

EXTRACTS

THE VERNACULAR in the Liturgy provides one of the most pressing problems of the day for those who wish to re-establish public worship in the lines of the ordinary men and women of this century. America now has its flourishing Vernacular Society which after five years can produce a regular printed bulletin, *Amen* (506 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago, 5). The first issue contains a plea to the Hierarchy from the president of the Society, the Rt Rev. J. P. Morrison, to 'grant a restricted and supervised use of the English language in the administration of some rites of the Church, that is, the use of *some* English in the Sacraments and Sacramentals the people most often receive, and in those parts of the Mass that originally and obviously were intended for the instruction and common prayer of the people'. The need is pressing in fact because the liturgy is the public act and the public have no idea what that act may be while it is clothed in a foreign tongue. But for that reason it is one of the questions which easily leads to fanaticism, a question which is intricate and delicate in the extreme and therefore requires a contemplative and moderate approach. Happily *Amen* with its many articles and excerpts from books and other periodicals has preserved the steady centre of a true and holy aim.

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THE IDEA OF GOD IN MODERN THOUGHT is the subject of a symposium in the Spring *Journal of Arts and Letters* (Brothers of the Christian Schools, St Paul, Minnesota). It has many contributors and contributions of note, for instance 'Léon Bloy: the Impatient Mystic' by Neville Braybrooke:

From destitution through suffering he had come to despair; from despair through Love he had come to fruitful hope. His pilgrimage of the Absolute was over. . . . In other lands, in the shadows and in the sun, other pilgrims are waiting, waiting—but they do not wait in vain. They have a guide.

On the whole, however, the modern prophets and their gods are here rather unhappily debunked, Rilke by an excess of sophisticated enthusiasm, Kierkegaard by a fear of giving too much to the Barthians and existentialists, St Thomas by a too naive exposition of the 'five ways' as opposed to modern scientism. In particular the well-known psychologist, Rudolph Allers, surprisingly sets out to debunk psychoanalysis in its attitude towards religion. After showing that Freud was anti-religious and atheistic because of the background to his thought rather than on account of the nature of his psychology, we may be

surprised to find that Allers still insists that psychoanalysis is anti-religious.

It is in fact fundamentally a system which does not recognise anything above man. . . . It agrees perfectly with so many tendencies of our age which aim precisely at the same goal: to make man into an absolute.

Perhaps; but this would not prevent its principles and discoveries being used for the higher purposes of religion. But we are led to a further denial:

Unfortunately psychoanalysis is not a science but a fantasmagoric travesty of science. It is not the kind of knowledge which vivifies, but one which deadens. Not one which raises man to higher levels of existence, but one which can do nothing save engender self-exaltation.

Finally psychoanalysis is attacked because it relieves man of responsibility. And all these criticisms have of course some elements of truth, yet they do not really come to grips with the fundamental and inescapable conclusion that the analysis of modern psychology has revealed and tabulated a great number of facts regarding man's response to God which had scarcely been considered before. And the idea of God in modern thought has been in many instances more fully developed and appreciated through this modern therapy. Little can be gained by condemning its abuses; a great deal remains to be done in reconciling the true God of Christian revelation with all these prophets and their messages, and in particular with the message of modern psychology.

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LAW AND LOVE. The old paradox is tackled once again in the *Supplément de la Vie Spirituelle* (May, 1951); the desire to leave the post-reformation legalist 'morale' in order to return to a more authentic Christian morality based on love is taken out again and given an airing. But the chief importance of this occasion is the insistence upon the law as a pedagogue to love. In an article on the 'Morale' of the Gospel Père Audet, O.P. quotes at length from Irenaeus:

We possess the Lord of the Law who is the Son of God; by faith in him we learn to love God with our whole heart and our neighbour as ourselves. . . . The Law no longer has to say, 'Do not commit adultery' to one who does not even look at another woman, 'Do not kill' to one who has cleansed his heart of all feelings of anger and hate, 'Do not covet your neighbour's field, ox or ass' to those who do not lay up treasures on this earth, but amass heavenly treasure, 'An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth' to one who has no enemy but who treats every man as his neighbour and who is therefore incapable of raising his hand in vengeance. . . .

EVANGELISER (May) has a series of vital comments on the new Easter ceremonies performed on Holy Saturday night.

RIVISTA DI VITA SPIRITUALE (Spring, 1951) is devoted to various aspects of the Congress of Religious in Rome, enshrining an excellent article by P. Gabriel of Mary Magdalen on the active and contemplative lives. *Revue des Communautés Religieuses* (Jan.-Feb.; and May-June) is concerned also with the Congress and with *Sponsa Christi*, the apostolic constitution on contemplative life for women, the nine articles of which are to be found in English in *Review for Religious* (St Mary's, Kansas) for May.

THE NEW OUTLOOK for Faith and Society (Mowbray's; 3s. an issue) is a quarterly which takes over the spirit of *Christendom* lately deceased, and sets out to provide a journal for Christian humanists.

The Carthusians have reached America at last and a *Carthusian Chronicle* (164 Lexington Avenue, New York) has been inaugurated—though so far only in mimeographic form—to keep enquirers and friends in touch with the foundation. The story of the foundation is told in the first number.

Gottesfreund, the German version of LIFE OF THE SPIRIT, has now changed its format and character and appears very successfully as an illustrated religious magazine after the style of *Fêtes et Saisons*. The reproductions are in keeping with German technical perfection in such matters.