

interpreters of St Thomas hold widely divergent philosophical positions, some of which—for example, Aimé Forest's—approximate to Dom Illtyd's own. The writings of St Thomas himself are seldom discussed, but on the one occasion when his views are set out at length (as expounded by Fr Copleston), the apparent opposition is due to the fact that Dom Illtyd is talking about something rather different. St Thomas held that the particularity of things, as felt by the senses, is normally lost when we begin talking about them; which is surely a matter of experience. It would be necessary to examine carefully what he says about the bases of metaphysics to discover whether he in fact thought that an intellectual grasp of individuality could be recovered.

A more serious over-simplification is implied by the use of the word 'logical positivist'. To be called a positivist by Dom Illtyd it is only necessary to write for *Mind*; which would matter less if it did not also involve being saddled with the views of the Vienna Circle on verification. This is especially unfortunate because a sympathetic study of the linguistic analysts by a Christian philosopher would benefit both sides as regards clarity of thought and depth of insight.

If this notice seems unduly critical, it is a measure of the interest of Dom Illtyd's essay; the faults of lesser books are more readily overlooked. It is recommended to anyone who is going to enjoy arguing with a highly stimulating person.

LAURENCE BRIGHT, O.P.

THE LATIN LANGUAGE. By L. R. Palmer. (Faber and Faber; 45s.)

Professor Palmer's volume on the Latin language is a distinguished addition to the 'Great Languages' series of which he is now general editor. The declared purpose of the series is 'to provide, in a single volume, a comprehensive account of the history, structure, and characteristic achievement' of each language, and its development, 'as spoken and written', is shown 'in relation to the culture it served or serves'. It is surprising to find that the present volume is the first 'comprehensive history of Latin . . . in English since the rise of modern philology'. In the circumstances it is fortunate that the work comes from the hands of a scholar who is eminent as a classical philologist and notable for his wide and acute knowledge of modern writings on linguistics. The result is a handsome volume, rich in its learning, mature in its judgments and attractive in its style.

There are two parts to the work: Part I gives an outline history of the Latin language and Part II a comparative-historical grammar. In the first part Professor Palmer traces the history of the language beyond the time of the earliest extant written evidence and considers

the place of Latin in the pattern of relationships with other Indo-European languages. His discussion of the 'Italo-Celtic theory' and of Italo-Greek affinities is excellent; he has some refreshing and timely good sense to offer on recent studies of so-called 'marginal phenomena'. 'Latin', says Professor Palmer, 'is the linguistic product of the manifold experiences of [the] proto-Latins in their new Mediterranean environment.' These 'proto-Latins' were a tribe of Indo-European speakers who came from central Europe, entering the Apennine peninsula towards the end of the second millennium B.C., and after long wanderings reaching Latium about the tenth century B.C., settling there 'in scattered rural communities (or *populi*) which combined in loose confederations'. Thus 'Rome itself originated in a *synoecismus* of cremating Latin and inhaling Sabine folk'. Later, Rome's political supremacy, and the Roman way of consolidating by absorption rather than by suppression, 'gradually led to the replacement of the dialects of Latium by the Latin of Rome'—itself originally 'merely one of the many Latin *patois*'. The records of the Latin of Rome are tantalizingly rare before the end of the third century B.C., but there is enough to show that 'between the fifth and third centuries B.C. Latin had changed so drastically that scholars can no longer understand texts of the earlier period'. Professor Palmer gives some very helpful comments on the earliest texts: for example, his remarks on the semantic development of *macte*. He analyses these features of 'colloquial' Latin which can be extracted from the available written documents, and he examines the language of Plautus and Terence. In a lengthy chapter on the growth of literary Latin Professor Palmer, with a wealth of detail and masterly lucidity, follows the paths of prose and poetry until they reach 'their summits of perfection in the mature oratory of Cicero and in Virgilian epic', and then on to post-classical poetry and prose. The theme of Chapter III on spoken Latin is taken up again in Chapter VI—Vulgar Latin—and a survey is made of those 'seismic areas in the dead landscape of literary Latin where occasional eruptions reveal the intense subterranean activity which one day will make a new world of language'; this survey leads to a useful tabulation of some of the features of phonology, morphology, syntax and vocabulary which mark the lengthy transition period before the appearance of the Romance languages. In the final chapter of Part I Professor Palmer brings together the results of recent studies on Christian Latin (especially the conclusions drawn by Dr Chr. Mohrmann and other pupils of Mgr J. Schrijnen). 'Two facts', he writes, 'are of prime importance for the understanding of Christian Latin: the new religion came in Greek guise and to the simple folk of the back streets.' His fascinating and stimulating account of the development of this 'special language', of the 'particular adaptation of the Latin language

to express "new" things', is one of the most valuable sections of the book. It can no longer be held that Christian Latin 'began' in North Africa; in any case, 'this special idiom . . . is oecumenical, for the differences between Africa and Rome are insignificant. This same idiom, which was later to appear in Spain and Gaul . . . was gradually hammered out as the story of the Gospel and the fundamentals of the Christian faith began to be communicated by bilingual speakers to monoglot Latin converts.' Referring to the 'obligatory constituents' of this special Christian idiom, Professor Palmer notes that 'Augustine's conversion entailed a linguistic conversion'. He has much else to say about St Augustine and Tertullian. On the latter he remarks: 'The "father of Christian Latin", in Schrijnen's sense, he may not have been. Shall we say rather that he took a promising child, fostered it, and endowed it with riches which made it master of a new mental and spiritual world?'

The second part of the volume (pp. 209-341)—a comparative-historical grammar of Latin—consists of sections on phonology, morphology and syntax. There is a short bibliography and a useful appendix of archaic Latin texts taken from epigraphic and literary sources. Two indices are provided—a subject index and an index of Latin words.

I. LL. FOSTER

CREATIVE INTUITION IN ART AND POETRY. By Jacques Maritain.

Based on the Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts, National Gallery of Arts, Washington. (Harvill Press; 42s.)

In their broad outlines the ideas summed up in M. Maritain's 'poetic intuition' are not new. 'Enthusiasm', 'mimesis', 'imagination', 'the objective correlative', are all terms which can be seen to point towards, and to be contained within, his philosophy of poetry. Yet there was commonly an aura of imprecision about them, a suggestion of the supernatural or of mania, as if the poet were perhaps only a medium for non-natural revelations. M. Maritain has not dispelled the mystery, but he has captured it within his illuminating definitions, and shown that poetry is a proper, and indeed the supreme natural, activity of the human spirit. So clearly does he demonstrate this in his philosophical and psychological enquiry, which reviews the achievements of both Eastern and Western art, that his claim that 'poetry is the *heaven* of the working reason' becomes almost self-evident. However I would suggest that, since here there is no question of the supernatural, it might have been more accurate to refer to poetry as the *Eden* of human reason.