

tolerant; full of fascinating stories of meetings with such people as Woodrow Wilson and Mary Webb, Queen Mary and Rupert Brooke. But he is at home with criminals and large-scale eccentrics as well, and perhaps the most delightful incident in the book is his visit to the 'factory' where the 254 plays of Bacon were being industriously reconstructed by cryptograms and crazy erudition. It is a happy profession indeed that can produce so wise and humane a practitioner. I.E.

THE DILEMMA OF THE ARTS. By Wladimir Weidlé. (S.C.M. Press; 10s.)

In reading Professor Weidlé's first book to be published in English one is reminded of Mr Eliot's essay on 'Tradition and the Individual Talent'. 'No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone'. Professor Weidlé traces the decay of modern art to the triumph of titanism at the Renascence when man ousted God from the centre of the artist's vision. So art and the artist have grown introverted and 'self-expression' is the rule. But titanism had always been a hidden grumbling monster before the Renascence; the flesh and the devil, original sin and the unredeemed world have always been just beneath the surface. It is the one defect of Professor Weidlé's work that he is so concerned by their triumph in the last fifty years that he forgets this and almost sets up an ideal where they would not be allowed even a subterranean rumble. Yet clearly he does not believe this for he quite definitely pronounces his belief in the sacramentalism of art. Professor Weidlé is concerned with the conflict between science and art. Perhaps the terms read a little archaic now but they are none the less applicable if for science and art we read plan and spontaneity and see excess planning as the destruction of life and thus of religion, for 'artistic experience is, deep down, a religious experience'. So art will only live again when religion lives again and that must be through prayer. One of the great merits of this book is that while it includes in its scope the whole of European poetry (and painting and music too) it is rarely guilty of unwarranted generalisations. The translator has done his work well and left only a few angularities. GERARD MEATH, O.P.

'I WANT TO BE LIKE STALIN'. From the Russian textbook officially approved for the training of school teachers. Drawn up by B. P. Yesipoz and N. K. Goncharov. Translated by George S. Counts and Nucia P. Lodge. (Gollancz; 7s. 6d.)

On the dust cover this book is described as 'rather terrifying'. Yet if we open it at random the chances are that we shall light upon a passage that is remarkable for its insight into the juvenile mind or else one that is highly reminiscent of the rules of a dames' school.

For example: 'Children imitate before they understand. They imitate even in the absence of any deliberate stimulation or direc-