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cover the quality of their making (wording mine), and this certainly seems a more satisfactory and logical definition than any of those we have had from the "Pure form" school. It is not in direct contradiction with their arguments but simply with their premature conclusions.

At this stage we might note that Mr. Read in *Art and Industry* says that "The utilitarian arts . . . have the appeal of abstract art." The formal element in art is unchangeable simply because it is dependent on the well making of the object (any object) and the change shown in the arbitrary element is the change in the values expressed.

Mr. Gill proclaims that "all art is propaganda" and that "the artist can do nothing that is not expressive of some value," and that "the artist cannot escape being a man." What we have to ask ourselves in this particular problem (and the argument applies to all the vital issues of to-day) is whether or not the art of what we might call the advanced studio artist (and that Mr. Read calls revolutionary) is not expressive of precisely those values that we now decry as bourgeois, and whether the conception of man expressed in his work is so very different from the current idea. It is a significant fact that both Marxist and Bourgeois accept as their ultimate standard material conditions.

Revolutionary art, *real* revolutionary art, can only come from revolutionary artists and can only be representative of a revolutionized society, and a revolutionized society is one that has changed its *standards* and not merely the expression of its standards.

Mr. Read stands for Communism, that is to say for an alteration in the distribution of wealth, and this he calls revolutionary. What needs revolutionizing is not so much the economic system (though this does) as the people themselves. A fundamental change in ideals is the only thing that we can seriously term revolutionary, and until we have this it is useless to talk about revolutionary art as though it were a new form of salvation. We can say with Maritain, "Purify the source and those who drink of the waters will no longer be sick." That is the only attitude that we can take.

I have dwelt long on Mr. Read's article because it is, with the exception of Mr. Gill's, the most intelligent in the book. The other three articles are well worth reading but tell us nothing that we have not already heard.

M. W. RICHEY.

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OXFORDSHIRE BY-WAYS. An account of scenes and places which for the most part lie off the beaten track in Oxfordshire. By R. M. Marshall. With an Introduction by Sir Michael Sadler. (The Alden Press, Oxford; 2/6.)

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I am afraid I cannot agree with Sir Michael Sadler that progress makes amends for ruining the environs of Oxford by opening up to Oxford residents the shyer and more secluded villages of the county. Let the peasant and pedestrian keep their last strongholds, say I! But let such discerning worshippers as Miss R. M. Marshall—whose *Oxfordshire By-Ways* Sir Michael so charmingly prefaces—add their voices to the chorus of letter-writers, poets, recluses and historians who have fittingly sung their praises.

Coming of a family lovingly and long associated with North Oxfordshire, Miss Marshall has carried on the affectionate research of her forbears in putting together from local hearsay and Bodleian manuscript the intimate history of a score of Oxfordshire villages. The valleys of the Glyme and Dorne fare especially well at her hands—her picture of Sandford St. Martin being a masterpiece of picturesque precision. She rather, I feel, slights Wootton, whose enchanting site is commended in Brabant's *Oxfordshire*; and surely Akeman Street does not run through the village but south through Hordley?

Perhaps, however, Miss Marshall will return to Wootton and its worthies and treat them with the unaffected charm and sensitive humour she has lavished on Somerton and its Catholic Fermors, Cropredy and its anti-Puritan Danvers, Littlemore and Newman, Ditchley and Rochester, Middleton Stoney and Kitty Queensberry. Catholics owe her a special debt of gratitude for her unobtrusive sympathy with religious—from Gilbertines at Clattercote to Sisters of St. Joseph at Radford; and the *Oxford Times* is to be warmly congratulated on securing the serial publication of such delightful and distinguished work.

H. P. E.

LAWS OF LIFE. By Halliday Sutherland. (Sheed & Ward; 6/-.)

The "physician who sings" was for the schoolmen the stock-in-trade example of an Accident. A first-rate physician who can also feel and think and write is perhaps yet more of a rarity. *Laws of Life* is stocked with the authoritative information we expect from so eminent a specialist, the courage of the hero of the Birth Control Libel Action, and the wit and wisdom of the author of *Arches of the Years*.

Most of the essays are concerned with matters more or less connected with sex. The first, on *Love, Marriage and Divorce*, is crammed with the best kind of worldly wisdom and is to be recommended to all lovers and would-be lovers. Then two essays on *Birth Control* (including the inner history of the libel action) and *Contraceptives* (their medical and aesthetic objectionableness ruthlessly exposed.) *The Safe Period*: detailed explanations and

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instructions. Follow chapters on Eugenics, Heredity, Sterilization, Malthusianism old and new, Population and Food supply, Race-suicide, Laws of Fertility and Growth. And, in other domains, on the *Use and Abuse of Alcohol*, *The Dominions Calling*, *Euthanasia*, and a grim picture of *The Next War*.

The book is little concerned with the explicit advocacy of Christian ethics. But it does suggest their inherent reasonableness and conformity with the facts and laws of life. It is, moreover, a book which should convince where bare moral and religious appeal fails. And it should be read especially by the clergy whose moral exhortations and arguments are too often ineffectual for their seeming remoteness from the facts of life and the feelings and experience of men.

V. W.

A MANUAL OF CATHOLIC ACTION. By Mgr. Luigi Civardi. Translated by C. C. Martindale, S.J. Introduction by His Grace the Archbishop of Liverpool. (Sheed & Ward; 6/-.)

No recommendation is needed of this work which is already well known to our readers as *the* standard handbook of Catholic Action. (The French translation was reviewed in BLACKFRIARS last April.) It only remains to thank Fr. Martindale for making the theory of Catholic Action at last accessible in English. The treatment, as the previous reviewer remarked, is rigidly scholastic, and, as Fr. Martindale warns us, "here and there our translation is bound to have a Latin rather than an English flavour." The result is solid, often dry. But it is to be hoped that its contents will be thoroughly mastered by those at least who are responsible for leading and organizing the lay apostolate, and that they will be able to present it in more attractive guise as a prelude to the establishment of a genuine English version of authentic Catholic Action.

H. G.

HIGH SPEED SKIING. By Peter Lunn. (Methuen; 3/6.)

As a first book this has an extrinsic interest, for it is characterized by a sustained restraint in the use of words and an ability to avoid repetition, and these two qualities are still relatively uncommon in the Catholic literary movement. The first three parts are concerned with skiing detail; Mr. Lunn writes authoritatively as the captain of the British ski-team and his advice is pleasantly practical in its elaboration of the minute. The fourth part is a study in applied Thomism. It is suggested that the asceticism of sport is an attempt to regain a lost co-ordination, that it finds its consummation in the sudden recognition of a complete and transient control of body by mind, and that this is experienced by the racer in an instant of ecstasy analogically

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mystical. It is a theory that needs to be developed and perhaps pruned. Yet it is patent that the technique of racing can be expressed in terms of the subordination of matter to form, and it seems possible to trace some analogy of proportionality between the sudden perception of an achieved unity in the spiritual life, aesthetics and high speed skiing.

G. M.

FRANCIS THOMPSON and Other Essays. By Vincent McNabb, O.P. (Pepler & Sewell, Ditchling Common; 5/-.)

According to Mr. Chesterton's Introduction these pieces could never be a substitute for meeting a man like Father McNabb. Yet often the subject writing is more revealed than the subject written about. The autobiographical strain is sometimes a cause of discomfort. The eloquence is more impressive to listeners than readers; this memento of it merited closer proof-reading.

G. B.

HER SOUL TO KEEP. By Ethel Cook Eliot. (Sheed & Ward; 7/6.)
WORLD D. By Hal P. Trevarthen. (Sheed & Ward; 7/6.)

Both these novels have a similar theme and solution, the power of sacrifice for sexual happiness. Yet it would be difficult to find a background more different from the American North Oxford of the first than the new world sunk in the red-hot granite ten miles beneath the Indian Ocean. Autumn leaves in porcelain bowls, furniture either consciously antique or consciously modern, the graceful trivialities of young faculty wives of New Lime are in contrast to the scientific fantasias of Helioxenon. The Psychophone, for instance, from which a flash of purple lightning darts at an elderly Chinese Jesuit. "Before he had time to make a sound he was ashes and charred bones. His blackened skull fell upon the gold table with a dull bump. The lower toothless jaw and a complete set of false-teeth on gold plates became dislodged from it and lay where they fell; the remainder of the skull rolled slowly towards Bob and Val and came to rest beneath Bob's nose, fuming a little, with the eye-sockets towards his face. A great cloud of steam and smoke rushed upwards from the chair where Wang had sat and spread itself upon the ceiling and began to descend by the walls. Black greasy smuts began to fall. . . ." That is one of the juiciest thrills of *World D*, most of the others are icier.

G. W. P.

LADY GEORGY'S HOUSE. By Cecily Hallack. (Methuen; 7/6.)

Ladyhall is in Cornwall: about it an old-world atmosphere as soothing to the city-wrecked frame of Gerald Thornaby as the silky coat of the spaniels who form an integral part of it. Sir

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Richard and Lady Georgina Wake are introduced to the generous owners of this house, through which pass many tired souls. . . . An attractive novel, though admittedly the lightning cures effected under the direction of Lady Georgy savour of an unlimited faith in the powers of psycho-analysis, and the sudden love-matches in the last few pages introduce no small unreality. B. H. P.

THE SEVENTH DAUGHTER. By "Euphan." Illustrated by Ernest H. Shepard. (Burns Oates; 3/6.)

The fact that Ernest Shepard has bejewelled this volume of poems with his exquisite drawings is sufficient indication of their quality and kind. They have the same delicacy of line, like tracery work engraved on silver, and the same whimsicality, sometimes tender, sometimes impish. It is possible that they are not well placed amongst the Publishers' *Books for Young People*; children's taste lies more in the direction of heavier outlines and cruder colours; they would enjoy the music of the verses, but they would miss the subtle charm of the poetry. Like most general statements, this may not be verified in all individual cases, and in any case the taste of a child is an uncertain quantity. Certainly those who can appreciate this kind of poetry will delight in this volume, be they children or grown-ups.

H. J. C.

GRAMOPHONE

Brahms' second pianoforte concerto, unlike his first, met with immediate success; it is without the austerity, harshness as critics saw it, of the earlier work; has a greater maturity, an equal depth. Throughout, Brahms at his most assured. Schnabel, rightly more *simpatico* in technique than when playing Beethoven, gives a brilliant performance. This is easily one of the most important H.M.V. recordings of recent date (DR 2696-701).

Decca likewise produce a work of first importance: the Walton Symphony. Harder, for those not thoroughly at home with contemporary idioms, to appreciate at a first hearing, especially in the first movement; it reveals on better acquaintance, profundity, clarity, grandeur. The last movement suggests irresistibly Sibelius; but is no imitative *tour de force*; it synthetizes in an idiom original for all its resemblances the ideas of the earlier movements (X 108-113).

These two recordings alone make the month memorable.

H.M.V. also issue the *Rhapsody in Blue* in concerto form: the Boston orchestra with Sanroma at the piano; a rendering which shows the work at its best. The fourth side is occupied by

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Gershwin's *Strike up the Band*, a vigorous march in the Sousa tradition (C 2806-7). Florence Desmond with her usual skill impersonates Jimmy Durante, Mae West, Lupe Velez, Zasu Pitts, the last especially good, in *Hollywood Bridge Game* (BD 275). Billy Merson fans will welcome his *Medley* of old favourites (BD 321).

From Decca comes a fine rendering of the *Barber of Seville* Overture by the Berlin Philharmonic under Furtwaengler; comparison with the earlier H.M.V. Toscanini recording shows some textual variants, notably one in the opening bars, and a slower beginning; after a rather abrupt change of tempo the orchestra settles down to the job with admirable verve (CA 8218). To the new recording of the *Unfinished Symphony* there can be but one objection: the labour involved by the use of ten-inch discs. The thing itself is admirably done (Berlin Philharmonic under Melichar) and its inexpensiveness should earn the gratitude of Schubert-lovers who, like Schubert himself, are not overloaded with gold (DE 7047-50). The makers of the recent Decca *Golden Sonata* now play Sonata no. 3 in A minor; a lovely thing, equally well performed (K 809). Grace Moore sings with her accustomed ease and freshness *One Fine Day* from *Madame Butterfly*, and that bad business from *On Wings of Song, Love Me Forever* (O 130).

It has been remarked that Ellington gets his best results when he confines himself to the length of one side of a ten-inch disc; there are honourable exceptions, however, like *Creole Rhapsody*, one of his greatest works; and *Reminiscing in Tempo*, which occupies four sides, must be counted another (O 2103-4). Fortunately it is Ellington's own orchestra which exquisitely plays it—fortunately, for experience shows what havoc other orchestras can make of his work. Lunceford, for example, has made this month a version of *Solitude* which simply caricatures the original, quite apart from the vocalist who spreads himself all over the first part and insists on calling it solitood (O 2112). Jessie Matthews makes the best, in her usual attractive manner, of *Everything's in Rhythm with my Heart* and *Little Silkworm*—the first side very much the better, but neither able to compare with their ear-wiggling and say-the-word companion earlier reviewed (F 5729). That there might be, and very attractively be, jazz chamber music is the sort of idea that does not strike one until one has heard it done: Grapelly does it with very definite success, and his version of *Moon Glow* and Ellington's *It Don't Mean a Thing* should be heard (F 5831).

(Key.—H.M.V.: DB series, 6/-; C, 4/-; BD, 1/6. Decca: Walton Symphony, 30/- complete; CA series, 4/-; DE, 2/6; K, 2/6; O, 12-in. 4/-; 10-in., 2/6; F, 1/6.)

G. V.