

Maritain shows how we may profit from the mistakes of the past, the mistake of expecting rough scientific fact to provide philosophical criteria, the mistake of constructing a natural philosophy independent of refined scientific facts. His essay is worthy of a commentary, as it stands small allowance is made for readers unfamiliar with scholastic terms.

On a point of detail, M. Maritain rules out as unauthentic the use of *scientia* to mean a way of knowing that likes the tang of created things. Yet the *Secunda Secundae*, treating of the Gift of Knowledge, allows for this cast of creatureliness and its penalty, known by Ecclesiastes and comforted by the second Beatitude.

THOMAS GILBY, O.P.

**THE FOURTH GOSPEL.** By the late Edwyn Clement Hoskyns, Bart., D.D. (St. Andrews). Edited by Francis Noel Davey, Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. Two vols. (Faber and Faber; 30s. the set.)

In a long introduction to this work, Hoskyns undertook to expound his central conception of the character and purpose of the Fourth Gospel. It is with this declaration, obviously, that a brief criticism must be concerned. Hoskyns only roughly completed this undertaking; but the Editor has been able to supply a supplementary Essay based on certain of Hoskyns' notes.

One forms the impression that Hoskyns' position is ultimately confused and inconsistent. His general conclusion is that both the theme and also the very subject-matter of the Gospel is 'the non-historical that makes sense of history, the infinite that makes sense of time, God who makes sense of men and is therefore their Saviour.' That is to say, Hoskyns maintains that nothing (or scarcely anything) of what we should simply call historical fact is contained in this Gospel. It is wholly concerned with what faith—and faith alone—can discover in, or through, the facts of the New Testament. It withdraws from the order of humanly observable history, of successive, chronological happenings, in order to set forth the Absolute of the Gospel. Here are no 'episodes,' such as the Synoptic Gospels provide. Indeed, Hoskyns supposes that a principle motive behind the fourth Gospel was one of rescuing the Christian truth from being identified with such 'episodic' material, and thereby nullified.

This broad conclusion is, of course, opposed to the Catholic view of the character of the Fourth Gospel. But the interest

of Hoskyns' thought lies in the groundwork of theological speculation upon which this conclusion is based. It is here that confusion enters. For he seems to maintain one attitude of mind in which he accepts the Catholic view of the original historical embodiment of the Gospel truths—and so long as he keeps to this attitude his theorising amounts to no more, or no less, than a most illuminating re-statement of the traditional estimate of the Fourth Gospel as being a Spiritual and a Theological Gospel which regards all history *sub specie aeternitatis*. But there also appears to be a strain in his thought, representing perhaps the most active drift of his mind, which is somewhat dualistic in character. One would be less inclined to treat this as being more than a vague undertone if it were not for his so formal rejection of the traditional Catholic position, as represented by Lagrange.

This quasi-Dualist in Hoskyns, then, appears to hold that the Gospel truth of its nature could not be set forth in terms of literal historical events, since there were no literal historical events in which it could be said to have been embodied. Not, however, that he flatly rejects the historical character of the Gospel; but the history he allows for is a transcendent, timeless history, recognizable only by faith, in which the Gospel truth was not precisely embodied but with which it was identical, or at least so indissolubly united that there must be no talk of Flesh and Spirit, of Body and Soul, and no scope permitted for the operations of historical criticism. Accordingly, the traditional Catholic position becomes unacceptable with its assertion that the characteristic method of the Fourth Gospel is to attain its theological end by means of literal historical facts so presented that their divine meaning should become symbolically apparent. And likewise the position of a Loisy and a Holtzmann must be repudiated, since their theory of imaginary history invented for allegorical purposes no less implies the original embodiment of the Gospel truth in literal historical events. For Hoskyns it is only by some method of *abstraction* that the divine reality could be expressed.

One is inclined to think, therefore, that the most advanced strain in Hoskyns' thought reaches to a position which is subtly anti-sacramental, anti-Incarnational; and that it is not without significance that he omits to dwell on the anti-Gnostic purpose present in the Gospel. Most decidedly, however, he deserves to be read. What may be false is always stimulating, for he is never perverse; and what is sound is wonderfully invigorating and enriching doctrine. The Commentary was only partly

written, or rather re-written, in the light of his final convictions. It wavers in its outlook, therefore; inclining perhaps rather more to the pole of orthodoxy. It is full of brilliantly suggestive thought. But it is also equipped with a masterly complement of technical information. It deserves—perhaps only just deserves—to be rated as the *great* Commentary which every one had looked for.

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THE POWER AND THE GLORY. By Graham Greene. (Heinemann; 8s. 3d.)

The greatest obstacle to *pietas* is complacent piety. It bolts and bars the soul against divine intrusion; it evades the divine pursuit because it cannot think of such a pursuit as conceivably necessary. Conscious of sin—its own notion of sin—only as an alien ugliness, it has discovered or dreamt of the deepest love: 'We wouldn't recognise *that* love. It might even look like hate. It would be enough to scare us—God's love. It set fire to a bush in the desert, didn't it, and smashed open graves and set the dead walking in the dark. Oh, a man like me would run a mile to get away if he felt that love around.' 'I love God, father,' she said haughtily. He took a quick look at her . . . another of the pious . . . 'How do you know? Loving God isn't any different from loving a man—or a child. It's wanting to be with Him, to be near Him.' He made a hopeless gesture with his hands. 'It's wanting to protect Him from yourself.'

To have missed, to fail to suspect, the deepest love is to miss the tears of God, and the deepest glory. For the deepest glory is revealed when the heart of God seizes on the weak, the negligent, the cold, for its service; entrusts to their care the Christ-life that is light to the world; and even batters them into beauty themselves, and into love, through their grudging service.

This story presents us with two contrasting portraits: a plump, sleek priest, surrounded by his admiring guilds and societies, accepting homage easily, performing his duties ably, respectable, respectably ambitious, repeating correct professional platitudes which have no meaning for him, loving nobody, living for himself; and the same priest, hollow cheeked, whisky-sodden, father of a child, neglecting all his personal duties, but discovering, with the sense of his own shame and weakness, the essence of the priesthood—the power to give God to men; discovering, in the mire and misery, the meaning of love; and dying for God. It is the story of the sole surviving priest in a