building the civilization of love is to turn the spotlight off the faults of others and onto the need for self-transformation. Stratford and Leonie Caldecott suggest that this is also one of the key points for parents to grasp: 'The way to bring up children is by letting God do it. Now this...doesn't mean giving them back to him, so much as giving ourselves to him. Things go wrong, not when our child throws a tantrum and won't do what we know she must, but when we throw a tantrum and prefer our own will to God's.'

And, precisely because the building of the civilization of love, like the bringing up of children, is primarily God's work and not ours, the book is imbued with a great sense of hope for the family.

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