

work on the importance of the numinous in religion has surely a message for the present day.' No less surely at a time when the thought of Christians becomes more ecumenical should we remember that great tradition, no less august than our own, which has remained faithful to the ikonostasis.

It is a tribute to Mr Anson's book that it stimulates thought about matters which it does not set out to treat. One cannot write about ecclesiastical art—or even ecclesiastical fashion—without impinging on theology. Is it fanciful to suggest that in these two streams—the screened and secret and the all-seeing and all-hearing—we have an example of man trying to give expression to the mystery of the Incarnation? At one period he will be seized with the Divinity of Christ. His representations of our Lord will be awful, his worship remote and hieratic. At another the humanity of Christ will possess him and he will represent Christ as a child in the arms of his Mother or as the Man of Sorrows, will worship him in the crib and accompany him on the road to Calvary.

A. N. GILBEY

PEOPLE, SPACE, FOOD. By Arthur McCormack. (Sheed and Ward; 9s.)

In this age the man in the street is more often than not hypnotized by the *soi-disant* infallibility of the scientist ('exact' and 'science' seem to be associated in the popular mind) and impressed by his hubris. Unfortunately in the matter of population statistics, agronomics and demographics one finds ample proof of the definition of a specialist being one who knows more and more about less and less. Malthus was the first, in modern times, to start a population scare and Fr McCormack in this useful book does well to recall how many have followed in his footsteps. The President of the British Association in 1896, Sir William Crookes, warned that in thirty years the world population would have disastrously outrun the food supply. He was fantastically wrong. The prime lesson to learn from this, and from more recent Cassandras, is not to be stampeded. There is a population explosion, and there is a very complicated problem to be solved. The moral solution must always be the right one, and so one must view with some suspicion the pessimists who paint a dark picture and show birth-control by artificial means as the only ray of light.

At the other extreme are the optimists, such as Mr Colin Clark. He is not concerned with figures of the growth of world population, but with the possible world resources. In a recent fascinating and compelling study (*World Justice*, I, 1, pp. 35–55) he has shown that the world's land area of 131 million square kilometres (excluding Greenland and Antarctica) could yield as much produce as 77 million square kilometres of temperate European farmland. In other words the world could provide food, fibre and all other agricultural requirements for 28 billion people, ten times the present world population. Fr McCormack spells this out, with ample references to the reports of FAO and WHO, but one sentence from a report of the former presents the central problem: 'There are vast potential resources which science and capital could capture for agricultural production'. And the trouble is that neither the science nor the capital is where it is most needed, in the under-developed countries. After chapters dealing with 'more

food from existing sources' and 'food from new sources' Fr McCormack turns to the crucial point of aid to the under-developed countries. Here the reader is heartened by the story of the growth of international assistance, especially through the United Nations Technical Assistance Programme which in nine years has been responsible for sending more than 100,000 experts on missions to 125 countries. It is a pity that this work does not gain the headlines now given to the debates of the Security Council or the General Assembly; for this is the way in which one world is being built. It may be a bitter pill for the politicians to swallow, but their contribution is negligible compared with that of the technicians. But vast capital resources are still needed and Fr McCormack does well to give so much space to the project for an International Development Authority worked out by Commander Sir Robert Jackson. Such bold vision is needed, backed by generosity from the 'have' nations, which would produce a world-wide Marshall Plan. Not the least of the values of this book is that it leaves the reader with a conditional optimism—the condition being that we of the West must take our principles of Christian charity seriously and realize that we are our brothers' keepers.

JOHN FITZSIMONS

THE GONCOURTS. By Robert Baldick. (Bowes and Bowes; 10s. 6d.)

KAFKA. By Günther Anders. (Bowes and Bowes; 10s. 6d.)

THE OWL AND THE NIGHTINGALE. By Walter Kaufmann. (Faber and Faber; 30s.)

What are we to make of these sick and sensitive aristocrats, the Goncourt brothers, frantically searching in a world that resounded with the trying din of birds and little girls for some quiet place in which Jules might die, peacefully, of syphilis? They are remembered only for their *Journal*, but Mr Baldick's study is mostly taken up with salvaging the novels from oblivion (they sound like inferior Zola written by Proust). It is little more than literary history, challenging no larger significance.

The study of Kafka in the same series could not be more different. Published originally in German in 1951, this is a compassionate and profound analysis not only of Kafka's novels but of the whole ethos which they represent and fascinate. It is not odd, in Kafka's nightmare world, to wake up one morning and find yourself under arrest for nothing, or turned into an insect; or to spend the whole of your life merely as a thing in other people's way. This normalization of the sinister and the inhuman offers a prophetic image of the domestication of horror which characterized the tyranny of Hitler, the experience which dominates Herr Anders' conscience. Kafka died in 1924, but the organization men of the gas-chambers, pottering happily in their spare time like good family men, were the historical reality of his irresponsible bureaucrats.

The heart of Herr Anders's argument, however, is that, though he realized what it meant for man to live in a demoralized world, Kafka could not help conniving at bringing it about (and perhaps this was why he wanted his work destroyed). For all his painful and illuminating insight into the horror of totalitarianism, he never freed himself of a certain fascination with