

writers it is about twice as long as Ueberweg; it may give fewer facts in the same space but it conveys outlooks too. I only wonder what sort of public these tabloids are meant for, are worth something to.

Fr Copleston has the gift of writing simply. I remember, when I was already of an age to be despairing of any ideas ever coming which could be the germs of any philosophical convictions, reading a little book by Joad for philosophy students. He must have been a first-class teacher. He expressed a pity mixed with scorn for readers who, instead of skipping difficult passages or sections, broke their heads struggling to grasp them. I had done this so often; it is still a mystery to me how anyone ever began to discern what any philosopher meant or was driving at—except a very few who appear simple, perhaps deceptively—without the help of a teacher or a commentary. And some do have to struggle without a teacher. Commentaries too have a way of making the thing more difficult, probably because commentators notoriously disagree among themselves. Fr Copleston sometimes draws attention to his over-simplification—I should call it short-cutting—but what a help he would be to a teacherless student struggling to read Kant, even though later the student should come to reject or modify the form in which it first seemed clear.

References to 'influence' smack of a history of literature; that Rousseau or anyone else should have 'influenced' Kant seems to me about the most crushing criticism that could be levelled against the philosopher, unless it be the other familiar allegation that his system was built on his certainty about Newtonian physics. I do not believe that either could stand serious examination.

I think Fr Copleston would agree that others besides Kant have written prolegomena to any metaphysics that should claim to be knowledge; Plato, for instance, and Hume, to mention only the long dead. He would agree perhaps too that their function is not really supplied by any compendium: compendiums only serve to introduce originals.

QUENTIN JOHNSTON, O.P.

LITURGY AND ARCHITECTURE. By Peter Hammond. (Barrie and Rockliff; 37s. 6d.)

CONTEMPORARY CHURCH ART. By Anton Henze and Theodor Filthaut. Translated by Cecily Hastings. (Sheed and Ward; 42s.)

A Dominican may perhaps be allowed a certain initial sympathy for a book which reflects so faithfully the preoccupations of some of his French brethren. Indeed Mr Hammond tells us, and as an Anglican clergyman he should know, that one of the weaknesses of the Church of England is 'that it lacks the Order of Preachers'. His appeal for a theological understanding of what a church is *for* as an essential preliminary to any discussion about how it should be built is certainly welcome, even though much of his argument is fairly superficial and repeats too uncritically the familiar formulas of *L'Art Sacré*. In any case, the reader who wants a convenient summary of continental theorizing on church building, with illustrations of recent

churches in Switzerland, Germany and France, will find in Mr Hammond's book exactly what he wants.

An understandable irritation with the philistinism of much official church-building leads Mr Hammond to some extravagant statements, as when he complains that the Church of England spends hundreds of thousands of pounds on buildings 'which scandalize the unbeliever and corrupt not merely the taste but also the faith of those who use them'. He ruins a good case by exaggeration, and one is too often conscious of that familiar Anglican phenomenon of shocking the conformists which, only forty years ago, was all for baroque altars and dressed-up statues, but has now caught the latest breeze from abroad and seeks to empty the churches and strip the altars (which, of course, are designed for Mass facing the people).

But beneath the polemic there is a solid argument, and the modern movement in architecture (which, in terms of building a theatre, led Gropius to speak of the need for 'unity between actor and spectator') is seen to present wonderful opportunities for recovering the sense of a church as the home of the people of God, where the liturgy can be offered as a truly communal action. Most valuable therefore are the plans which are given, not only of (Catholic) churches abroad but of recent (Anglican) churches in this country, which exemplify the simplicity and organic strength which should mark the true *ecclesia*. A preference for central altars is perhaps too much insisted upon: the tension (a healthy one) between the Mass as a meal and as a sacrifice needs to be resolved without making the church into a mere assembly-room. An impatience with *décor* can easily lead to a contempt for the grace which should mark the image of the new Jerusalem. Yet it must be admitted that the real need is to see the architect's business as one of spatial organization: it is through the disposition of volumes, above all, as Le Corbusier has shown at La Tourette, that the sacred theme must first of all emerge.

Mr Hammond makes considerable use of the (Catholic) Bishop of Reno's article on 'Art and Architecture for the Church in our Age' from *Liturgical Arts*, a measured statement (without the fever and fuss of some continental manifestos) which states what is fundamental. 'If we are to conceive the altar as the heart and centre of the church we have to do more than merely adapt the cathedral concept to a more convenient accommodation. We have to think of a structure designed for the altar, rather than the altar designed for the structure. We have to think of the liturgy for which the altar is the focal point as central to the whole meaning and usefulness of the church, not as an adjunct of a monument which could very well serve for any number of extraneous purposes.' The Bishop's words are a clear summary of what is theologically axiomatic: it is for the architect to find means for its realization. And the Church must respect his function and give him the freedom to use it.

Contemporary Church Art was published in America some time ago, but it can be warmly recommended for its useful introduction on modern sacred art and the liturgical norms which should govern it, as well as for an excel-

lent choice of illustrations. Many of the continental churches referred to in Mr Hammond's book appear in good photographs, and there are numerous pictures of paintings, carvings and ornaments besides. The emphasis of the book is perhaps excessively Germanic, and Herr Henze's over-rigid categories could be questioned, but text and illustrations alike are a sober reminder of what has already been achieved in restoring the artist to his proper place in the life of the Church.

I. E.

ORIENTAL ESSAYS: Portraits of Seven Scholars. By A. J. Arberry. (Allen and Unwin; 28s.)

Oriental studies in England are not uninfluential; rather their influence is irregular. You may meet quite unacademic persons who are fascinated by Indian sculpture, by the Japanese theatre, by Islamic mysticism; you may hear famous scholars generalizing about Greek vases or about landscape painting without awareness that vases have existed in Persia or landscape in China.

It is, I suppose, more especially the ignorance of the learned that Professor Arberry hopes to pierce by these studies of six predecessors in Arabic, Persian and general Islamic scholarship and by one chapter about his own life and aims. And indeed, if the 'cultured reader' may be expected to take some interest in the work and career of a Bentley or Routh or Housman, why should he not do as much for Simon Ockley or Edward Lane? Above all, what a subject is Sir William Jones, perhaps the most admirable figure among all eighteenth-century men of letters, a master of Eastern and Western learning who reached far beyond literary greatness and whose name is now scarcely known in England!

The material Professor Arberry has is thus very promising indeed, but I fear he fails to do it justice. He often spoils a good narrative by mere clumsiness, and he is oddly insensitive to the English language. He mixes quite inconsistent styles, and his judgment of other men's translations too often confuses their hits and their misses. He himself writes this prose: 'Laura Palmer began to ail, and it was soon clear that consumption, which had robbed Palmer of his father, was out to claim another victim.' He approves this verse of E. G. Browne:

'Up its sleeve the wind, meseemeth, pounded musk hath stored away'.
I deplore this tactless advocacy of an excellent cause.

WALTER SHEWRING

THE FACE OF THE ANCIENT ORIENT. By Sabatino Moscati. (Routledge & Kegan Paul and Vallentine Mitchell; 30s.)

This is a brilliantly conceived book, as we have come to expect from the never-idle pen of Professor Moscati, the Director of the Centre of Semitic studies in the University of Rome. The treatment is original: it began as a series of broadcast lectures on the Radio Italiana in 1955 on the civilizations of the Ancient Orient; the next year the lectures were expanded into a book entitled *Il Profilo dell'Oriente Mediterraneo*, and now this book has appeared