

BLACKFRIARS

—from I Corinthians to St. Ephrem. Another on Our Lady from the Gospels to Ephesus. Finally, in a superb conclusion on 'The Christian City' he describes the relationship between the Church and the Empire, until the peace of Milan and the coming of Byzantism . . . It is a book that creates enthusiasm, and should be translated into English.

A.M.

DAS SEELENLEBEN DES MENSCHEN, Eine Einführung in die Psychologie. By Johannes Lindworsky. (Bonn: Peter Hanstein; RM. 2.30.)

A very useful survey, synthesizing traditional rational psychology with the latest data of experimentation. The author's name is a sufficient guarantee of its reliability. The volume constitutes the ninth of the important series of philosophical brochures edited by Dr. Theodor Steinbüchel. If less original than *Das Ethos der Gegenwart* and *Die Philosophie der Kunst*, already reviewed, the present volume fully maintains the standard of its predecessors. The series should not be missed by any who wish to keep in touch with the great advances in Christian philosophy which are being made in Central Europe.

V.W.

DRAMA AND FICTION

THE ROCK. By T. S. Eliot. (Faber and Faber; 2/6.)

Mr. Eliot has come out of the Waste Land.

His sojourn in the desert was not, as his less intelligent disciples seem to have thought, an intellectual antic: it was a necessary asceticism, and an asceticism for poetry. Analogous renunciations are observable in other arts. All are stripping to structure in order to regain tradition. But the desert is a dangerous place: there are devils in it as well as God. *Surréalist* paintings suggest that it is the devil whom the painters have met in the desert.

Mr. Eliot has come out of the Waste Land a Christian. This play, which ran for a fortnight at Sadler's Wells, with crammed audiences (and was reported in BLACKFRIARS), is an explicitly Christian play, it is vulgar propaganda, it is to collect cash for Church extension. It is a phenomenon to be noted when the greatest living English poet finds it an honour for poetry to be an *ancilla Fidei*.

The play is built on several planes. In the foreground two Cockney bricklayers are trying to build a church in a swamp. On another plane are the appearances of great church-builders of the past who come to encourage the workmen—Rahere, Ne-

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hemiah, Blomfield. Then there is the contemporary 'world,' with its aimlessness and lucre lust, and its panaceas of Fascism and Communism. And behind all is the mysterious figure of the Rock. The Rock is Peter.

Mr. Eliot has always claimed that the poet should be in organic relation with the community: in this play he has achieved that relation, and without any loss to his poetry, for the great choruses which weld the play together contain some of the noblest poetry he has written. Only the language of the Cockneys is a little uninteresting: Cockney is more than misplaced h's, and Mr. Eliot would do well to rely on his own judgment in this matter, since the advice he says he has taken seems not to have been very helpful. But this is to carp at a work which as a whole is a magnificent and thrilling success. The temptation to quote is furious, but we must be content to conclude with the refrain which is the 'motive' of the entire play: '*A Church for us all and work for us all and God's world for us all even unto this last.*'

A.M.

THOMAS MANN. By James Cleugh. (Secker; 6/-.)

THE TALES OF JACOB. By Thomas Mann. (Secker; 7/6.)

Mr. Cleugh has provided an unpretentious and directly written introduction to the works of Thomas Mann. In the first part he describes Mann's life and the various influences—his bourgeois ancestry, Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, and Wagner, which shaped him. In the second part he analyses the development of his works in detail and groups them under the idea of decadence, the problem of happiness, the adventure of beauty. He throws out many happy suggestions and makes one realize the importance of the change in Mann's views of the relation between the artist and the man of action. But he somehow fails to convey the precise *quality* of Mann's work, its total value and nature as a novelist's interpretation of the world. Undoubtedly this is a difficult task, but it is the critic's business.

In the first volume of his new trilogy Mann retells the old Biblical story. A precarious attempt in view of the eternal vigour of the original. Mann, however, prepared himself well by study and travel: at times one feels that the preparation rather drags on the novel. Three points strike us as the significant successes of the book. First, the author manages to communicate the sense of the immense distance in the past when the events took place: we travel back with awe into time that has gone. Secondly, he makes us realize dramatically the profound and wonderful newness and uniqueness of Jahwe amidst the multitude of the strange gods of Canaan. Thirdly, he has re-