

PERIODICALS

The fourth number of *Dieu Vivant* gives a verbatim report of an interesting discussion on the subject of sin. A representative group of thinkers both christian and non-christian were assembled at the invitation of G. Bataille to discuss the views he had put forward in a book on Nietzsche.

Bataille only uses the traditional christian terminology as a starting point for he is far from being a christian. Christianity for him is a dead thing and men are at last coming to the realisation of its real nature. It has no real vitality because it has to shun sin and corruption and ultimately to take refuge in dull respectability. This is its real home because its ideal is one of possession—a closing-in of the subject upon the object. The way to escape this dullness is to embrace "le neant" through sin, which involves dissolution and therefore liberation from all limitation. Unlike the existentialist Sartre from whom he received the stiffest opposition (the others were in general more interested in discovering whether Bataille really meant what he said), he wants to make the result of sin-chaos his resting place. The marxist utopia of a perfect order born from violence has no attraction for him.

Bataille is very earnest about his views and by all accounts a most likeable man. He deserves to be taken seriously as he has not yet achieved his ideal and is therefore still capable of reflective thought. Now that his own position has been made clearer it would perhaps be better to continue the discussion on a narrower basis so that the christian and marxist extremes may be confronted separately.

The February issue of the *Vie Spirituelle* on the other hand is devoted to the subject of sanctity. After a few stimulating articles on the nature of sanctity, one in particular dealing with the spirituality of the secular clergy and maintaining that of its very nature it has no peculiar form of spirituality, goes on to give the results of an inquiry which it initiated by circulating a questionnaire under the general title "Towards what type of holiness are we moving?" Many answers were received; they are summarised and typical instances are given. Some suggest that our age is going to produce the most integral type of humanity; not cramped like in the saints of other ages. Were the saints mistaken in modelling themselves on their predecessors? If we have discovered a new formula it does not seem to have been tried yet! A man like S. Dominic produced a new type of holiness by modelling himself upon the desert fathers. S. B.