Rupert Grove O.P.

5 Nov. 1916—16 Feb. 1966

The memory of Rupert Grove will be an ineffacable one for all who knew him. His personality had many facets, but there was a deep interior fire, so that, though he was a master of the unexpected remark or attitude, such actions and reactions revealed a consistent and most attractive personality.

The power to attract was, perhaps, the most striking of his characteristics and his death at the age of 49, on February 16 of this year, produced overwhelming evidence of this. The great congregation of Dominicans who gathered at Leicester for his Requiem, his many relatives, including his aged and valiant mother, were joined physically or spiritually by a host of friends. The prisoners in Leicester gaol, who sent a superb wreath and offered Masses; the sturdy group of Tertiaries who travelled from Manchester to have the privilege of bearing his coffin into the choir; the Leicester Council of Churches; the Lord Mayor; the Dominican sisters; the University students; the S.V.P. and the multitude of young people who so often came to occupy his room and his time; all these bore witness to the range of his affection and his influence.

He had never been physically robust but we had all hoped that he would outlast stronger people. This hope was reinforced when, in the last days of 1964, he became Prior of Leicester and it seemed that his immense personal influence among his brethren would become an official and continuous one in the Province. We have been disappointed, but those who lived with him during this last year will remember with gratitude his interest in and affection for all that they were or wanted to do; it was his desire to make the Priory a home and he fulfilled this wish. Deeply immersed in the Catholic Faith, a profound lover of the thought of S. Augustine and S. Thomas, his mind swept forward to embrace the new perspectives and acute problems of our time . . . a point made in Fr. Ian Hislop's fine panegyric. He would not have called himself a scholar but his penetration of theology and ability to expound its truth were remarkable. This was of a piece with his wide reading and culture which made conversation with him on any topic an aesthetic as well as a personal pleasure. The scope of his intelligence was constantly deployed in a sense of humour which made it necessary, on any contact, to keep on one's mental toes. No meeting with Rupert Grove could be commonplace or altogether predictable and it was rare indeed to part from him in anything but a much better humour than before.

No plaster saint, obviously; but a great human being, richly endowed by God and gaily rejoicing in God's goodness to him. We are all very glad to have known him; he leaves behind an unforgettable atmosphere of gaiety and the love of God.

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