

wholly independent of any kind of earthly authority'. Strictly, one would be justified in demanding elucidation of the phrase, 'wholly independent', just as the author justifies his criticism by distinguishing between *potestas ordinis* and *potestas jurisdictionis*. Certainly, any serious disagreement with the general sense in which the late Archbishop of Canterbury spoke would be to place one's self in the Erastian position. Mr Reckitt does not do this; but he declares that 'We (the Church) also hold a secondary and supplementary commission from the nation to be the national symbol and expression of Christian faith of the English people'. With these words, the old spectre of tribal religion (however softly) enters the stage, dressed in whatever apparel of nationalism you like to name. It is this ghost from sad years, this lack of any effective understanding of the true Commune of Christ, that haunts what otherwise were a fine study in Christian sociology.

J. F. T. PRINCE.

ART IN CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY. By Walter Shewring. (The Sower Press, Plainfield, New Jersey; 75 cents.)

Since Maritain's *Art et Scolastique* was translated, nothing of this nature has appeared in English. Like the French philosopher's classic this essay is a closely reasoned and carefully documented exposition of the thomist teaching on art. But the author has an advantage over M. Maritain's book which was in many ways the starting-point of Eric Gill's polemic: this work reaps the fruit of twenty years of that artist's clarification of the theory. It is clear and concise (sixteen pages of letter press), and yet it covers more ground than *Art et Scolastique*; it is a classic.

Mr Shewring shows the true sanity as well as the aristotelian origin of the 'functional' definition of art which Gill sometimes stated too baldly but which properly understood is the only true explanation. Art is intellectual; it is also practical. It is the habit of making things humanly and making them well. It is concerned with things made and the things must be useful. 'Useful' things—in the wider sense of the term 'use'—are things that serve the ends of man. The use may be physical or it may be mental, but pleasure in either case is not enough; for pleasure is not an end but the effect on man of an end attained. Art must therefore be functional, having a purpose for the artist who makes the thing as well as for the consumer who uses it. Beauty is rightly a digression for it is proper to *being* rather than *making*. It is related to the perfection of a thing in itself—and Mr Shewring has some telling phrases from St Augustine to show that everything in its own kind and in relation to the perfection of its own kind may have its beauty. It is not the special property of art, nor the isolated end of art. The stupidities thrown up by both sides in the particularly unintelligent controversy over Picasso would appear in their owlish reality in light of the wisdom of this paper. But, as the author shows, the trouble about modern art goes back to the Renaissance and we shall never get back to a sane understand-

ing till we restore a sane society in which the work of man's hands is *human* work proceeding from a mind and a free will. 'Hence our immediate concern as Catholics is not with the problems of modern painters and novelists. . . . Rather it is with a fully Christian life and through it with the restoration of those conditions in which the common arts can flourish.' The essay should be used as a text book in all English schools; studied by every English Catholic; and used as the foundation for all social work today. It is to be hoped that it will be published in this country. CONRAD PEPLER, O.P.

THE LIVING HEDGE. By Leslie Paul. (Faber, 1s. 6d.)

Reminiscences of childhood fail too often because, inevitably, they interpret a world which was once accepted: a world that was a birthday present, a private possession that could rarely be shared. Mr Paul, the author of *The Annihilation of Man*, is an interpreter of his own boyhood and youth in *The Living Hedge*, and yet his purpose—a factual commentary, so to say, on the recovery of religion that was the theme of his earlier book—does not obtrude. The lower middle-class setting, in the Home Counties so soon to become a sprawling suburb, is faithfully seized with just that whole-hearted innocence which, in a child, can see wonders in a tram, on the beach, under the stone, while important world-shatterings (in this case the 1914-18 war) are a nuisance, noises off which interfere with what matters much more.

This instalment of memories ends with the decay of a boy's faith: the shoddy materialism of the clerks' office and the fake heartiness of the larger life of scouting and Kibbo Kift. We are promised more, and it will be of the greatest interest to follow Mr Paul's journey, which will bring him back to the candid acceptance he begins with. But that is for the future, and in the meantime *The Living Hedge* must be welcomed for its own account, as a piece of skilful writing, free from tricks indeed but containing, among other excellencies, a description (on pp. 82-85) of swimming in a rough sea that can rarely have been equalled for terror re-lived. ILLTUD EVANS, O.P.

FRESNES MA PAROISSE. By Jean-François Leonard. (Editions Franciscaines; 30f.)

LES ROIS-MAGES. By André Frénaud. (Editions Poésie 44: Pierre Seghers; 60f.)

Fresnes ma Paroisse is a series of meditations by a French patriot who was imprisoned during the German occupation. They are set down in free verse and, although they are to be commended more for their spiritual rather than poetical qualities, at least they do possess some of that ragged charm which can also be discerned in Peter Maurin's *Easy Essays*. Frère Jean-François Leonard has made his tribulations into a means of religious purification through self-sacrifice: the mystery of suffering for him has taken on a fresh significance and his vision of the world a new perspective. For instance, his