

REVIEWS

part in this sport; the hull often 'got' his player. The frescoes that can still be seen are the most fascinating part of Knossos and here are many photographs, one of which, that of the Priest King, was copied in the production of Handel's *Samson*, when the Cambridge Musical Society performed that Oratorio as Opera in 1931. Mr. Pendlebury says of that fresco: 'This painted relief shows the Minoan ideal of a prince; with the waving peacock feathers of his crown and his collar of fleur de lis . . . he seems to be leading something or someone—perhaps as we see on gems, a griffin.' He most likely was leading the company along the 'Corridor of the Procession' and up the Grand Staircase—one of the marvels of antiquity. Then there are the giant Pithoi, vast jars 'big enough to hide all the 40 thieves at once.' But you will ask, is there nothing about the Labyrinth and the Minotaur? There is something in the foreword by the discoverer of Knossos, Sir Arthur Evans: they did not exist except in the imagination of the Greeks to whom the vast ruins of Knossos were a maze inhabited by frightful ghosts and strange beings who appeared on the walls of the shadowy rooms and halls.

E.G.T.

EINFÜHRUNG IN DIE PHILOSOPHIE DER KUNST. By Heinrich Lützel. (Bonn: Peter Hanstein; Rm. 3.)

At the present time, when we are divided by something more radical than mere difference of opinion, open controversy becomes almost futile. The only course open to us to pursue is for each independently and dispassionately to state his point of view, without rancour or prejudice.

This introduction to the philosophy of art is an object lesson in how it should be done. The author, with admirable perseverance and skill, has managed to give to his work the best qualities of a water-tight *a priori* treatise; at the same time he has not neglected the positive point of view so dear to the modern mind, and so important if our knowledge is to be anything more than mere mental exercise. The appearance of the book shows the progress that has been made in this study. In some sense, the whole study is regrettable and unfortunate. It is unfortunate on the whole that we have become so curious about the working of our own mind, especially since for the most part investigation is carried out solely on a basis of experiment and observation. Thus in England, Mr. Clive Bell and his contemporaries set out on what appeared to them a journey into new lands. It is in such a book as the present that we see how their conclusions are explained and given depth by principles which come down to us from another age. In the

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process they benefit much, both the old principles and the new conclusions.

It is in this felicitous combination of the analytic and the positive that the value of the book lies. Although studies of this and that are multiplied from hour to hour, no one should want to say of this, 'just another hook on art.' And in these days, when most successes come by way of 'stunt' arid 'shock tactics,' it is no mean achievement to produce something new and of value merely by being careful, painstaking and thorough.

R.M.B.

ENJOYING PICTURES. By C. Bell. (Chatto & Windus; 7/6.)

Mr. Bell has always been on the side of the angels: unfortunately they have been the fallen angels. He has seized perfectly the spiritual nature of art, its character as an absolute, and knows how to bait the bourgeois, and still more the 'cultured and academic.' This is very cheerful and refreshing in an age when we are all being so educated as to have no time for ecstasy. Mr. Bell has time for ecstasy, plenty of time, it would seem. And perhaps his leisure is irresponsible for the falseness of his theory. For him this ecstasy which art undoubtedly gives is alone of value: mundane affairs deserve contempt, and moreover he equates the aesthetic ecstasy with the supernatural ecstasy of the saint. His thought lacks suppleness. We can't divide life like that—into stretches of aridity with occasional escapes into delight. To *transform life*, this here-and-now-life—*that is* the function of art, and in an infinitely higher degree, of religion also. Further, one **should** not conclude from an analogy to an identity: the resemblance between aesthetic and religious ecstasy **is** real and striking: the difference is that the latter is salvific, the former not. These reflections come out of Mr. Bell as a result of **an** hour or **two** in the National Gallery and the Vatican. Those who are interested in the development of his thought—and from the aesthetic viewpoint, it has a happy resemblance to the Thomist position as interpreted by Maritain—will find a valuable precision as to the relation between learning, general culture and the aesthetic thrill: while fundamentally distinct from the latter, it may **have** a dispositive effect towards it. Good remarks also on the nonsense that is so common about craftsmanship: the craftsman *as such* is at heart the enemy of the artist and usually a Puritan. Incidental to his reflections Mr. Bell writes some admirable criticisms of pictures, and his remarks on Raphael prove once again that only those who have understood the great modern painters can truly appreciate the greatness and peculiar significance of the Old Masters.

A.M.