

## OBITER

THE ART OF JUDGMENT was the subject of Sir Henry Slessor's Haldane Memorial Lecture for 1950, now published by Birkbeck College (University of London). Speaking from a wide experience as advocate and Lord Justice of Appeal, as well as from a careful study of the canonists and schoolmen, Sir Henry once more affirms the primacy of the Natural Law and the reality of a criterion of absolute justice ('though modern practice is for the most part unsympathetic to any but relative solutions').

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FR KARL RAHNER, S.J., the German theologian, has recently published *Gefahren im heutigen Katholizismus* (Johannes Verlag, Einsiedeln) and *Die vielen Messen und das eine Opfer* (Verlag Herder, Freiburg.) In the 'Gefahren' his outline of interior threats to the Catholic Church reads like a commentary on *Humani Generis*, although it was written before the Encyclical; one chapter is concerned with 'sin-mysticism' as that peculiar mystique is found especially in contemporary novelists; the last chapter deals with the strong temptation to interior heresy which has been made more acute within the Church during the past eighty years. The work published by Herder might provoke discussion amongst theologians over here once its contents become generally known; leaving niceties aside, the question which Fr Rahner sets himself is this: on what theological principle do we decide such questions as whether it is more to the glory of God to have many Masses simultaneously at side-altars rather than to have one Mass which will allow for the maximum of devotion? Is it desirable always for priests making a retreat together to each offer a separate Mass? (The same applies, presumably, to pilgrimages and shrines.) Of the 118 pages which he takes to answer these questions Fr Rahner devotes 75 to a clearly-stated theology of the Mass.

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REVISTA DE FILOSOFIA NEO-SCOLASTICA (Milan) has devoted a special number to the Encyclical *Humani Generis*. Among the contributors are the Rector of the Catholic University of Milan (who writes on the historical significance of the Encyclical), and Fr Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P. (who relates its teaching to that of St Thomas).

DIEU VIVANT (No. 17) has a critical study of 'The religious thought of Simone Weil' by Marcel Moré, and a letter from Graham Greene which adds to the considerable literature on the question of Scobie's salvation (at the end of *The Heart of the Matter*):

Scobie's last prayer has lost the point that I intended in the French, because of inability to translate into French 'Oh God, I love...' without adding the subject of the love. My own intention was to make it completely vague as to whether he was expressing his love for the two women or his love for God. My own feeling about this character is that he was uncertain himself and that was why the thing broke off.

LA VIE INTELLECTUELLE (March) prints Max Jacob's account of his conversion and a discussion by Père Régamey of the 'Christian opportunities of unbelieving artists'.

ESPRIT (March) with its customary thoroughness discusses 'The possibility of Peace' in a series of articles, and provides at least the material for understanding what French 'neutralism' may mean.

THE MEANING OF GOD, a translation of Cardinal Suhard's last pastoral letter, appears as a special issue of *New Life* (43 Offley Road, S.W.9; 2s.)

TOLERANCE: CAN IT BE TAUGHT? is a useful pamphlet, issued by the Council of Christians and Jews (6d.), which suggests ways in which school teachers can combat racial intolerance.

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ROY DE MAISTRE AND ARTHUR POLLEN. If one wanted to take a quick lesson in the evolution of art from primitive beginnings, through the High Renaissance, giving a slick leap over the baroque and rococo decadence and recovering a balance again in time to slide gracefully out of the nineteenth century academic, and into the abstractions of Henry Moore, one could not do better than visit the Arthur Pollen and Roy de Maistre exhibitions at the Ashley Gallery (opposite Westminster Cathedral).

From Roy de Maistre comes a direct exposition of the stages of abstract painting. He shows only four works, all of the same subject, deliberately to demonstrate how from realistic appearances the trappings are gently shed until a pure abstract picture stands—the essence only, or the prayer without words. The subject is one of the series of the Stations of the Cross. It is hoped that from these pictures a great series may grow. De Maistre has the qualities needed for Stations, great dramatic feeling restrained in technical excellence.

Arthur Pollen's sculpture falls into three categories, the realistic, the formal and the semi-abstract. His eager devotion to Greek primitive and art and to Donatello is linked with a passion for Rodin, Maillol and Moore. Influences flicker for a second across all his works and then disappear into something personal of his own, a subtle mingling of many beauties not quite resolved yet, but giving promise of greater things to come.

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