

been finding her feet after the great social changes of the post-war years and has been unwilling to commit herself or even to speculate upon a new pattern of development. But it is also not wholly good, for there is need at all times for guidance from the professional guardians of environment and the present lack of it has caused frustration and despondency.

The ultimate purpose of this book of Helen Rosenau's, we suspect, is to affirm the value of thinking about planning and of thinking about it at the highest level. 'Ideal Planning' is for her an activity of the human spirit which is almost (but not quite) independent of practical considerations and which seeks a visual formula which will provide an ideal environment. She includes as examples of this activity such diverse mental productions as the images of Jerusalem depicted in medieval manuscripts, the woodcut which prefaces the first edition of St Thomas More's *Utopia*, the geometrical city plans of the Baroque period (such as Karlsruhe) and the community buildings planned by the Utopian Socialists of the nineteenth century. The authors of each of these have it in common that they all make a courageous estimate of the nature of man. What they got right in their estimate has passed almost unnoticed into our common stock of ideas; and they themselves are remembered mainly for what they got wrong. This book is primarily a work of scholarship and a valuable one; but it also offers a suggestion which our planners cannot afford to ignore. We in England depend almost exclusively on the development of techniques for the quantitative assessment of human needs. No one would deny that these are necessary. But when, in the end, the time comes to act, the aptness of our solutions will depend equally on the amount of thinking we have done on the basic human issues and on the architectural imagery which we can put forward to substantiate it. This book is a reminder that functional analysis, like fear of the Lord, is only the beginning of wisdom.

LANCE WRIGHT

CHRIST AND THE APOSTLES. *The Changing Forms of Religious Imagery.*
By F. M. Godfrey. (The Studio; 45s.)

The basilica of Sant' Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna, which was consecrated in 504, contains a cycle of mosaics which represent, with unexampled authority and grace, the public life of Christ, surrounded always by the Apostles whom he had chosen and who were to perpetuate his redeeming work. These mosaics provide the classic statement of the theme which Mr Godfrey traces through twelve centuries of artistic history. His aim is to see how these central events of Christian

life are treated both in terms of a changing religious sensibility and of the artistic forms which so faithfully declare it.

It is a welcome relief to find in a work of this kind a serious understanding of the function of sacred art: an acceptance of the continuity which underlies the varying forms which so often interest the art historian as though their plastic expression were autonomous and unrelated to the sacred truths they seek to represent. Mr Godfrey remarks on 'the power of the Christian icon to renew itself', and so 'the life of the Christian verities lay assured, and the religious experience assumes outward and visible form in the artistic creation'. Fortified by this clear conviction of what a sacred art is concerned to achieve, Mr Godfrey provides an exact and coherent commentary on the illustrations he has chosen. Almost every incident (the calling of the Apostles, the Marriage at Cana, the entry into Jerusalem, the Last Supper, the Agony in the Garden, the Walk to Emmaus, the incredulity of Thomas) has its primary statement in a Ravenna mosaic, and there follow paintings which compass the whole European achievement from Duccio to Tiepolo, from the South German Master of 1485 to Rubens and Rembrandt.

So sensitive an approach to this sense of sacred art as illuminating an unchanging truth gives to Mr Godfrey's book an unusual gravity and depth. He is wholly aware of the problems of interpretation and style, of that 'internal life of forms' with which it is the art historian's business to deal—but only, to continue Sir Kenneth Clark's definition, by relating these forms to life. And the life in question here is the radical truth made incarnate in Christ and henceforth to be shown as continuing to enlighten the world he came on earth to redeem. So it is that the Ravenna mosaics are the ageless statement of the truths which the Christian church is built to enshrine and re-present in sacrifice and sacrament every day. If we prefer the formal nobility of these mosaics to the graphic drama of Duccio or to the later revolution of Masaccio, with his powerful sense of human movement, not to speak of the wholly different emphasis of the Renaissance painters, that is not to deny the authentic quality of the changing forms of art which reflect, as they must, the cultural and social values of their time. It can be a sort of puritanism to limit the sacred to the liturgically acceptable. And Mr Godfrey's selection, as well as his commentary, reveals a catholic understanding of the variety-in-unity of the great sacred themes, however variously expressed. A hundred illustrations (of which four are in colour) provide a magnificent volume of evidence. The Christian theme is indeed impoverished by the exclusion of any representation of the Mother of God, who, alike in the history of art and in the history of the Christian faith, occupies a central place. But Mr Godfrey has

deliberately restricted his subject to the public life of Christ—a manageable and limited one—and for that reason his argument emerges with strength and authority.

ILLTUD EVANS, O.P.

ITALIAN RENAISSANCE SCULPTURE. By John Pope-Hennessy. (Phaidon Press; 90s.)

Twenty-two years ago a review in *BLACKFRIARS* prophesied that Mr Pope-Hennessy would become one of the most distinguished art historians of his time. By now he should be recognized as the greatest among them. He has synthesized the scientific expertise and detailed perceptions of the great Dr Saxl with a very English tradition of lucid prose and reluctant generalization. Here he is discussing the development of Italian sculpture from Donatello to Tullio Lombardo. The 144 plates and 165 text illustrations are of course admirably selected and superbly photographed; only a complete mastery of the subject could make his style so limpid.

Inevitably there are interpretations with which an individual reviewer may disagree. I am not so convinced as he is of 'the life-giving breath of the antique'; sometimes it could bring death instead. More might be made of the Germanic share in the origins of north Italian equestrian sculpture; it had filtered south of the Alps to the court of the della Scala at Verona. The statement that the early humanists 'looked back across aeons of emblematic portraiture to a remote age when sculptors had been capable of rendering in marble the lineaments of a specific human face' seems to ignore the recurrent attempts since the third century to render the lineaments of a specific human personality.

But much of this criticism is perhaps the prejudice of a Byzantinist.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.

SYMBOLISM IN THE BIBLE AND IN THE CHURCH. By Gilbert Cope. (S.C.M. Press; 30s.)

The title of this book, and the dust-jacket with its Henry Moore *Madonna and Child*, and much within its pages is undoubtedly fascinating. There is much too which a discerning reader could glean, for our author covers a vast field and draws copiously from up-to-date writings on psychology and symbolism. Yet we would advise a discerning reader to read critically and turn to sources and think afresh. For how can we speak with restraint of these 287 pages which contain so much which is so utterly alien to traditional and essential Christian thought?