

## REVIEWS

useless to include in this appendix Münzer's letter to Konrad Celtes, since this letter is already well known and is to be found in Rupprich's edition of Celtes' Correspondence.

The list of books once in Münzer's library shows plainly the nature of the intellectual interests of their owner. Theology, Medicine, Science and the works of classical and humanistic authors appear to have crowded the bookshelves of Münzer and testify to the catholicism of his tastes. Dr. Goldschmidt's arrangement of these books according to their subject was certainly sensible, but this division could have been done with more accuracy. Thus, to give a few instances, one is apt to wonder why he placed Orosius among the classical authors and Eusebius among the theologians, and why some humanistic versions from the Greek are classed among the classics and some among the works of humanists. But these are mere trifles in comparison with the solid learning behind this work which makes it such a useful contribution to the history of German humanism at the eve of the Reformation.

R. WEISS.

T. E. HULME. By Michael Roberts. (Faber & Faber; ros. 6d.)

As a symptom, this book, like the recent orientation of the *Adelphi*, has a significance it is only too easy to undervalue. It is true that Hulme raised questions which he did not definitively solve; it is true too that his thinking is too disorderly to be called a metaphysic; it is even true that as a literary critic he seems to have lacked finesse. But he did at least think to live, working against the stream of academic irrelevance with something analogous to an existence-philosophy, and working for the continuity of a vital tradition by probing more deeply into the meaning of history than literary humanism was prepared to probe. In transcribing P. Lasserre and E. Seillère, Hulme inhaled not a little of that widely advertised and allegedly latin scepticism which is essentially anarchical (Wyndham Lewis seems to be his disciple in this); Mr. Roberts is able to correct this trend in Hulme and convincingly to demonstrate that, in the modern world, in proportion as thought lends to be less unreal, it inevitably tends to be more Christian. So that the end of humanism in one sense becomes the beginning of humanism in another, and much profounder, sense.

Neither Hulme nor Mr. Roberts seem, however, to penetrate to the vital issues in the nominalist dispute. This is perhaps what leads Mr. Roberts to declare that Hulme's "resembles the

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Thomist philosophy in not recognising any distinction between moral and aesthetic values," and the equally muddled view that the thomist "accepts the nominalist argument that all science is only an approximate representation"; if by science is meant mathematical physics, that is not the nominalist argument; if a natural philosophy is meant, then science does deal in generic concepts and is not a mere assemblage of individual data. It is a palpable misrepresentation again to quote the thomist as equating in value ethical concepts and mathematical numbers; Mr. Roberts no doubt has in mind a "pure" ethic, but that can by no means be described as characteristically thomist.

Hulme's war on romanticism has had conflicting results. Mr. Louis MacNeice, for example, oscillates between escape and the (unconvincing) assertion that he is "decidedly happy to be alive." Mr. Wyndham Lewis has become the "complete" aesthete to whom ethical concepts and mathematical numbers are indeed equally irrelevant. If the scientist wishes his nomination to be more than departmental, the literary person is satisfied with very generalising assertions that may presumably be literature but as philosophy can hardly be considered final.

"All literature and poetry is life seen in a mirror" (*Notes on Language and Style*). Trapped in romantic ways of thinking, Hulme is driven to enslave the mind to the senses to account for poetry. Hence, "Life is as a rule tedious, but certain things give us sudden lifts. Poetry comes with the jumps, cf., love, fighting, dancing. The moments of ecstasy" (*ibid.*). This inadequate and partial view (modified by what appears to be a transformation of Proust's aesthetic) is apparent even in the later T. S. Eliot: "sudden in a shaft of sunlight," there the ecstasy is, followed by

"Ridiculous the waste sad time  
Stretching before and after" (*Burnt Norton*).

However, scattered passages in Mr. Eliot's criticism show that he wishes to comprehend all experience in his poetry, and his "auditory imagination" is a term that reveals two valuable items in the Hulme inheritance; the insistence on the necessity of conceiving images as symbols, and on the "hue too beautiful for health" common to Shelley's maniac and the false infinitude of romantic language.

Superior to the critical part of this work is the preliminary sketch Mr. Roberts gives of a truly Christian polity. It is a tribute to his energy and acumen if one wishes to add depth and dimension to the views he very properly puts forward as adumbrations.

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