

not to 'lose' any of the hearers by the complexity of the treatment, and perhaps above all, there is the obligation to be simple and lucid. In the written word a point can be developed and, if need be, illustrated by a multitude of examples: allowance can always be made for turning back a page or two and going over again the thread of the argument, an allowance which destroys the need of 'talking down' to the least intelligent of the readers and which permits of the education of the willing learners, and a page can be kept open while a point is pondered without detriment to what follows which is impossible in the spoken word. In published works all these advantages ought to be used, in justice to the readers, in justice to the author (the possibility of a preacher not being interested in his subject is unthinkable) and in justice to God whose message one must give forth to the best of one's ability, using all possible advantages and accepting no undue limitations.

There must be some case for publishing these talks other than the obvious ease with which a broadcast script can be handed to a publisher—that would reduce these books to a matter of convenience and to the level of utility furniture, which is the negation of all true craftsmanship and approaches very closely the prostitution of labour. It would be interesting to hear the case.

Admirers of Father Vann's writings who have been disappointed in his latest works should be warned that *Two Trees* is by the author of *Awake in Heaven* rather than by the author of *Divine Pity*. It seems that Father Vann no longer writes because he has something to say but because he has said something—which is a great pity.

TERENCE TANNER.

ON MODERN ART. By Paul Klee. (Faber; 8s. 6d.)

When Herbert Read says in his introduction that he considers that these notes 'contribute the most profound and illuminating statement of the aesthetic basis of the modern movement in art ever made by a practising artist' we must take care to ponder what this celebrated, if not notorious, artist has to say for himself. But we must first remember what he means by 'modern'. He wrote these notes before 1924, and he bases his views on the 'modern' conception of the artist as a very special kind of man. The artist according to Paul Klee is 'a being who differs from you only in that he is able to master life by the use of his own special gifts'. We cannot forbear reminding the reader that another artist who wrote considerably since 1924 insisted frequently that the 'artist is not a special kind of man, but that every man is a special kind of artist', and who would surely have taken up Paul Klee by pointing out that every man must master life by the use of his own specific gifts, or perish in the mire of industrial materialism. Klee was perhaps taking things as he found them, but Gill tried to construct reality out of the fragments that he found strewn around modern man. At the same time we must avoid the stupidity of the third type of 'modern' artist who clings des-

perately to the old masters and slings mud at Klee and his like, mocking them as hooligans and gangsters. A closer examination of this essay would show an affinity between the modernity of Gill and that of Klee. Both were aware that art had reached a point where technique had severed it from reality. Klee sees the artist as the transmitter passing on 'what comes to him from the depths'. His position is almost purely functional, but he has to find the means of passing on his vision—'the flow'—in a spatial, dimensional manner, which, we may add, has been rendered almost impossible in the present by the 'masters' of the past. But where we think that Eric Gill came nearer to clearing away this 'hangover' from the past was not only in demanding that every man should be an artist and master life by his own talents, but also in recognising that a man's work to be functional must follow the nature of man—it must flow from the exercise of reason and free will. Unhappily in these days we have discovered the dangerous trick of making the subconscious conscious. Such tampering with the hidden sources of life is fraught with greater danger than the splitting of the atom. But Klee seems to regard the artist as a man who merely accepts irrationally and without choice the movements of the subconscious. He is 'driven' to express what he feels—the flow from the subconscious movement of nature—and this cannot be combined with depicting a thing in nature 'as it is' without a destructive 'vagueness'. But our pounding heart drives us down, deep down to the source of all. What springs from this source, whatever it may be called, dream, idea or phantasy—must be taken seriously only if it unites with the proper creative means to form a work of art' (p. 54). Such is Klee's conception of the function of the artist, but surely this is a dangerous and as easily and vastly destructive as the scientific discovery of the nature of the atom. If only we could have let the subconscious remain subconscious the healthy objectivity of Gill would have drawn the 'creative' world out of its present fragmentation. For him the function lay in the art rather than in the artist. Every man should be able to make things which being seen would please. The subconscious then would have played its part subconsciously; consciously men would have used their rational skills to 'perfect' nature—to make all nature human as a prelude to its deification through the Word made flesh. But this cult of the imagination, which is illustrated in the book by a series of black and white drawings showing the development chronologically, must surely spring from the modern despair which worships the very things by which man should worship God. For some it is sex, for others logic, for most science and efficiency; for Klee it is imagination. 'Among artists', writes Klee, 'one urge seems to be gradually gaining ground: the urge to the culture of these creative means, to their pure cultivation, to their pure use' (p. 53). So also among philosophers the urge is the pure use of logic. For both their culture becomes a cult of the means instead of the end.

Yet, such a modern art is to be preferred to the morgue-worship of the realism of 'old masters'. The worship of technique is death.

We could wish that the complexities of the Klees had not resisted the apparent facilities of Gill and Coomaraswamy. For these two could have saved—indeed they may yet save—the Klees of today. the 'old master' artists no power can save, for they are more than four days in the tomb.

CONRAD PEPLER, O.P.

DEVIATION INTO SENSE. By O. S. Wauchope. (Faber; 12s. 6d.)

This book has been provoked by a civilisation which is unduly at pains to canonise the 'common man'. Finding himself dissatisfied with the mediocre achievements of those philosophers who are content to improve on one another Mr Wauchope attempts to construct a philosophy with new roots which will 'justify itself before "omnitudo"'. 'This book is written in the belief that the literature and history of philosophy have at every stage been too much of an influence on the next stage, with the result that new ramifications have always been the most common additions to the subject, and new beginnings have been few, and that what are now needed if the problem of experience is ever to be solved, or even if the subject is ever to be intellectually exciting again, are some wilder plunges, some less professional starting points.'

Since Mr Wauchope faces a world which for the most part accepts the validity of no absolute principles the only starting point for investigation is the self and perception. By an analysis of perception he reveals the pattern of all reality—'difference in unity, unity in difference'—for in all perception there is the interaction of contraries, subjective-objective, rational-nonrational, etc., etc. The function of philosophy should be to reveal this ambivalent pattern in all reality, but it has so far failed because logic has been allowed to usurp the functions of all knowledge and reality has been endowed with a smooth objectivity which ordinary experience denies. Hence it is possible for planners and social reformers to run riot and destroy the person for the sake of the 'common good' in the name of philosophy. This is sound as far as it goes, and as might be expected, the application of these principles to biology, sociology and aesthetics is sometimes lively and entertaining. There seems to be a failure to accept the full significance of the ambivalence in man: to believe that man has in himself the seeds of conflict by his nature; he is attracted by good but he is also attracted by evil, disguised, no doubt, but still real evil. Mr Wauchope's philosophy leaves us with the Utilitarian's problem: love of one's neighbour is a fine doctrine but it is difficult to practise it for long without some more binding and higher love to keep us at it. Mr Wauchope does well to remove the high abstractions from their eminence but they must be replaced by something more concrete than amorality. Perhaps he has his tongue in his cheek but at times it looks uncommonly like a gumboil.

GERARD MEATH, O.P.