

No; it will be 'As long as ye did it, or ye did it not, to me'. He was there all the time in our work and our duties. Detachment, surely, consists in realising this and adoring him beneath the earthly trappings of his present manifestation, as we adore him beneath the accidents of the white host.

In this sense, I believe, contemplation is not incompatible with life in the world.—Yours, etc.

GLADYS M. STANFORD (Mrs)



REVIEWS

LITURGIE UND MONCHTUM. Laacher Hefte I. To the memory of Abbot Ildefons Herwegen. (Verlag Herder, Freiburg.)

In the death (in 1946) of the Abbot of Maria Laach and of Dom Odo Casel on Holy Saturday this year (1948), the Liturgical Movement has lost two quite exceptional apostles. *Maison-Dieu* (No. 14) which contains important studies of Dom Casel's *Mysterium-Theologie* devotes the whole number to his memory, and now we are happy to welcome from Germany the first number of a new series which most appropriately is a memorial to Abbot Herwegen.

That his was a great creative personality, that he made possible the physical and intellectual conditions which enabled such men as Dom Casel to produce their profound liturgical studies, those of us who had no personal contact with Maria Laach long ago suspected; but here the story is told and all is made plain. Abbot Herwegen was a many-sided genius, a scholar whose whole intellectual effort was to restore a true notion of the Christian life in its widest extent and deepest meaning; a man of affairs who provided the material conditions for that restoration; an artist, a Christian humanist, but above all the Spiritual Father (how he loved that word *Pneuma!*) of his monks and of many more besides. Up to the war, the ideas of the Maria Laach school seem to have influenced only German-speaking countries—and there they made a deep impression—but elsewhere they were hardly known. A few professional theologians made passing references to Dom Casel's teaching on the Mass; a few liturgists were aware of the artistic productions of Maria Laach, but very little was known about this school. Dom Theodore Wesseling in his book *Liturgy and Life* introduced Dom Casel's teaching on the Mass into England but the welcome was not over-enthusiastic. Now at last the importance of the Maria Laach school is realised in France and forms the basis of much of the best work of the *Centre de Pastorale Liturgique*.

Perhaps there was a suspicion abroad that the Maria Laacher were extremists, that they were not quite in the centre of the theological stream. It is certain, as this journal makes clear, that Abbot Herwegen made some trenchant though never irresponsible

criticisms of the modern way of the spiritual life, and it is true he thought it not sufficiently deeply grounded in the supernatural, in the outflowing life of Christ; but he was the sanest, and indeed the gentlest, of men, and he made these criticisms to clear the ground for the revelation of the depth and breadth of the Christ-life; but more, because he was profoundly convinced of the necessity to modern men of the virile and total Christianity that a life-long study of the primitive Church had revealed to him. It is heartening to read, even in the brief study given here, of the Abbot's burning desire to bring all things and every aspect of life under the empire of Christ. He had a truly Christian philosophy, wide, deep and generous. It is interesting to see too, in the brief '*Summa*' of his writings given here, how he adopted Dom Casel's view of the Christian *Mysterium*, and states it again and again, simply and without question. As for the possible difficulties it raised, the monks' view was, and is, that it is true, the teaching of the early Church, and it is for the professional theologians to give precision to the matter and to find answers to the difficulties. (The articles in *Maison-Dieu*, No. 14, are partly this.)

No doubt, with the pardonable enthusiasm of pioneers they occasionally overstated their case, over-simplified the issues and were a little too positive in their opinions; and there seems to have been an early stylisation or crystallisation of language so that with a few phrases of the jargon, a superficial or malevolent student could talk a lot of harmful nonsense. But the point is Abbot Herwegen was a pioneer; Maria Laach is still only at the beginnings of things and not the least welcome news contained in this number is that the *Academia Benedictina*, founded by the Abbot, has been reconstituted to continue his work and to adapt it more and more to the needs of modern people, and is to be called the *Herwegen Institut*. It is to be a Catholic Institute for the study of the Liturgy, Biblical Theology, Patristics and Church Music. (The terms of membership are to be found on pp. 94-96.)

We are glad to see this journal as the first-fruits of post-war German Catholic scholarship and vitality to which in the past the Church has owed so much. The hand has not lost its cunning. Apart from the three articles on Abbot Herwegen, there are others; a study of the living Tradition of the Church (an application of the *Kult-mysterium* to reunion), an article on the Christian interpretation of history, one on the chant and another on Christian Art, namely a study of a Christian sarcophagus of the fifth century.

No doubt this review ought to have given some account of Herwegen's views but even the '*Summa*' of his teaching occupies fourteen pages, and any synopsis would be misleading. Much less can we attempt an estimate of his teaching. Further, we have omitted the *Mönchtum* part of the title. Abbot Herwegen was apparently as great and fruitful an influence in continental monasticism as in the sphere of the Liturgy. We can only hope that some of his books

will be translated and that perhaps a few young priests will take the trouble to acquire some German and go and study at the Herwegen Institut. Only in this way will the ideas of the Maria Laach school become really known and criticised and thus enter into the common stock of Christian thought.

J. D. CRICHTON

THE HAPPY ISSUE. By Warner Allen. (Faber; 12s. 6d.)

In *The Timeless Moment* the author described what he took to be a mystical experience and the immediate effects of that experience. Here he traces his mode of synthesising the inner experience with outer reality and reason. He has read widely and eclectically in mystical literature and is as we should expect greatly influenced by Inge's *Plotinus* and Aldous Huxley's *Perennial Philosophy*. He seems to have sought confirmation for his experience in books about mysticism rather than in the total exposition of the genuine mystics themselves—at least he quotes from *The Epistle of Privy Counsel* and *The Scale of Perfection* as taken secondhand from Miss Underhill and Dr Inge respectively. Such reading and such writing are very comfortable and very dangerous. They dull the fine point of the spirit which should be able to detect the truly supernatural from the natural touch of God. Leaving out all the hard things of Christian asceticism it becomes absorbed in a comfortable assurance of the presence of God. It would seem likely that the author's experience, which occurred while listening to Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, was a natural poetic experience which can of course achieve a quite considerable 'happy issue' in adjusting self from inside to awkward outward environment. A great deal of genuine mystical writing can be read on this infinitely lower plane and still seem to be true. But inevitably passages in such writers as St John of the Cross are hard to swallow, and Dark Nights are not very attractive. We are not surprised therefore when after tampering with St John of the Cross as a man with a spanner trying to unravel the mysteries of a watch the author turns with relief 'to the steady common-sense of Henry More, the Cambridge Platonist'. In this book, then, there is plenty of sound common-sense and healthy psychology, a delicate sensibility and a more than usually penetrating philosophical insight. But let it be a warning to those who dabble in mysticism and think they can find a comfortable way to a happy issue.

CONRAD PEPLER, O.P.

THE HUMAN WISDOM OF ST THOMAS. Arranged by Josef Pieper. (Sheed & Ward; 6s.)

Described on the title page as a Breviary of Philosophy from the works of St Thomas Aquinas, this book consists of some five hundred texts from St Thomas grouped in seventeen sections and designed to reveal the structure of the thomistic explanation of the universe. The texts are numbered consecutively throughout and are presented without comment or elaboration of any kind; even the