

their old homes back into their possession and held on to them until Elizabeth's armies practically swept the whole country. Whereas in the late fifteenth century the Irish Dominicans numbered nearly a thousand, in 1593 the figure stood at forty-eight. Under the milder rule of the Stuarts their numbers steadily increased, but the statement made in the General Chapter of Rome held in 1656 that in 1645 they numbered six hundred is surely a considerable exaggeration.

The story of the terrible persecutions and numerous martyrdoms naturally occupies much space and is admirably told, and a useful list is given in the first appendix of all those who suffered; sixty-three slain under Elizabeth, six under the Stuarts and thirty-five under the Parliament and Protectorate, and eight who died in prison under William and Anne. There are in all fourteen appendices, including lists of the provincials and Dominican bishops, ninety-three in number. Both author and publishers are to be congratulated on the book which is excellently printed and profusely illustrated with ninety-six photographs and sketches, many of these being Miss Mould's own work.

WALTER GUMBLEY, O.P.

PÉGUY. By Alexander Dru. (Harvill Press; 15s.)

THE HOLY INNOCENTS AND OTHER POEMS. By Charles Péguy. Translated by Pansy Pakenham. Foreword by Alexander Dru. (Harvill Press; 15s.)

Péguy, when he is known at all to English readers, has the reputation of being little more than a prolix pamphleteer, a reputation which is not wholly undeserved. His puzzling contradictions—the peasant traditionalist supporting Dreyfus, the socialist preaching Christianity and returning to the threshold of the Church before a romantic death on the field of battle—have not made him an easy figure to fit into the pattern of modern French literature. Mr Dru draws very well the line which divided Péguy both from his old socialist friends like Jaurès, committed to crude anticlerical alliances which he found supremely distasteful, and from the conformist *Maurrassien* Catholicism of the Right. Like his epic *Eve*, Péguy was equally opposed to 'the fecundities of disorder and the sterilities of order'. In fact his value for us lies in his restatement of the important truism that in the things which matter both Left and Right are wrong, or at best unhelpful.

But this is not Mr Dru's major concern. The kernel of his book is in chapters VI-VIII in which his purpose is to develop Péguy's poetic theory. For besides being perhaps the major journalist of his age, he was a poet whose work is of considerable bulk—it occupies close on fifteen hundred pages of the *Pléiade* edition—and although it has no the attraction of experiment and novelty which we might at first:

expect from a contemporary of Claudel and Apollinaire, its scope and themes command our interest. The more so since they represent the final stage of Péguy's thought: he was a poet in the technical sense only for the last six years of his life. Mr Dru explains Péguy's *art poétique* for us in relation to Coleridge *On the imagination*, an unexpected but very enlightening juxtaposition: 'Coleridge describes in his own way what Péguy describes in the *Commentary* as a descent to the point at which the spiritual life and the spiritual proposition, the idea and the image, are as yet undifferentiated. Both of them are attempting to describe the poetic power as the fruit of the harmony and unity of vision, in which not one faculty alone is active, but the whole soul of man.' (p. 57.)

It is typical of Péguy's life and of the French literary situation that the expression of this exalted ambition, the evocation of the life of grace through an architecture of poems, a cathedral of which the three *Mystères* were to be the doors, *Eve* the nave and the *Tapisseries* the praying spires, should go hand in hand with ambitions of a lesser order achieved by meaner methods: 'Financially the situation is still very strained' (writes Péguy in one of his letters) 'but one must not let up and do everything possible to increase subscriptions. Speak of me as of a *maître*: say negligently in the course of conversation, Péguy will soon be in the Academy. Ça fait très bien . . . Acker m'est très utile. Il connaît un tas de femmes. C'est épatant, un type comme cela. Il couche avec les vieilles, et c'est moi qui vais en profiter. Enorme!' (p. 67). Incidentally, the mixture of languages here gives a Frenchy rather than a French tinge to Mr Dru's prose; the quotations could very well have been left in French or completely translated into English.

Perhaps the best tribute to Mr Dru's excellent survey is that with its help we can distinguish what is important and refreshing in the work of Péguy from the often alienating self-importance of the man. We can sense this rather unpleasant feature in the atmosphere of carefully cultivated secrecy surrounding his return to faith, and in the dangerous complacency of statements such as 'My life is not an ordinary one. . . . My children are not baptized, so it's up to the Blessed Virgin to look after them. I have an office, enormous responsibilities. At bottom it's a Catholic renaissance which is happening through me. . . . I am a sinner, a good sinner . . . but a sinner who has treasures of grace. . . . I am the only one who can say certain things, so I say them. . . . Listen, I shall cover the same surface in a Christian sense as Goethe did in a pagan. . . .' (pp. 69-71.) What redeems all this is the result of the ambition, when the artist shines through the man.

This is what Lady Pakenham attempts to show us in her volume of translations. She has made a good selection of the poems: the greater

part of her book is taken up with a version, abridged here and there, of *Le Mystère des Saints Innocents*, to which she has added selections from *Eve*, *Châteaux de Loire* and *La Tapisserie de Notre Dame*. She is much happier in her translation of the *vers libre* of the main body of the *Mystère* than in her attempt to render the repetitive rhetoric of *Eve*, which imposes too great a strain on her ability to convey the same rhythmic impression as the original. We have only to compare these lines from the *Mystère*:

'Alas my Son, alas my Son, alas my Son;
My Son who on the Cross had a skin as dry as bark;
a faded skin, a wrinkled skin, a tanned skin;
a skin which cracked under the nails;
my Son had been a tender milky child . . .

with these from *Eve*:

'But when a brass shall resound with a terrible tone
With a clash that shall make the universe to totter
When Satan with his writhing and monstrous litter,
Shall flee in terror before the Holiest One. . . .

And when in the Close where the tall cathedral looms,
The people set free from a vast necropolis,
In Paris and Rheims and in each metropolis
Shall carry with them still the horror of their tombs . . .'

to see the quite different measure of success she has in each. Her attempt to keep reasonably close to the pattern of the French quatrain has made her mistranslate *parvis* as 'Close', and *dans* in this last stanza is more correctly translated as 'to' than as 'in'. Similarly in *Castles of the Loire* she has succumbed to the temptation of using inaccurate homonyms: *allée* does not mean 'alley', and the abrupt falling off in the final vowel of the English word makes it out of place in the context, which is meant to evoke the majesty of a landscape. And surely 'festal street altars' is not the natural English rendering of *repositoires*? Again, *rangeriez* in *Eve*, *The Eternal Housewife*, as Lady Pakenham somewhat whimsically calls the first 'climate' from *Eve*, would be more correctly translated as 'would tidy up' than 'would arrange'. The music of the original is not a particularly subtle one, but the version makes it unnecessarily stilted here and there.

It is perhaps fitting that the translator should be more successful with the *Mystère des Saints Innocents* than with *Eve*. Although Péguy himself considered the latter to be his most important poetic work ('ce sera plus fort que le *Paradis* de Dante', he embarrassingly proclaimed), the repeated hammer-blows of the first line of each quatrain in a series become very tiresome, whereas the looser, less traditional

framework of the *Mystère*, with its more natural speech rhythms, is quite acceptable to the modern ear, and more suitable in a writer who was a contemporary of some of the most experimental verse that has ever been written. Although one might quarrel here and there with Lady Pakenham's renderings, her version of this poem, taken in conjunction with Mr Dru's commentary (indispensable if we want to know the background of the work), manages to give a sound impression of the value of Péguy as a poet and as a religious thinker.

LOUIS ALLEN

ESSAYS ON TYPOLOGY. By G. W. H. Lampe and K. J. Woollcombe. (Studies in Biblical Theology, No. 22. S.C.M. Press; 7s. 6d.)

A distinguished literary critic has recently expressed misgivings about the typological approach to Scripture in terms which must surely prompt the most serious heartsearching to practitioners of this method of exegesis. 'Speaking as a Christian', Miss Helen Gardner writes, 'I would say that it has revealed another aspect of the *praeparatio evangelii*: the preparation of the imagination of men to receive, when the fullness of time was come, the event of Jesus Christ and to render it to mankind. But, as a literary critic, I find it too one-sided, too abstract, intellectual and bookish, too literary and aesthetic an approach to the interpretation of the Gospels. It does not come to terms with the Gospels' proclamation of event, and their appeal through that to the moral imagination.'¹ Her misgivings are widely shared, and by many who are not as clear as she is about what is meant by 'typology'. Professor Lampe and Mr Woollcombe have performed a useful service by clearing away at least some of the preliminary misunderstandings. They both insist on the radical distinction between typology and allegory, which Mr Woollcombe states as follows (p. 40): 'Typological exegesis is the search for linkages between events, persons or things *within the historical framework of revelation*, whereas allegorism is the search for a secondary and hidden meaning underlying the primary and obvious meaning of a narrative.' Professor Lampe, in a penetrating study, shows how typology, understood in this sense, is a part of the process whereby we come to understand the significance of the events recounted by the New Testament writers in terms of imagery and patterns taken from the Old Testament. This approach has, in recent years, come into its own with a renewed emphasis on 'the unity and continuity of the Scriptures as a whole' (p. 18), the recognition that to the earliest Christian community the Old Testament as a whole spoke of the redemption God prepared for his people and

¹ In her Riddell Memorial Lectures, *The Limits of Literary Criticism; reflections on the interpretation of poetry and scripture*. Oxford, 1956, p. 61.