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mediæval philosophy, without ever failing from the resolute determination to be fair and objective.

In search for a definition, Prof. Gilson characterizes the spirit of mediæval philosophy as the Christian Philosophy *par excellence*, and he proves his thesis by showing, with the aid of history, its realization in the mediæval thinkers. "As understood here, the spirit of mediæval philosophy is the spirit of Christianity penetrating the Greek tradition, working within it, drawing out of it a certain view of the world, a *Weltanschauung*, specifically Christian. There had to be Greek temples and Roman basilicas before there could be cathedrals; but no matter how much the mediæval architects owed to their predecessors, their work is nevertheless distinctive, and the new spirit that was creative in them was doubtless the same spirit that inspired the philosophers of the time." Great discussions have been raised lately—and the controversy is still going on—about the problem of Christian philosophy: its very name has been contested, and even the possibility of its existence denied. Without entering here into the merit of the question, we venture to say that if the problem is looked at from the right angle and is well understood, many a difficulty against it could easily be dissolved.

I do not attempt to give even an impression of the richness this book contains. It must be read and seriously pondered from cover to cover. The chapters on being, analogy, causality, finality, the intellect and its object, *potentia obedientialis*, and other metaphysical topics are most illuminating and show the originality and creative power of mediæval philosophy. "The debt of the Middle Ages to the Greeks was immense, and fully recognized, but the debt of Hellenism to the Middle Ages is as great, and nothing is less appreciated; for even from mediæval religion Greek philosophy had something to learn. Christianity communicated to it some share in its own vitality and enabled it to enter on a new career" (p. 424). If the last three chapters on the Middle Ages and Nature, history and philosophy were well pondered they could afford much help to dispel misunderstandings and reproaches.

DANIEL CALLUS, O.P.

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NIGHT OVER THE EAST. Translated from the German by Edwin and Willa Muir. (Sheed & Ward; 7/6.)

The adventures of a Hungarian aristocrat, who is disillusioned after the reverses of the Great War and its aftermath, first start in Finnish Lapland which has afforded him a sure, if somewhat selfish, cure for his ills. Nostalgia draws him back to Budapest. More adventures. A Macedonian Revolutionary organization. Finally, back in Finland with a wife he does not love. Recurrent

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suggestions that *digitus Dei est hic* leave us unconvinced; and that children play in the streets in Catholic but not in Protestant quarters hardly proves much. And why an indiscriminating censure of all that is bourgeois, and of more modern forms of amusement? But, abstracting from such points, we are left with an adventure story of tense situations and some measure of psychological backing. B. H. P.

EPHRAIM THE JEW. By A. Norton Raybould. (Bruce Humphries, Boston, Mass; \$2.)

Laslo Lachowski, a Jew by birth, is brought up in ignorance of any form of religion by his step-father, a Polish nobleman settled in Austria. When imprisoned for assaulting a Tyrolese farmer whose wife he has seduced, he starts to read the Bible, and is suddenly made aware of the religion of his forefathers and, moreover, of the true Messiah. . . . In the fervour of his discovery Laslo sets out alone in quest of the true Christian faith. His encounters with friars, Anglican clergymen, society women in the throes of a religious crisis, and his anguish in the face of very divergent religious experiences are all duly analyzed. One could wish for more evenly distributed action: the first few chapters read like a good adventure story; but the body of the book is a series of philosophico-religious discussions; then on a sudden the murder of Laslo, now called Ephraim. This book depicts one aspect of the Jewish mentality; but its appeal will be limited, perhaps to those who have in some degree experienced the *tourment de Dieu*. B. H. P.

DEUTSCHE REVOLUTION DIE WENDE EINES VOLKES. By Friedrich Heiss. DEUTSCHLAND ZWISCHEN NACHT UND TAG. By Friedrich Heiss. (Volk und Reich Verlag, Berlin.)

These two books of magnificent photographs vividly illustrate the history of Germany from the Revolution to the formation of the Nazi state. Provided with a clear textual commentary they form a pictorial record of Hitler's achievement indispensable to anyone wishing to form a fair judgment on it. The authors have applied the film technique—the juxtaposition of two images to the production of the idea required—and their power as propaganda is strong. They certainly achieve their purpose in showing Hitler's successful re-orientation and transformation of Germany into a vital community. Fulminations against Jew-baiting and concentration camps need to be set off by a reminder of Hitler's positive achievement. He has given Germany a unity of purpose. These books will however clear away any misconceptions about the reality and spontaneity of the "racial" religion in Germany to-day—often stated to be the driving force of the Nazi régime.

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It is true that the German people have still a strong racial instinct; but the "racial" religion as it exists to-day is an artificial growth—an artificial creation. "Racial" religion is the instrument of a secularist party controlling the state. It represents the last convulsion of a decayed social system—"The brief glory of the business man": yes, it is both his glory and his death. M. S.

THE PLAY

Those of us who were brought up on *Puck of Pook's Hill* must remember the altar Pertinax built on the Wall to his dead youth. It is such an altar that Mr. Eugene O'Neill has built in *Ah, Wilderness!* a "comedy of recollection," as he describes it, which, by arrangement with Lord Longford, has been brought to the WESTMINSTER THEATRE from the Dublin Gate. It will not count among his more important plays, but it has a special documentary interest; we see how the author of such widely divergent works as *Strange Interlude*, *All God's Chillun Got Wings*, *Emperor Jones*, *Mourning Becomes Electra*, and the poetic, spiritual *Fountain*, developed naturally from the hobbledehoy whose philosophy of life is a hotchpotch of Swinburne and Ibsen, Shaw and Wilde and Omar Khayyam (to the alarm of his family at such "advanced" reading)—idealistic, romantic, but ready to fall into sweeping cynicism when his too exacting demands of life seem unfulfilled. Here Mr. O'Neill has laid aside symbolism and experiment; his aim is straight portraiture, the picture of a beloved household in a small town of the Connecticut of thirty years ago—the wise, tolerant father, the endearingly inconsequential mother, naughty, delicious Uncle Sid, gentle Aunt Lily, all a background for youth in the ecstasies and agonies of first love. Mr. O'Neill is smiling as he writes, poking fun, but very tenderly, and his humour leaves an impression of wistfulness. It is in every sense an old-fashioned play, with an old-fashioned happy ending, but with a difference. We know that it is no ending, but something fragile and transient, that the world will tarnish Richard's innocence and the inevitable separation of death divide the two old folk on whom the curtain falls as they declare the moon does not smile on young lovers only, and life is good and beautiful so long as they are together. Acting and production are wholly admirable.

Another play to be recommended to those who seek pleasant amusement is Miss Clemence Dane's charming adaptation of Max Beerbohm's *Happy Hypocrite* at HIS MAJESTY'S THEATRE. It moves as airily as the tale, Motley's settings have just the elegant conventionality required, and the adaptor's inventions, her introduction of the two Olympians, Amor and Mercury, are in perfect keeping with the spirit of the piece. Only the music

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seems ill-chosen; what was wanted was something more astrigent and sprightly, an eighteenth century rather than in a romantic tradition.

I was told that *Storm in a Tea-Cup* at the THEATRE ROYAL was amusing. It has a few amusing lines, but that is the best that can be said of it. As in *The Wind and the Rain* (which ran for two years and was described in the penny press as a "delightful idyll"), sentimentality reaches the point of immorality. Those concerned with morals and the theatre would do well to realize that the sentimentality that obliterates moral values can be more pernicious than the deliberate search for comic effects at the expense of propriety. In the latter case (I am of course not speaking of plays of which the appeal is intended to lie in exhibitionism or mere vulgarity, but of such plays—to take instances at random—as *England, Home and Beauty*, *Reunion in Vienna*, or the French comedies of Robert de Flers) there may be a safeguard in the fact that an awareness that here are people doing what they shouldn't is essential to the humour, based on the sound principle that people who do what they shouldn't are particularly liable to find themselves in ludicrous situations. But with sentimentality the very idea of should or shouldn't is lost. *Storm in a Tea-Cup* is taken from a German play that was evidently a satire on officialdom, but here all trace of satire vanishes after the first scene, leaving only mush. A Scottish Provost who is running for Parliament refuses to intervene to save an Irishwoman's dog from being destroyed for her non-payment of arrears of licence and municipal tax; as a result he is hounded from his constituency, and his wife before his eyes goes off with the reporter who had started the outcry. That what normally considered should be a tragic situation is made a "happy ending" to a light comedy shows the lack of sense of even artistic fitness, but with this play indeed art has little to do. The acting of Sarah Allgood and Ethel Glendinning cannot redeem it.

"Ought we to be clapping?" someone asked doubtfully, as the *Grail* performance of *The Hound of Heaven* at the ALBERT HALL came to an end. That it seemed right to clap, that there was not that atmosphere of profound absorption left by, for example, a Bach Passion or even Parsifal, to which silence seems the most fitting tribute, and that instead one felt a real desire to applaud a performance that had a consistent dignity and many moments of beauty, may give the measure of its strength and weakness.

The Grail has taken *The Hound of Heaven* as the connecting theme of what may be best described as a Spiritual Exercise (with at times a distinctly Ignatian flavour), dividing it into sections marking the stages of the unavailing search of the soul for God

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in His creatures, till the ultimate surrender, and each is commented and underlined by passages from St. Augustine, the psalms, the English mystics, or specially written little scenes to accentuate the lesson. Though these in themselves may be beautiful and relevant in matter, the unity of the poem is destroyed and the mind wearies. For the general standard of the performance and the choreography, on the other hand, no praise can be excessive. It is an amazing achievement that these 1,300 young women from every walk of life should have learned to sing Gregorian chants with such purity, to speak in full chorus with such admirable diction, to move with such rhythm and dignity and surety of gesture. Again, the interweaving of figures, the blending of colours, had an exquisite rightness.

BARBARA BARCLAY CARTER.

GRAMOPHONE

Variations can be either a purely formal development or a development of idea; to use Cocteau's example, you can say either, "Ce porte-plume a une plume neuve—il y a une plume neuve à ce porte-plume—neuve est la plume de ce porte-plume," or "Ce porte-plume a une plume neuve pour que je la trempe dans l'encre et que j'écrive," etc. The *Enigma* are one of the glories of the latter class, small as that class relatively is; the dynamism of his developments, like the joy of his orchestration, never tires. Dr. Boulton's reading, excellently recorded by H.M.V. this month, is thoroughly satisfying and convincing (DB 2800-02). Someone said of Fauré that his music is reminiscent of the surroundings of the boudoir and the perfume of the hothouse; of his *Pelléas*, at any rate, which deserves to be heard more often than it is, this would be unjust, for if it has his characteristic refinement it is far from cloying; the *Siciliana* in particular perhaps is a thing to treasure. The Berlin Philharmonic give, apart from a little uncertainty at the end, a fine performance, smooth and sensitive; surface noises on the first side are blots on this otherwise outstanding Decca recording. On the fourth side is Ravel's *Pavane*, played by the same orchestra, an enticement in its own right to possess the record (CA 8229-30).

Of Overtures, Decca provide another Handel this month (may they long continue the good work): *Berenice*, with its four distinct movements, the second dainty, the third, given to the 'cello, a rival to the famous Largo, the first and fourth spirited, the whole, Handel. Sir Henry Wood gives a solid and satisfactory reading (K 810). The *Meistersingers*, also solid and satisfactory, played by the London Philharmonic under Georg Szell, is issued by H.M.V. (C 2809); this is Wagner that most of us at some time or another can enjoy. There is, as the Red Peppers would say,

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better to come: Kirsten Flagstad, who appears at Covent Garden this season, sings *Isolde's Love-Death* on DB 2746, and if dramatically this hardly sounds like a love-death it is musically at any rate a fine performance: a voice of great richness and quality, rather reminiscent of Sigrid Onegin, and of great power. This last asset is energetically demonstrated in another record, Brunnehilde's *Battle Cry*, which as music, in isolation from the visual and accidental, is in danger of failing in its effect, but which is interesting as proof of the singer's capacity in one direction. The coupling is Strauss's *Allerseelen* (DA 1460). Margherita Perras, with a quality curiously different from and inferior to her recent Verdi record, sings two arias from Mozart's *Seraglio*, which show her mastery of coloratura (DB 4439). Most delightful of this month's opera records, as far as the singing is concerned, is Decca's CA 8233, on which Tiana Lemnitz sings *And If Clouds and When Sleep is Coming* from *Der Freischutz*; an exquisite performance with, apart from a shaky note or two, a fitting accompaniment by the Berlin State Opera Orchestra. The *Bartered Bride* Overture, Smetana at his jolliest, is done with verve by the same orchestra, but unhappily the recording is very poor indeed (CA 8232).

Mozart wrote his D major Quartet (Koch. 499) in 1786, the year *Figaro* was produced; not ranking with his deeper works, it is polished and assured and contains lovely things. The Prisca play; the recording is clear; but whether because of over-amplification in the recording or hardness in the playing, there is a lack of delicacy particularly unfortunate in such a work (DE 7056-9).

Two outstanding pianists add to the month's enjoyment. Borowsky's finesse is a joy in his Liszt's *Au Bord d'une Source* (*Switzerland*), and shows one a new beauty in the good abbé's work; in Albeniz' *Malaga* again there is the same liquid clarity (CA 8231). A pupil of Liszt's, Moriz Rosenthal, now giving recitals in London, plays Chopin's Preludes and Waltz op. 28 and 42 with lightness, expressiveness, a sort of contemplative stillness (DB 2772).

Franz Völker, attractive tenor, sings two tuneful ditties from *Lullaby*; the recording rather poor (F 5930). Lovers of Kreisler's *Liebesfreud* and *Liebeslied* may hear Vasa Prihoda play them on DE 7060. A great deal has been written about *Gloomy Sunday*, Seress's "suicide song." True, when it is well done (one has heard of it being turned by one bright dance band into a nice waltz . . .) it has an incredibly chilling effect upon the organism—cold currents shudder down the spine. But one does not need these extraneous arguments to appreciate its worth; the song is a great one, and Paul Robeson who sings it on B 8423 has never

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brought the quality of his voice through better than on this disc.

The Boswell Sisters with their accustomed art sing two Berlin ballads from *Follow the Fleet*, one mediocre, one excellent (O 2165).

(Key.—H.M.V.: DB series, 6/-; DA, 4/-; C, 4/-; B, 2/6-. Decca: CA series, 4/-; K, 2/6; DE, 2/6; O, 2/6.

G. V.

BOOKS RECEIVED

- AUGUSTE PICARD (Paris): *Le Laïc Théologien: Introduction à l'étude de la théologie*, Denys Gorce.
- BLES: *The Meaning of History*, Nicholas Berdyaev, tr. George Reavy (8/6).
- BOIVIN (Paris): *Le Phénomène de l'art*, Georges Mottier (20 frs.).
- BURNS OATES: *The English Bishops and the Reformation, 1530-1560*, G. C. Mortimer and S. C. Barber (8/6); *Botany for Children*, Lady Elphinstone (3/6); *The Little Flowers of St. Anthony of Padua*, ed. P. Dr. Luigi Guidali, tr. G. D. Smith (2/6); *Gabriel's Ave and other religious Plays*, F. H. Drinkwater (5/-); *The Touchstone*, "Euphan" and "Klaxon" (3/6); *Apologetics for the Pulpit*, Vol. II, Aloysius Roche (6/-); *Ordeal of Souls*, J. P. de Caussade (5/-); *The Insight of the Curé d'Ars*, Vol. II, Chan. F. Trochu (10/6); *Addresses to Women*, Abbé Huvelin, ed. Abbé E. Gibert-Lefon (5/-); *St. John Bosco for Children*, Wilkinson Sherren (1/-); *Grains of Incense*, Rose A. Carter (2/6).
- DESCLEE DE BROUWER (Paris): *Summa Theologiae Moralís*, editio altera, B. H. Merkelbach, O.P., Vol. I (30 frs.), Vol. II (40 frs.); *Les abeilles d'Aristée*, Wladimir Weidlé (15 frs.).
- DISTRIBUTIST LEAGUE: *An Essay on the Restoration of Property*, Hilaire Belloc (1/-).
- EDITIONS SALVATOR (Mulhouse): *La Guide dans l'Année liturgique*, Pius Parsch, tr. M. Gautier (first three vols. 56 frs.).
- HERDER (Freiburg): *Die Kirche unseres Glaubens: Grundlegung katholischer Weltanschauung*, Ludwig Kösters, S.J. (RM. 2.50); *Liturgie und Lebensstil*, Linus Bopp (RM. 2.40).
- LONGMANS: *Bishop Challoner*, M. Trappes-Lomax (10/6); *Honeymoon-shine*, James Oliver (7/6).
- OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS: *The Origins of Jansenism*, Nigel Abercrombie (15/-); *The Revival of Pascal: A Study of his relation to modern French Thought*, Dorothy Margaret Eastwood (12/6).
- SHEED & WARD: *The Will to Freedom*, Ross Hoffman (3/6); *The Living Source*, Paul Bussard (2/6); *In the Likeness of Christ*, Edward Leen, C.S.Sp. (7/6); *Christianity and Race*, Johannes Pinsk (*Essays in Order*, 2/6).
- SHEPHERD & HOSKIN: *A Directory of Catholic Schools and Colleges 1936* (1/-).
- S.P.C.K.: *The Death of Christ the King*, Allen Brockington (1/-).

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