

Classical; the palaeo-Christian; the Medieval; the Renaissance of Bramante and Peruzzi; the Baroque of Bernini and its wilder master Borromini; finally the bravura, the flourish of the Rococo.

It will be seen at once from this list that Mr Lees-Milne's enthusiasm comprehends the whole sweep and continuity of the Stones of Rome. Concerned only with the aesthetic appeal of his buildings, he has no 'moral' or 'functional' axe to grind, so can thread his way through the centuries guided solely by his instinct for beauty and scholarly appreciation of form. His method is to take the reader to each building, first selecting for him with care the best external viewpoint, then to lead him in, carefully expounding on the way the historical and stylistic background. Then follows a masterly description of the interior of the building and its decoration. Here, sad to say, the illustrations are hopelessly inadequate. For San Carlino we are given nothing but a view into the vault and a graceless little plan; for Santa Maria in Cosmedin a far-off view of the façade and a close-up of the episcopal chair! It is really too bad, but then it is obviously the intention of the author that we should illustrate the book by going to the buildings themselves.

Mr Lees-Milne is not without foibles. He sees Catholicism as a fanatical creed from which Rome has 'recovered'; he speaks of a 'high altar to enshrine the Blessed Sacrament' in the seventh century; he gently mocks the medieval mistake of placing the site of St Peter's martyrdom *inter duas metas* at San Pietro in Montorio, only to misplace it himself in the centre of the Piazza of St Peter's; one suspects a confusion of a *breccia* marble with a marble from Brescia! However, these and other slips are but specks on a most valuable, friendly and stimulating book. Although it lacks an index, for the serious student there is an excellent bibliography at the end of each chapter.

FRANCIS BARTLETT

RONCHAMPS-VENCE. (Éditions du Cerf.)

Here is a book which it is impossible to review dispassionately: it may be a little tenuous, it may be put together a little peremptorily—but it is a most valuable record of two masterpieces, two buildings which would not have existed were it not for the moral courage and the vision of a small group of people.

The book is moreover something of a memorial to the late Fr A.-M. Coutourier, O.P., for many years the co-editor of the review *Art Sacré* and the most active member of this group. He more than anyone else—including the artists, perhaps—is responsible for the existence of the two buildings. Over a period of years he managed, by dint of constant attrition, to create a climate of opinion in which such pioneering artists as Matisse and le Corbusier (and many others, not concerned here directly) were prepared to take the problems of

sacred art seriously, while ecclesiastics learned to think of modern art as something not wholly alien, but as of a language which they must learn to use.

This book, then, belongs to the category of *témoignages* rather than *documents*. The several essays are slight and very personal, the photographs mostly excellent and pleasantly tentative. Of the two buildings little need be said here: the little chapel of the Dominican nuns at Vence near Nice devised and decorated by Matisse—‘designed’ seems inappropriate somehow—and the pilgrimage church of Notre Dame du Haut at Ronchamp, in the Vosges, by le Corbusier have been given a great deal of publicity and have provoked much passion. What is most interesting in this book therefore is the witness of the artists themselves—both unbelievers—about their work: ‘elle est le résultat de toute ma vie active’ writes Matisse about his chapel to the bishop who consecrated it. ‘Je la considère, malgré toutes ses imperfections comme mon chef d’oeuvre.’

For some Ronchamps and Vence were the first steps out of impasse, and they will find this book heartening and stimulating; the doubtful will not, I dare say, be converted by it. But no one can fail to be moved by the pictures of Matisse at work: the old master in his wheel chair, moving painfully to draw the enormous full-size studies for the decorations at Vence with a large stick on which a piece of charcoal is mounted: modifying some detail, altering a few lines only perhaps. And yet the contrast between the panel of the stations of the cross makes a fascinating study. How different the finished panel is from the first conception, how much better understood the devotion than in the first sketches! By contrast with Matisse’s slow process of modification, le Corbusier’s sketches show the opposite approach—for his first few sketches, shown here, prefigure the finished building with few differences. Here then are two great artists, two masters, working in the service of the Church. These two buildings are a fine beginning. Soon perhaps we will have more churches of which we can be equally proud.

JOSEPH RYKWERT

MR LYWARD’S ANSWER. By Michael Burn. (Hamish Hamilton; 21s.)

Mr Lyward’s Answer is a careful and well-written study of the methods which he uses to rehabilitate ‘problem boys’ whose psychological disabilities have made them into misfits in their school, or their home, or in both. The book is obviously a labour of love and of conviction. The author was introduced to Mr Lyward and to Finchden Manor by an enthusiastic Dr Selwyn. Mr Burn, after his first introduction, decided to join the staff and to remain in residence so as to gather together the material for this book.